Andrey Kostyrev

MEDIATIZATION OF POLITICS:

HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

TEXTBOOK

Series Political Communication:
Theories and Practices

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I sincerely express my gratitude to the management of the European Humanities University (Vilnius) and, in particular, to **Professor Ryhor Miniankou**, Acting Head of the Academic Department of Social Sciences, for their invaluable support in publishing this textbook. I am deeply grateful to the **University of Latvia** leadership for providing the organizational and financial resources necessary for this work. My special thanks go to **Dr. Jānis Ikstens**, former Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, for his unwavering professional and scientific support. I am especially indebted to **Dr. Zigmārs Gailis**, Executive Director of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, for his dedicated organizational assistance and commitment to the successful realization of this project. My sincere thanks go to **Dr. Rūta Sutkutė**, Associate Professor at the Academic Department of Social Sciences, European Humanities University (Vilnius), for her insightful and constructive reviews, which greatly enriched this work. Furthermore, I am profoundly grateful to **Professor Oleksandr Chornyi**, Head of the Department of Law, Philosophy, and Political Sciences at T. G. Shevchenko National University 'Chernihiv Collegium', for his continuous academic and methodological guidance, professional support, and steadfast optimism during these challenging times of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Additionally, I extend my appreciation to my grandson, **Alexander Pelykh**, for his assistance in designing the figures for this textbook. Lastly, my deepest gratitude goes to my wife, **Nina**, for her unwavering support – not only during the creation of this textbook but throughout all aspects of my life.

Glory to Ukraine!

ISBN: 978-609-8220-37-7

Publisher: JSC Igmovila
Laisvės al. 38a-12, LT-44240 Kaunas

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Series *Political Communication: Theories and Practices*

European Humanities University

VILNIUS

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered how much influence the media has over what we think about politics? Or how political leaders and campaigns seem to masterfully use media to shape public opinion? This is what the mediatization of politics is all about. It's not just about news reports or viral social media posts – it's about the way media and politics have become so intertwined that one can't function without the other. Studying this topic gives you a whole new perspective on how media can drive positive change or create significant challenges in democratic systems. If you've ever questioned why certain political issues dominate headlines or how social media platforms shape public debates, this is the perfect opportunity to dive deeper.

This book is the second in the *Theory and Practice of Political Communication* series. *Mediatization of Politics: Historical and Systems Analysis* explores the dynamic interplay between media systems, technology, and political practices.

The purpose of this textbook is to equip readers with a clear understanding of how media and politics have co-evolved, what systemic structures and processes behind mediatization, in which way they impact democracy, and which functional models provide the interaction between political and media systems.

To fully grasp mediatization, we approach it through history and systems analysis. Why? Because looking back shows us how media and politics evolved together, shaped by new technologies and societal changes. A systems perspective helps us connect the dots—how media, political institutions, and society work together (or against each other) to shape public life. Think of it as creating a map to understand not just where we've been but where we might be heading in this complex relationship between media and politics. The mediatization of politics is not a straightforward story; it's a layered process influenced by historical developments, technological innovations, and changes in political systems. The mediatization of politics has become a defining feature of modern governance and public life. From traditional print media to the era of social networks and AI, the way media interacts with politics has reshaped societal norms, influenced policies, and redefined how people form their opinions.

This book uses a multidisciplinary approach, combining insights from history, communication studies, sociology, political science, and technology to help you understand this phenomenon. Step by step we examine how media has shifted from being a passive channel for information to an active player in shaping political realities, explore how this fascinating process transforms political actors and institutions and how political power affects media in turn.

The textbook is structured into four chapters, each focusing on a key aspect of mediatization:

1. Political Media History. This chapter looks at how media systems have influenced political communication over time. You'll explore different approaches, including: (1) The Linear Instrumentalist Approach: How media evolved as a tool for political messaging; (2) Social Network Constructivism: How participatory networks, even before the internet, shaped political discourse; (3) Pulsation of Communication Fields: How societal demands and media technologies influence each other in cycles; (4) Structural Functionalism: A four-stage framework for understanding political media evolution; (5) Normative Value Perspective: How media's role in politics has oscillated between being a democratic tool and a force for manipulation, especially in the age of AI.

2. Media System. This chapter dives into how media systems function as the backbone of mediatization. It explains the evolution from traditional centralized formats to today's decentralized, algo-

rithm-driven ecosystems. You'll also learn about the key players – journalists, platforms, regulators, and audiences – and how they shape political discourse.

3. Effects of Media on Politics. This chapter focuses on how media influences political processes, looking at four main approaches: (1) Normative-Value Approach: Media's role in democracy and its challenges like sensationalism; (2) Behavioral Approach: How media shapes public opinion and voter behavior; (3) Technological Determinism: How innovations like television and AI change political communication; (4) Systems Approach: The reciprocal influence between media ecosystems and political systems.

4. Models of Political and Media Systems Interaction. This chapter introduces key theoretical models, including: (1) Normative Approach: Classifying media systems based on political ideologies; (2) Structural-Functional Approach: Regional variations in how media and politics interact; Media Matrix and advanced models that integrate cultural, technological, and systemic factors.

At the end of each chapter, self-assessment questions are provided to help readers reinforce their understanding of the material.

The key ideas and concepts presented and discussed in these chapters in an accessible way will help you think critically about the role of media in politics today and even your role as a citizen. It also emphasizes the importance of media literacy and ethical responsibility in a digital world filled with opportunities and risks. By the end of this journey, you'll not only understand the complexities of mediatization but also feel empowered to engage with media and politics in a more informed and thoughtful way.

On your way, dear reader!

Jesper Strömbäck and Frank Esser, authoritative European scholars in political communication and media studies, observe that **"the mediatization of politics is defined as a long-term process through which the importance of the media and their spillover effects on political processes, institutions, organizations, and actors has increased"** (Strömbäck & Esser, 2014; 375). Niels Ole Finnemann notes that **"the concepts of mediatization differ in several aspects, but they are all related to a specific set of media, characterizing a specific historical epoch"** (Finnemann, 2011: 74). Stressing the importance of historical analysis, Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini point out:

> Common historical roots shape the development of both media and political systems, and are crucial to understanding the relation between the two (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 46). This does not mean that the past entirely determines the present, or certainly that change does not take place. But there are clear relationships between patterns of historical evolution going back to the beginnings of modernity and the media system patterns that prevail today (ibid: 301).

Consequently, **the mediatization of politics should be studied within a historical context, where media history and political history intersect as a joined political media history.**

In undertaking a historical analysis of the mediatization of politics, it is essential to recognize that media is both a product of social system development and an integral part of it, functioning as both a component and a driving force simultaneously. Sociologist Daniel Lerner wrote that people living together in a social and political group – a common 'polis' – develop special models and ways of distributing information, just as they develop special models and ways of distributing other goods. The communication systems, which they form, are products of their social systems and reflect the social values, actions and needs of this society (Frey, 1973: 74-77). Thus, each society created such a form of communication channel that meets its needs and possibilities. At the same time, according to Niclas Luhmann, although the content of mass media communications exists mostly in reflection and communication, however, they form the "world in which we live", contribute to "building bridges" between the political and the private, and do the actual impact, contrary to their functional type (Luman, 2000). Hence, media construct new forms of social interaction and interrelations as well as new forms of social institutions in turn. Realizing this, economic historian Harold A. Innis, looked at the entire history of civilization through the prism of the history of media (1951). Generalized the variety of scholars' positions, **there are four main approaches to interpreting the history of the media in its co-relation with political history: (1) the linear instrumentalist approach, (2) the social network constructivism, (3) the structural functionalism, and (4) the normative value approach.**

1. Linear Instrumentalist Approach: Improvement of Channels

Famous Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan in his book 'The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man' (1962) described four epochs of media history: (1) Oral tribe culture; (2) Manuscript culture; (3) Gutenberg galaxy; (4) Electronic age (McLuhan, 1962).

So, although the term *'media'* began to be used in the 1920s only (Briggs, & Burke, 2010: 1), its history goes back thousands of years. The framing of media's history starts with the Chauvet Cave paintings and their analogs in other places. Sometimes such tools such as drums, smoke signals, lantern beacons, or semaphores systems, which mediated messages over relatively short distances, are called media too. The development of early enabling longer-distance communication systems such as mail,

including in the Persian Empire (Chapar Khaneh and Angarium) and Roman Empire, can be interpreted as early forms of oral and writing media. Because the messengers carried memorized or written messages – from sender to receiver–and returned with the reply from the receiver (Dunston, 2002). The classification of primitive media, which was proposed by the McLuhan's teacher Harold Innis, is interesting from the point of view of the time dimension. He divided media into heavy, durable media like stone tablets, suited to carrying ideas through time, and light, ephemeral media like parchment, more suited to spatial dissemination (Innis, 2022: 32). However, it was interpersonal communication substantially.

The history of mass communication can be traced back to the days when dramas were performed in various ancient cultures. This was the first time when a form of communication was 'broadcast' to a wider audience. The incendiary speeches of ancient orators addressed to the public of Athens and Rome were common classical oral forms of mass political communication. Event organising and public speaking remain actual forms of mass communication to this day. But they are some forms of direct communication and we deal with media as channel only after information was transmitted as word of mouth or by letters from direct witnesses of events to other people. So, media was non-mass tools of interpersonal communication and mass communication was non-mediated process until the practical implementation the printing press invention by Gutenberg, The phrase '*mass media*' was, according to American journalist Henry Mencken, used as early as 1923 in the United States (Colombo, 1994: 176). The notion of 'mass media' was generally restricted to print media up until the post-Second World War, when radio, television and video were introduced.

It should be borne in mind that, as Ithel de Sola Pool noted, the pace of innovations in means of communication is constantly increasing (language – 500 thousand years, writing – 4 thousand, the printing press – 500, the telephone – 100, radio - 50, television and computer – 25, communication satellites – 10 years, etc.). The American scientist indicates that this acceleration is the main cause of social upheavals (De Sola Pool, 1974: 33). **The development of communication and mass media clearly correlate with known schemes of periodization of mankind's social and political development.** This once again emphasizes their constant dialectical connection. Daniel Bell's, and Alvin Toffler's periodizations include **pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial (information) societies. Later Barry Wellman and Manuel Castells add Network society. And historians of mass media consider the chronological order of the evolution of mass media throughout the four ages** (National Institute of Mass Communication & Journalism, 2019).

(1) The Pre-Industrial Age (from the Ancient to 15th century):

59 BC: The first newspaper 'Acta diurna populi romani' in Rome;

1041: Movable clay type printing in China;

1440: The first printing press in the world by German goldsmith Johannes Gutenberg;

1477: First printed advertisement in a book by William Caxton.

(2) The Industrial Age (from the 1700s to 1930s)

1774: Invention of electric telegraph by George Louis Lesage;

1829: Invention of typewriter by W.S. Burt;

1876: Invention of telephone by Alexander Graham Bell;

1877: Invention of the phonograph by Thomas Alva Edison;

1894: Invention of radio by Guglielmo Marconi;

The early 1900's: Starting of the 'golden age' for television, radio and cinema;

1918: First color movie shot Cupid Angling;

1920: Invention of TV by John Logie Baird and first Radio Commercial Broadcast by KDKA radio station a daughter company of Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company;

1923: The first news magazine was launched – TIME;

1927: First TV transmission by Philo Farnsworth.

(3) The Electronic Age (from the 1930s to 1980s)

1940: Community antenna television system, early cable;

1950: Black and white TV came out and became mainstream;

1960: Rise of FM Radio;

1963: Introduction of audio cassettes;

1972: Email was developed by Ray Tomlinson;

1973: First handheld mobile phone by John Mitchel, and Martin Cooper;

1975: Introduction of VCRs;

1980: Color television became mainstream and first online newspaper - Columbus Dispatch;

1981: IBM Personal computer is introduced;

1985: Microsoft Windows is launched;

1986: MCI Mail – first commercial email service.

(4) The Evolution of New Media (21st Century)

The 1990s to 2000s: Invention of the Internet, birth of social networking sites, and emergence of social media;

1991: World Wide Web came into being by sir Timothy John-Berners Lee;

1995: Microsoft Internet Explorer was launched;

1997: DVDs replaced VCR;

2001: Instant messaging services;

2002: Satellite radio is launched;

2004: Facebook;

2005: Youtube;

2006: Twitter (X);

2007: Tumblr;

2010: Instagram;

2016: TikTok;

2023: Threads.

Many textbooks and most popular print, online, and televisual accounts of media history share this linear model of progress (for example, print is an advance on hand-writing, TV an advance on radio) and a focus on specific contributions of different media.

2. Social Network Constructivism: Communication Field's Pulsation

Media history acquires a deeper and voluminous character if we evaluate it from the constructivist standpoint of social network theory and the concept of the communication field, which we considered in chapter 3. This view better than the instrumentalist linear approach reflects the value content of those

social transformations that accompanied the media history. **According to this theoretical and methodological paradigm, the change in the properties of communication channels is an important reason for the transformation of relations between social actors. At the same time, the transformation of social relations and political structures takes place in accordance with the pulsation of the communication field. This pulsation is caused by the cyclic alternation of the dominant forces of social interaction – collectivism and individualism.** Collectivism is based on the value of the public good. Individualism is based on the value of freedom. And the balance between them is ensured by the value of justice. Collectivism contributes to the creation of structures, the establishment of an order based on common norms, and reduces the entropy of the system, which, however, leads to the freezing of the forms of its existence. Within the synergistic paradigm frameworks Elena Knyazeva and Sergey Kurdyumov have called these processes of centralization the LS-mode (Knyazeva, & Kurdyumov, 2002: 123). Individualism disperses structures, creates chaos, increases the entropy of the system, which at the same time opens a window of new possibilities. These authors have called these disintegration processes the HS-mode (ibid: 100). The communication field provides a dynamic balance between the LS- and HS-modes. Therefore, even without changing its power parameters, social networks with different degrees of centralization, different hubs' valuence can be formed in the communication field, and processes of their integration and fragmentation can occur. In addition, in the communication field, the priority of networks developing in LS- and HS-modes is constantly changing. However, the communication field itself ensures the functioning of social networks as open, self-organizing systems. **The assessment of self-organization potential as the ability of the communication field to provide a dynamic balance between integration and fragmentation of social networks gives a possibility to determine the degree of viability of socio-political systems and look at the media history from these evaluation positions.**

Oral communication has a direct nature and ensures the functioning of the field in which, in particular, social networks of primitive societies are formed. The study of these elementary social constructs enabled such social anthropologists as Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (1935), Bronislav Malinovski (1944), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1949) and others. The large area of correlation frameworks' intersections between communicators, who all know each other, is determined by the fact of kinship. Therefore, it causes a high concentration of the strength of the communication field. However, the number of nodes in such a network is small as a result. and there are few areas of intersection of their correlation frames, so the overall power of the communication field is low. The communication field of primitive societies is characterized by high homogeneity. An increased level of valuence is marked only by the head of the clan or the leader of the tribe, who act as the hubs of these elementary social networks. The high homogeneity of the communication field determines the low level of structure and high entropy and dispersion of the social system. But since the internal integration of the network is ensured by the predominance of collectivist forces in the communication field, and the nature of the social environment determines its closeness, this gradually changes the development trends from dispersion, or from the HS-mode, to centralization, or to the LS-mode. Émile Durkheim (1893) characterized societies built on the principle of repeating cells (villages) as societies of mechanistic solidarity, or primitive societies. He noted that these societies were able to exist without a political power that would consolidate them, that is, without the state. But as soon as human settlements found the ability to grow, to acquire individual features, they began to lose solidarity, the previously unified spaces began to open up. Then the state was needed (Durkheim, 1997 [1893]: 39, 60, 108). Communication fields based on oral communication have survived in the modern social system. In particular, they are the basis of interaction in the structure of the family as a social network, which became the object of research by Elizabeth Bott (1957), or in the structure of a separate religious congregation, as it was shown by James Barnes. Although these fields are certainly much more open than the fields of primitive societies.

The birth of such an actor as a state in the social network of the primitive society fundamentally changed its structure, because the state emerged as the most powerful hub. In addition to socio-econom-

ic determinants that caused changes in individual and group values and, accordingly, changes in the configuration of social actors' framework of correlation, it was due to changes in communication channels – the emergence of writing. For the first time, communication became mediated not by another person, but by a written channel. Therefore, the structure of social networks also changed – they became media. Written sources of information perform not only the function of communicative edges in the network, but instead they have turned into nodes with their own valence. The nodes with the greatest value significance turned into hubs, in the communication field of which new social networks began to form. As an example, we can cite such written sources as the Torah, the Bible, and the Koran. From these superhubs, the communication field extended to priests and then to ordinary believers.

With the advent of writing, the communication field expanded in space (because it became possible to send messages over long distances in their original form, and not through oral intermediaries, such as playing a damaged telephone, which significantly reduced the level of 'noise' in the transmission of information) and in time (because it had made possible to save information not only in memory). Although communication through written channels reduced the area of intersections of correlation frames between individual communicators, and the formation of a feedback lope as a necessary condition for communication became possible only under the condition of correspondence, however the communication field's area increase led to the communicators' number increase, and therefore to a strengthening of the field in total.

At the same time, since only a narrow circle of people possessed writing, the heterogeneity of the communication field increased significantly, its structure increased, and entropy decreased. Literary people (ancient rulers and priests, and later clergy, merchants, aristocracy) quickly appeared in social networks as hubs with increased valence, which gave them the opportunity to significantly increase their social capital. In addition, the communication field lost its flat linearity, it became two-level. The field of written channels formed a Higher level, and the traditional field of oral communication - a lower one. And, although these levels were not completely isolated, but they had different degrees of interpenetration. So, since the appearance of writing, the communication field gained a certain volume. The complexity of this field was also due to the fact that as the field became more concentrated, the centrifugal powers caused by the individualism of peronal hubs intensified at the higher level, while the collectivism inherent in traditional society prevailed at the lower level. At the same time, more powerful fields of a higher level attracted fields of a lower level.

The hierarchy of interactions between centrifugal and centripetal forces in the communication field caused various combinations in the mosaic of social networks. Vortices, which, according to the principles of synergy, invariably arise in a heterogeneous field, where **LS- and HS-modes led to the formation of the following structures: (1) local centralized social networks that function in an isolated communication field; (2) local decentralized networks that function in an isolated communication field; (3) local centralized and/or decentralized networks. which function in a common regional decentralized communication field; (3) local centralized and/or decentralized networks. which function in a common regional centralized communication field; (4) large regional networks that function in a single centralized communication field.** It should be emphasized that both locality, centralization, and isolation are relative values that can be calculated on their own continuum scale. From this point of view, for example, the Western Europe of the Middle Ages can be considered as a system where local centralized (feudal principalities) and/or decentralized (free cities) networks functioned in a common regional centralized communication field of the Catholic Church, which formed a kind of social network known as Christendom.

The advent of printing and the spread of literacy among the population, when most people were able to read the Bible on their own, contributed to the strengthening of dispersion tendencies in Europe in the form of Protestantism with its ideology of individualism. The Catholic world broke up

into individual nation-states, and national communication fields were formed accordingly. Thus, at this stage, decentralization HS-mode began to dominate at the regional level, and centralization one LS-mode – at the local level. Paradoxically, the centripetal trend was strengthened thanks to the such factors as mechanical printing and the spread of literacy, which had led to the transformation of such media as newspapers, known in ancient China and Rome, from government leaflets to the first means of mass communication. Already from the beginning of the 17th century European newspapers and magazines had established networks of supporters around themselves – cultural, scientific, political and others. Such social networks as, for example, cultural and scientific societies, and mass political parties began to form. Popular authors of circulation publications had become new hubs of social networks, the ribs of which were formed by the press. The communication field, which was created by the press, crossed national borders, because contributors to well-known publications could read them all over the world. At the same time, as Jean Pierre Vaudon notes, press is such specific product that is sold twice: first to the advertiser, and then to the reader (Vaudon, 2001: 21). Advertising comes primarily to large mass media – the leaders of this market, to those who has a significant number of consumers or large circulations. Therefore, newspapers in small cities declined, independent mass media were either driven to bankruptcy, or were bought or became parts of other enterprises. In the 1970s, almost 90 cities in the United States became so-called 'one-newspaper' regions (Schiller, 1973: 230). So, communication field, which was based on the press, have expanded broad globally but lose its local roots.

Communication field had greatly expanded with the development of radio. At the same time, the tendency to their concentration due to the absorption of less powerful fields also increased. Some researchers claim that mass media are a necessary condition for the planting totalitarianism in general. Thanks to them, the population is ideologically processed, uniform standards of everyday life and outlook are established, and personal and universal values are leveled (Kozenyuk, 1998: 170). The rapid entry into the arena of a new communication channel – television only strengthened the indicated trends in the development of the communication field. Therefore, **the communication field of mass society becomes centralized, and gives way to a rigid vertical hierarchy**.

Herbert Schiller had identified four negative trends in the development of mass media that appeared in the second half of the 20th century: monopolization, internationalization, unification, and commercialization (Shiller, 1973: 122-130).

(1) *Monopolization.* After TV expansion the steadily growing concentration of mass media had led to the formation of several transnational media broadcasting concerns at the end of the 20th century, such as CNN, Time Warner, Sony, Matsushita, Bertelsmann, News Corporation, Finvest, Microsoft, Capital City/ABC, Walt Disney, Paramount, Television, TV Globo, which were owned by media moguls Ted Turner , Rupert Murdoch , Silvio Berlusconi, Bill (William) Gates, Emilio Fernando Azcárraga (Zernetska, 1999: 58). Under such conditions, people had no choice and the competition between mass media virtually disappeared. Report of the UNESCO commission chaired by Seán McBride noted that the concentration and consolidation of different technologies and different media is a disturbing phenomenon, because it can adversely affect the freedom and democratization of communication (UNESCO, 1992: 4). And it was the answer to 10-years ago Report by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems *'Many Voices – One World: Towards a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order'* (1980).

(2) *Information imperialism*. In the 20th century the internationalization of mass media, i.e. the free movement of capital, labor, material resources, ideas and information become a natural phenomenon in the world. But this internationalization turned into a 'westernization', or 'information imperialism', or 'information colonialism', as some researchers, in particular Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, had named this world information order (Nordenstreng, & Tapio, 1974). In this order, developing countries accounted for only 10% of information resources and 1% of resources in the field of infor-

mation data processing, when two-thirds of the world's population in the countries of the 'third world' accounted for 7% of television and 25% of radio stations, 20% of newspaper circulation , agencies and only 10% of radio frequencies belong to African, Asian and Latin American countries, 35 countries did not even have their own news agencies. While the four 'whales': Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, and France-Presse distributed between 33 and 37 million (depending on different sources) of the 40 million words that news agencies around the world transmitted each day in 1975 (Schiller, 1975: 232). These agencies, known as the 'big four', practically monopolized the entire flow of international information.

(3) *Unification.* Various television channels and other mass media differed less and less in content and political position, and more and more in layout and design. They become constantly interchangeable. In the printed mass media, this is observed when they want to survive in the competitive struggle, remaining a newspaper – a forum of opinions of a certain region or city; on the radio, whose programs for similar reasons are becoming more and more like discotheques; to television, which is forced to give more and more priority in its programs to the tastes of the majority. However, the McBride Report emphasized that the uniformity of consumer behavior is inappropriate for many local environments (UNESCO, 1992: 6).

(4) *Commercialization.* Under the conditions when so-called independent radio and television become completely dependent on advertisers, the value of the channel or program is determined by their rating. In pursuit of him, the mass media try in every way to please the tastes of a wide audience. As a result, the mass media found themselves in the vortex of the entertainment industry (Schiller, 1975: 235).

These trends had led to the fact that many people who did not have a privileged position in public life had less and less to do with the political and cultural messages of the mass media. Such people were withdrawn from the political life of the state and become completely apolitical. They could easily be manipulated by various powers that own the mass media, because such people were not connected to information networks and did not use other channels as a source of knowledge to receive political information and to participate in political discussions. These trends had also led to the fact that the mass media, which were in the service of entertainment, strengthen the norms and values of the existing social system of power, which was interested in the unpreparedness of people for political activity. These people had made up the majority that cultivated creeping apoliticism in society. Others, on the contrary, were very deeply integrated into political life; occupying a privileged position in society, they participated in political debates in clubs, parties, associations, read newspapers and books, and understood how to use radio and television to become a politically informed person. Thus, commercialization had led to inequality in access to political information. Monopolization and informational colonialism had led to a decrease in the structural differentiation of communication fields both at the local and global levels. In turn, unification and commercialization caused a decrease in content-value differentiation of communication channels. McLuhan described how the world was compressed to the size of a village as a result of the development of television.

It shows that **the dominance of the LS-mode, not only at the local or regional level, but also at the global level, led to the fact that the main information flows were monopolized by either superpowers or transnational corporations. This information order changed not only the configuration, but also the valuable essence of communication fields. Media turn from a means of organizing social interaction into a means of manipulation.** As the closeness of the communication field grows, network structures disappear, giving way to a rigid vertical hierarchy. In this way, the field in our understanding of it as a set of intersection zones of correlation frames essentially disappears. Since individual nodes of social networks had lost their individual value frameworks as a result of manipulation, instead they found themselves drawn into the unified framework of the most powerful hub – the state and/or TNC.

This social structure carried the threat of such kind of totalitarianism, which was described by George Orwell in his dystopian novel '1984' (Nineteen Eighty-Four (Orwell, 1961). And McLuhan predicted that the future rulers would not need to apply repressive measures in cases of discontent and unrest among the plebs - it would be enough to change the television programs (McLuhan, 2001 [1968]: 12). Propaganda manipulation of facts, words, concepts, purposeful dehumanization by means of information and monopoly means of social relations, institutional and systemic influence on the social system of values by state power structures, bureaucratic apparatus, individual functionaries in order to achieve comprehensive control over the individual and society are defined by the term 'Orwellism'. According to Ukrainian researchers Volodymyr Horbatenko and Oleksiy Dubas, Orwellism, constantly emerging in different parts of the planet and manifesting itself in unexpected angles, leads to the degradation of society (Horbatenko, & Dubas, 2002: 15). It can be stated that Orwellism as a social construction has been considered as a natural result of the development of the communication field of the Gutenberg era – the era of mass media.

Instead, completely different perspectives may be opening up in the process of information society transition from the traditional mass media domination to the new network society, which is formed by Internet channels and, especially, online networks. These changes are truly revolutionary in nature. They opened the new – Fourth – age of political communication.

This will be analysed through the lens of structural functionalism.

3. Structural Functionalism: Four Ages of Political Communication

The structural functionalism is a macro theory that looks at how all structures or institutions in society work together. Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell introduced a structural-functionalist approach to comparing political systems. These authors argued that, in order to understand a political system, it is necessary to study not only its institutions (or structures) but also their respective functions. They also insisted that these institutions, to be properly understood, must be placed in a meaningful and dynamic historical context (Almond, and Powell, 1966). The structural-functional approach reveals to us the history of media as a system. And we will continue on this way in the next chapter.

In the frame of this approach, Jay G. Blumler, developing his and Dennis Kavanagh joint theory, depicted four ages of political communication, which largely correlate with the above periods of mass media evolution:

> In the first, much political communication was subordinate to relatively strong political institutions and beliefs, so that political parties and leaders enjoyed a relatively easy communication ride in the media of the period.
>
> In the second age, limited channel network television became the prime political communication medium, with an increasingly important role for television news in reporting events and channeling advocacy.
>
> The third age was primarily one of communication 'abundance, ubiquity, reach and celerity' (especially abundance), due chiefly to the conversion of limited-channel to multi-channel television, and it was being re-shaped by five main trends: intensified professionalizing pressures; increased competitive pressures; anti-elitist populism; centrifugal diversification; and changes in how people receive politics.
>
> The fourth age of political communication crux must be the ever-expanding diffusion and utilization of Internet facilities – including their continual innovative evolution – throughout society, among all institutions with political goals and with politically relevant con-

cerns and among many individual citizens. All this has evidently produced a vibrant communicative sphere, which though not coordinated or coherent overall, includes many new opportunities for expression and exchange – and also for learning what others are saying elsewhere. Hence, what we used to call interpersonal communication in politics – which mainly took place in the family, among friends and with workmates – has been completely transformed. All this has unleashed an incredibly diverse range of globally expansive and temporally synchronous communicative networks, enlarging opportunities for linkage between dispersed social actors. It has also complicated the lives of politicians wanting or feeling they need to manage news and publicity to their advantage. Whereas in the past political leaders and their strategists geared up to cover and intervene in television, radio and press outlets, now they are involved to a considerable extent in multi-dimensional impression management (Blumler, 2016).

Iceland researcher Peter Aagaard proposes a combined overview of the four phases of political communication development:

Table 1.1. The content of political communication development phases
(Aagaard, 2016)

Phase	The public sphere	Recipients	Media	Political actors	State form
The premodern phase	Centralized, party press	Passive	Newspapers, party press	The elite, Old political parties	The nation state
The modern phase	Two-step models emerge	Passive	Breakthrough of mass media, Still party press, state monopoly on electronic media	Political parties, Organized interests groups	The welfare state
The late modern phase	Increased fragmentation, mediatization	Passive, seen as an individualized citizen.	Privatization of media, dying party press, increased professionalization	Elites isolated in 'Bermuda triangles', Increased professionalization	The competition state
A fourth phase?	*Interactivity, Continued fragmentation, mediatization, algorithms shape public awareness*	*Increasingly active, but still individualized*	*Stagnation of mass media, emergence of digital media.*	*Everyone collects data*	*The digital state*

This comparative cross-temporal functional analysis shows that in the first age (phases), the media – press – informed the public about policy, in the second one, the media – radio and early local TV – functioned as a podium for politicians, in the third, the media – broad nets of multi-channel television – became an agenda maker, and in the fourth age, a mediatization of politics is taking place.

In some sense, this periodization correlates with the position of scholars, who concentrate on the representational functions of the media. For example, Jean Baudrillard traces media history in four

phases: (1) it is the reflection of a profound reality; (2) it masks and denatures a profound reality; (3) it masks the absence of a profound reality; (4) it has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1994: 6, and 1983: 11). This position contrasts with all other instrumentalist four-stage media history stage concepts and opens a door to studying issues of post-modern, post-truth, post-politics communication, and post-democracy.

4. The Normative Value Approach: Waves from Admiration to Fear

While the structural approach considers the functional algorithms that have transformed political communication, the normative value approach centers on the axiological criteria in assessing mediatization as historical process. As Sean Cubitt highlights, an essential task for media history is to explain why human communication—supposedly the vehicle of democracy and societal evolution—has often been restrictive, oppressive, exploitative, and exclusive (Cubitt, 2023). Therefore, normative value approach focuses directly on the challenges facing democracy. This focus is especially pertinent given that the Internet's rise to 'meta-media' status and its emergence as a 'new media matrix' has spurred discussions about the ethical face of a 'new epoch in media history' (Finnemann, 2011).

It should be emphasized that applying the axiological methodology to media history yields conclusions distinct from the linear, progressive model. Instead, **the normative value approach portrays political media history as a series of waves, aligning these with democratization waves for comparative analysis.**

Samuel Huntington described three waves of democratization (Huntington, 1991). The first wave began in the early 19th century, peaked in the 1920s, and declined until the mid-1940s. The second wave began in 1945, peaked in the early 1960s, and declined by the mid-1970s. The third wave started in the mid-1970s and reached its crest in the early 1990s with the collapse of authoritarian regimes in the USSR and Central and Eastern Europe, followed by a decline in the early 2000s. Some experts have associated the fall of several dictatorships in the Middle East and North Africa, known as the Arab Spring, with the post-Soviet transitions in Eastern Europe, sparking hopes for a fourth democratization wave.

When we juxtapose the periodization of democratization waves with media history, we find a notable correlation: the first wave coincides with the rise of the mass press, the second with the widespread adoption of radio, the third with television's dominance, and the fourth with the Internet's prevalence.

Social media, in particular, played a significant role in this fourth wave, as seen in the Arab Spring of 2011 and the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity in 2013–14, where people used social media to coordinate and communicate during these movements. Digital media played a large role in creating favorable conditions for uprisings, helped to publicize key igniting events, and then facilitated those uprisings and their diffusion. But digital media did not do this alone or as suddenly as some observers have claimed. The story of the Arab Spring, according to Phillip Howard, began over a decade before as internet access and mobile phones began to diffuse rapidly through North Africa and the Middle East. The citizens that could afford internet access, the wealthy and powerful, mostly, played a huge role in the Egypt, Tunisia, and Bahrain uprisings. Over time, online criticism of regimes became more public and common, setting the stage for the Arab Spring. Digital media also allowed women and minorities to enter political discussions, and ultimately, the ensuing protests and revolutions as well (Howard, 2013).

A comparative analysis of these waves and the evolution of media suggests that each media type undergoes two axiological phases – an initial rise and a subsequent decline. In the rise phase,

'young' media drive democratization, while in the decline phase, they 'ossify' and may become tools for authoritarian control and manipulation.

Although the Arab Spring was initially viewed as a positive example of social media's democratizing potential, perspectives have shifted. Events such as the 2021 Capitol Hill riots and the suspension of President Donald Trump's social media accounts have spurred critical discourse surrounding social media and the Silicon Valley giants behind it (Kortti, 2021).

Thus, the normative value approach enables us to identify two main stages in assessing the Internet's impact on political communication: (1) an enthusiastic phase, and (2) an anxious phase.

The first – from the end of the 1990s to 2016 – was characterized by optimism in relation to the potential of the Internet influence on the democratization of society. Acceleration and cheapening of the information process and the political communication field expansion, which took place thanks to the development of the WWW, were considered at this stage as factors contributing to the growth of deliberative democracy. For example, Howard Reingold hoped for the prospects of a 'virtual community' to return to political life that primary democratic experience of the community, which was lost in the processes of modernization (Rheingold, 1993). Really, the Internet has become not only a tool for finding political information, but also a means of exchanging advice and an assistant in making decisions in the political sphere. And although not everyone used it in this way, but the general trend seemed obvious. William Gibson and Martin Hagen even called this stage of political communication development 'cyberdemocracy'. As Hagen noted, cyberdemocracy has enabled a decentralized, self-governing form of government by opposing state abuse of power (censorship, invasion of privacy, etc.) (Hagen, 1997).

The dominant position at this stage is illustrated by the statement of Ethan Zuckerman:

> Thanks to new technologies, the word is no longer controlled by the topic of who controls the means of printing and circulation, as well as the governments of countries that limit freedom of opinion and communication. Now everyone can take the power of the press into their own hands. Everyone can tell their stories around the world. We strive to build bridges across the chasms that separate people in order to better understand each other. We strive to work together more effectively and act with greater strength. We believe in the power of direct contact. In personal, political and powerful ties between individual people from different parts of the world (Zuckerman, 2010: 72).

But the second stage – from 2016 to the present - is marked by skepticism and even pessimism. At this stage social media are criticized as harmful to democracy. According to Ronald Deibert, "The world of social media is more conducive to extreme, emotionally charged, and divisive types of content than to calm, principled, competing, or complex narratives" (Deibert, 2019: 28). After Brexit and the election of Trump as the US president, praiseworthy democratic odes to social media were replaced by statements that "social media steal elections" (Porotsky, 2018). Since the end of the second decade of the 21st century, more and more empirical studies have tried to provide evidence of the harmful influence of the use of online networks on democratic processes. Accusations of social media in the growing pollution of the information ecosystem with the language of hatred, in the formation of excessive individualization, the destruction of traditional identities, the polarization of society and the promotion of anti-democratic populism and authoritarianism are spreading. In addition, researchers point to the growth of such threats to e-democracy procedures as cyberattacks on systems and databases; digital interference in elections; digital disinformation: fake news and computerized propaganda; manipulation of preferences using extensive data and microtargeting; Internet trolling (Tenove, Buffie, & Moscrop, 2018).

So, as in a broadcasting period of media history, as in its new age, at the first stage, optimism prevailed in the assessment of the new achievement of information and communication technologies as platforms for new opportunities to realize citizens' rights and freedoms, but at the second stage, concerns about the threats to democracy from authoritarian state power or powerful global Internet corporations such as Google and Facebook come to the fore with this innovation. As Andrea Kendall-Taylor, Erica Frantz, and Joseph Wright state sadly:

> At the turn of the millennium, new technologies, including the Internet and the cell phone, promised to empower citizens, allowing individuals greater access to information and the possibility to make new connections and build new communities. But this wishful vision of a more democratic future proved naive. Instead, new technologies now afford rulers fresh methods for preserving power... (Kendall-Taylor, Frantz, and Wright, 2020).

Artificial Intelligence: The Medium became the Actor

Understanding the nature of these contradictions is also necessary for assessing the prospects of political communication. They are viewed everywhere through the prism of new alternatives, which are open by the attraction of the artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities to democratic processes, in particular, to the processes of collecting big data of political information and making political decisions. At the same time, we should keep in mind that humankind deals with another media reality. Ian Bremmer, founder of Eurasia Group and GZERO Media, and Mustafa Suleyman, CEO of Inflection AI, note:

> It's 2035, and artificial intelligence is everywhere… AI moves far too quickly for policymakers to respond at their usual pace. Moreover, social media and other older digital technologies do not help create themselves, and the commercial and strategic interests driving them never dovetailed in quite the same way: Twitter and TikTok are powerful, but few think they could transform the global economy (and policy)… AI is different – different from other technologies and different in its effect on power. It does not just pose policy challenges; its hyper-evolutionary nature also makes solving those challenges progressively harder. That is the AI power paradox" (Bremmer, & Suleyman, 2023).

Therefore, it already makes sense to talk about the prospects of the newest and unknown variety of political communication – algocracy.

Supporters of this innovation have named it AI-democracy and point to the advantages of using artificial intelligence in the process of developing and making political decisions that remove the problem of rational choice. Their argumentation, which is supported by the results of empirical studies, is based on the fact that AI technologies allow officials and local officials to receive and process huge arrays of requests and other data coming from citizens using digital algorithms. The concept of algocracy assumes that as a result of transparent algorithmization, sensitive to such democratic values as the protection of personal rights and equal treatment, state institutions and political organizations will return the trust of citizens, which was lost at the post-democratic stage (Meijer, 2020).

However, the authors, who look at artificial intelligence through the prism of social constructivism, express serious concern about AI's impact on democratic processes. Bulbul Gupta, founding advisor of Socos Labs – an analytical center developing artificial intelligence to maximize human potential, comes to conclusions indicating the emergence of a new social hierarchy:

> Given the current state of tech and artificial intelligence ownership, I expect democracy to be even more unequal between the haves and have-nots by 2030, and a major uprising happening from the masses who are being quickly left behind. Tech and AI are owned by their creators, the top 1%, with decisions made about the 100% in every sector of society that have little to no transparency, human judgment or much recourse, and that may not get made the same if they were being forced to happen face to face. People will need their own personal AIs in their corner to protect their basic civil and human rights." (Anderson, & Rainie, 2020).

It is obvious that in these forecasts, even in terms of vocabulary, there is a tendency to return to the principles of Platonic and Aristotelian aristocracy or the later elitist model.

Behavioral research expert Robert Epstein, a senior psychologist at the American Institute for Behavioral Research and Technology, lights another dark side of AI. He states:

> As of 2015, the outcomes of upward of 25 of the national elections in the world were being determined by Google's search engine. My research – dozens of randomized, controlled experiments involving tens of thousands of participants and five national elections – shows that Google search results alone can easily shift more than 20% of undecided voters – up to 80% in some demographic groups – without people knowing and without leaving a paper trail. The content of answer boxes can increase the impact of the search engine manipulation effect by an additional 10% to 30%. I've identified about a dozen largely subliminal effects like these and am currently studying and quantifying seven of them. I've also shown that the 'Go Vote' prompt that Google posted on its home page on Election Day in 2018 gave one political party at least 800,000 more votes than went to the opposing party – possibly far more if the prompt had been targeted to the favored party. So, democracy, as originally conceived cannot survive Big Tech as currently empowered (ibid).

These concerns are echoed in Yuval Noah Harari's '*Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow'*. He describes an imaginary situation when a person would agree to be voted for by Google, which knows everything not only about the object of the vote, but also about the subject's preferences and his physiological state. Google's decisions, which are not subject to instant outbursts of emotions, will be more reliable, so people will be more willing to transfer their rights to it. The further, the wider the databases will become, the more accurate the statistics, the more advanced algorithms – and the more accurate the solutions. Harari also refers to a study commissioned by Facebook, which showed that the Facebook algorithm understands people's characters and moods better than their friends, relatives and spouses. The author is concerned that from the results of this same study it becomes clear that before the next presidential election in the USA, Facebook will be informed not only about the political preferences of millions of Americans, but also about who among them belongs to the critical group of vacillating voters and how to squeeze them into one side or another (Harari, 2017: 346–348). We will add that the book was first published in 2015. And already in 2016, the company Cambridge Analytica was involved in the election campaign of the President of the USA by the team of Donald Trump, which used the database of voters to implement microtargeting and became a symbol of the dark side of social networks.

In light of the above facts, we should pay attention to Harari's predictions that artificial intellect and biotechnology can very quickly rebuild our society. In the coming decades, according to this futurologist, technology will prevail over politics, while traditional democratic politics loses control

over what is happening and is powerless to provide us with a meaningful vision of the future. One of the consequences of this restructuring will be the departure of liberal customs such as democratic elections into the past, because they have become oracles that know everything, the algorithms of Google, Facebook and others can turn into mediators, and then rulers. Thus, the technologies of the 21st century can undermine the humanistic revolution, leaving the power of people and giving it to algorithms (ibid: 389, 353).

Jean Baudrillard notes critically: "The success of the artificial intellect is due to the fact that this intellect frees us from the natural intellect. The telematic person is intended for the device, as the device is for him, as a result of their entanglement with each other, the refraction of one into the other, the machine does only what the person requires of it, but the person performs what the machine is programmed for" (Baudrillard, 2016: 134). This reveals that **the new age medium became not only the massage but the actor.**

Therefore, this coming period will no longer be a continuation of purely media evolution. Bremmer and Suleyman emphasize that its arrival marks a Big Bang moment, the beginning of a world-changing technological revolution that will remake politics, economies, and societies. These advanced AI observes focus on **five life-changing challenges posed by artificial intelligence in politics**. They are so important that we must consider them in detail.

> (1) AI is not just software development as usual; it is an entirely new means of projecting power. In some cases, it will upend existing authorities; in others, it will entrench them. Within countries, AI will empower those who wield it to surveil, deceive, and even control populations—supercharging the collection and commercial use of personal data in democracies and sharpening the tools of repression authoritarian governments use to subdue their societies. As if that were not enough, by shifting the structure and balance of global power, AI complicates the very political context in which it is governed.
>
> (2) AI's creators are themselves geopolitical actors, and their sovereignty over AI further entrenches the emerging 'technopolar' order – one in which technology companies wield the kind of power in their domains once reserved for nation-states. For the past decade, big technology firms have effectively become independent, sovereign actors in the digital realms they have created. AI accelerates this trend and extends it far beyond the digital world. The technology's complexity and the speed of its advancement will make it almost impossible for governments to make relevant rules at a reasonable pace. If governments do not catch up soon, it is possible they never will.
>
> (3) AI is not just another tool or weapon that can bring prestige, power, or wealth. It has the potential to enable a significant military and economic advantage over adversaries. Within countries, AI will empower those who wield it to surveil, deceive, and even control populations – supercharging the collection and commercial use of personal data in democracies and sharpening the tools of repression authoritarian governments use to subdue their societies. Across countries, AI will be the focus of intense geopolitical competition. Whether for its repressive capabilities, economic potential, or military advantage, AI supremacy will be a strategic objective of every government with the resources to compete.
>
> (4) AI could be used to generate and spread toxic misinformation, eroding social trust and democracy; to surveil, manipulate, and subdue citizens, undermining individual and collective freedom; or to create powerful digital or physical weapons that threaten human lives. AI could also destroy millions of jobs, worsening existing inequalities and creating new ones; entrench discriminatory patterns and distort decision-making by amplifying bad information feedback loops; or spark unintended and uncontrollable military escalations that lead to war.

(5) Online misinformation is an obvious short-term threat, just as autonomous warfare seems plausible in the medium term. Farther out on the horizon lurks the promise of artificial general intelligence, the still uncertain point where AI exceeds human performance at any given task, and the (admittedly speculative) peril that AGI could become self-directed, self-replicating, and self-improving beyond human control (Bremmer and Suleyman (2023).

New challenges bring new actors to the arena of political communication. If global governance of AI is to become possible, the international system must move past traditional conceptions of sovereignty and welcome technology companies to the table. These actors may not derive legitimacy from a social contract, democracy, or the provision of public goods, but without them, effective AI governance will not stand a chance (ibid). In this way, the rules of the political game will change in general. In the last century, policymakers began to build a global governance architecture that, they hoped, would be equal to the tasks of the age. Now, they must build a new governance architecture to contain and harness the most formidable, and potentially defining, force of this era (ibid). **Thus, the magical renewing of the media system once again led to the need to rebuild the entire political system.**

Conclusions

Media is a product of society. But the media construct society too. So, we can conclude that the media history is not a history of channels but a history of humankind. There are four main approaches to interpreting media history: linear instrumentalist approach, social network constructivism, structural functionalism, and normative value approach. The linear instrumental approach concentrates on the progress of communication channels. Its apologists describe four periods of the history of media: the pre-industrial age (from the Ancient to 15th century), the industrial age (from the 1700s to 1930s), the electronic age (1930s to 1980s), and the evolution of new media (21st Century). In accordance with social network constructivist approach, the media construct relationships in social networks. New forms of media affect changes in the communication field. And communication field periodically pulsates from the mode of integration (LS-mode), which is caused by collectivism, to the mode of decentralization (HS-mode), which is caused by individualism. These pulsations cyclically manifest themselves at all stages of media history: oral, written, printed, radio, television and Internet. They reflect on which of the participants in the process of political communication – the authorities, owners or the public – the media serve and what social structure they support and maintain open or closed, centralized or decentralized. The conducted analysis of media history proves that the dialectic of unity and the struggle of these contradictions is a regularity of mass media influence on political processes. The structural functionalism in media history focuses on a development of media channels' function in interrelation with other social structures, especially with political. And it considers a history of media as a system. This approach distinguishes four ages of political communication: (1) when the media (press) were about politics, (2) when the media (radio and limited TV) were used by politicians, (3) when the media (advanced cable and satellite TV) became politic-maker, and (4) when politics become media (Internet). The normative value approach evaluates the media history from the position of democratic values – freedom, public good, and justice. And there is some a pattern that manifests itself in an indispensable consistent transition from admiration for the democratizing possibilities of the next new channel of communication to anxiety about its threats to democracy. It was right about press, radio, TV and Internet. Related to the Internet the optimistic stage continued from the end of the 1990s to 2016, and the second pessimistic stage goes now. Particular anxiety is caused by the uncontrolled development of artificial intelligence. These technologies began to be used on the basis of the Google and Facebook platforms, but quickly spread beyond their borders. The danger is that, firstly, AI gives unprecedented power to a narrow circle of its developers, and secondly, that it threatens to get out of human control. At this stage, the medium becomes not just a message, as McLuhan noted, but a self-sufficient political actor.

Questions for Self-Assessment:

1. What is the linear instrumentalist approach's theoretical starting point to understand the history of media? What is its periodization?
2. What are the driving forces of media history according to the social network constructivism?
3. How do the pulsations of the communication field influence the political processes of centralization and decentralization in social networks?
4. What are negative trends of mass media development, defined by Herbert Schiller?
5. What is the *Owrellism*?
6. What is the theoretical background of structural functional approach to media history?
7. What are the four ages of political communication?
8. What are the characteristic of the fourth age of political communication?
9. What are the principles of normative value approach to media history?
10. How does normative value approach evaluate the Internet's influence on democracy processes?
11. How does normative value approach evaluate the social media's influence on democracy now?
12. What are the prospects and the threats of artificial intelligence?

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MEDIA SYSTEM

The mediatization of politics refers to the interaction between political and media systems. Some researchers even argue that the media has become an integral part of modern politics (Graber, 2010: 34), asserting that the symbiosis between the political and media systems is essential for both. However, the majority of scholars still view the political and media systems as distinct subsystems within a larger social system. Moreover, Jesper Strömbäck and Frank Esser identify the autonomy of media institutions from other social and political institutions as one of the four key dimensions of the mediatization of politics. In this system, actors are guided by 'media logic', which is shaped by professionalism, commercialism, and media technology (Strömbäck & Esser, 2014: 375). Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini point to media-centricity as a defining trend in current political communication, which follows the logic not of the traditional political system, but of the media system itself:

> Patterns of political communication have also been transformed, away from party-centered patterns rooted in the same organized social groups, toward media-centered patterns. Politics, finally, is more media centered, as the mass media become more independent as agenda setters, and as the 'retail' politics of rallies, activist campaigning, and, in some countries, patronage give way, above all, to television-centered campaigning directed at a mass audience. 'Differentiation' of the media from the political system does not mean that media lose all relationship with the political world. Indeed, it is commonly argued that media have come to play an increasingly central role in the political process, as they have become more independent of parties and other political actors, and as the latter have lost much of their ability to shape the formation of culture and opinion. Differentiation means, instead, that the media system increasingly operates according to a distinctive logic of its own, displacing to a significant extent the logic of party politics and bargaining among organized social interests, to which it was once connected (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 252-253).

Therefore, **studying the mediatization of politics requires understanding the media as a system in its own right and logic of development.**

Media history, which was discussed in the previous Chapter, shows that over the centuries, the development of communication channels has resulted in the formation of a complex media system. The main object of media system is to maintain mass communication. Its components were formed throughout human history in accordance with the needs of the social community from newspapers to multi-media online platforms, which became the part of artificial intelligence. The German scientist Hans Kleinsteuber understands the definition of a media system as a set of public and relevant media (Kleinsteuber, 1994: 545). According to Denis McQuail, a leading British mass communication theorist, a media system is an actual set of mass media (McQuail, 2010: 6). So, we include to media system only the components, which are related to the mass media, i.e. those means that provide public communication.

1. Media System's Structure

In general, mass media are special social institutions that are engaged in collecting, processing and disseminating information. Mass media includes the diverse arrays of media that reach a large audience via mass communication. Five characteristics of mass media have been identified by sociologist John Thompson of Cambridge University:

(1) Comprises both technical and institutional methods of production and distribution – This is evident throughout the history of mass media, from print to the Internet, each suitable for commercial utility.

(2) Involves the commodification of symbolic forms – as the production of materials relies on its ability to manufacture and sell large quantities of the work; as radio stations rely on their time sold to advertisements, so too newspapers rely on their space for the same reasons.

(3) Separate contexts between the production and reception of information.

(4) Its reach to those 'far removed' in time and space, in comparison to the producers/

(5) Information distribution – a one to many form of communication, whereby products are mass-produced and disseminated to a great quantity of audiences (Thompson, 1995: 26-28, 74).

This instrumentalist approach lies in the basis of mass-media classification. In the late 20th century, mass media could be classified into eight mass media industries: books, magazines, newspapers, radio, movies, recordings, television and the Internet. The explosion of digital communication technology in the late 20th and early 21st centuries made prominent the question: what forms of media should be classified as 'mass media'? For example, it is controversial whether to include mobile phones and video games. In the definition. In the early 2000s, a classification called the 'seven mass media' came into use. In order of introduction, they are:

1. Print (books, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, posters, etc.) from the late 15th century.
2. Recordings (gramophone records, magnetic tapes, cassettes, cartridges, CDs and DVDs) from the late 19th century.
3. Cinema from about 1900.
4. Radio from about 1910.
5. Television from about 1950.
6. The Internet from about 1990.
7. Mobile phones from about 2000 (Sashwat, 2013: 71-73).

The organisations that control these technologies, such as movie studios, publishing companies, and radio and television stations, are also known as the mass media.

Each mass medium has its own content types, creative artists, technicians and business models. But all of them may be joined into two main groups according to technological base of communication channel: (1) print mass media, and (2) electronic media.

Print media transmit information via paper medium, such as newspapers, magazines, books, brochures, newsletters, and even leaflets and pamphlets. Visual media like photography can also be mentioned under this sub-head, since photography is an important mass media, which communicates via visual representations. Outdoor print media transmit information via such means as AR advertising; billboards; blimps; flying billboards (signs in tow of airplanes); placards or kiosks placed inside and outside buses, commercial buildings, shops, sports stadiums, subway cars, or trains; signs; or skywriting.

Electronic media transmitted verbal and visual information using electromagnetic waves. It includes broadcast mass media and digital (Internet) media. Broadcast media transmit information electronically via means such as radio, television, films, or recorded music. Digital media is based on Web 2.0 technologies. Internet media comprise such services as email, blogs, podcasts, web sites, social media, online messengers, as well as Internet-based newspapers and magazines, radio and television and various other technologies built atop the general distribution network. Whilst other forms of mass media

are restricted in the type of information they can offer, the internet comprises a large percentage of the sum of human knowledge through such things as Google and such AI tools as neural network GPT.

Communication on the World Wide Web has become so different from communication through the press, radio and television that it has prompted analysts to change the given classification and combine print media and broadcasting into the group of 'traditional media', and the set of Internet multi-network means – into the group of 'new age media'.

Despite the diversity in terms of typological characteristics, with the help of which each publication or program is defined, mass media collectively establish a complete media system. **The modern media system includes such functional levels: (1) traditional mass media (press, radio, film, television), which make up its core, as well as home audiovisual systems; (2) multi-network of Internet media (web sites, social media, online messengers, blogs, podcasts, etc.); (3) organizational media structures (news agencies, publishing houses, studios, management bodies and public organizations of journalists, press services and advertising agencies).**

Media system's components and levels interact with each other, coordinate efforts, compete, exchange achievements and experience. And it is the internal interrelations. At the same time, media system is a subsystem of whole social system and it is influenced by other subsystems, primarily political and economic. And it is the external interrelations.

James Harless proposed detailed model of mass-media system (Harless, 1985: 30-31).

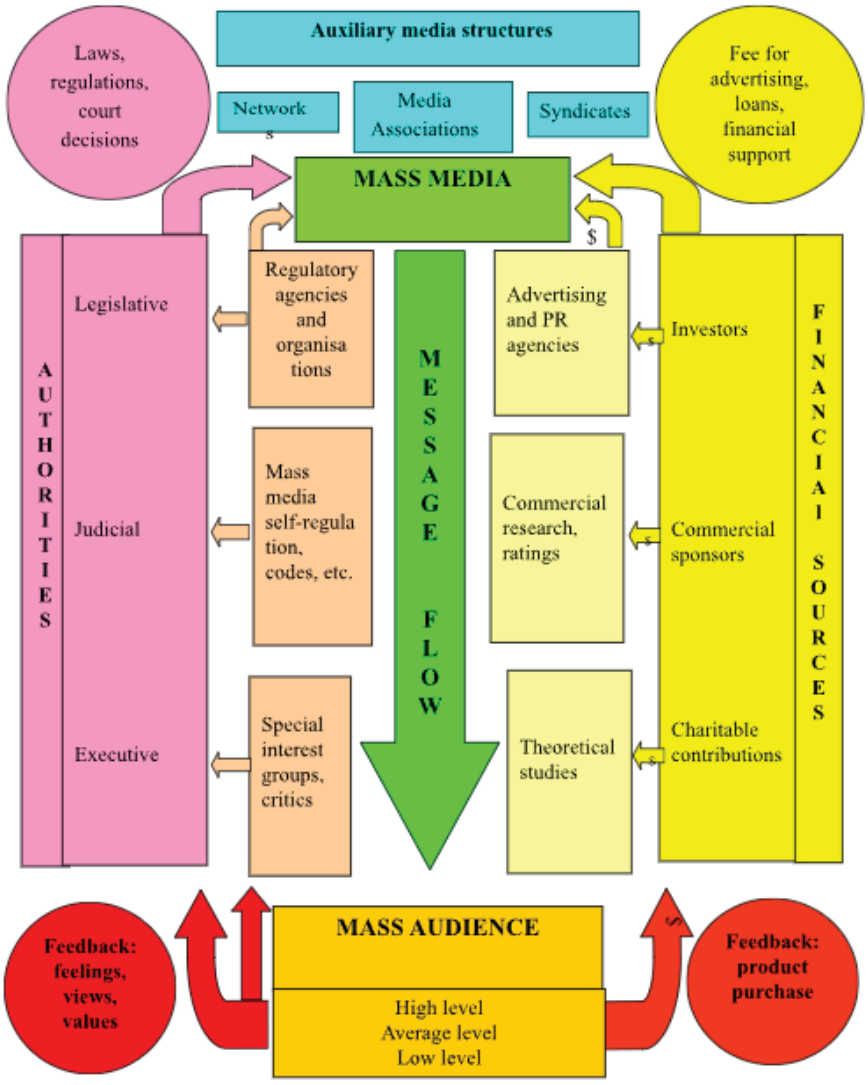

Figure 2.1. Harless's Model of Mass-Media System

Harless draws attention to the fact that, unlike direct personal or public communication, mass media messages are made by a complex of organizations that require significant costs. Their information is disseminated publicly and quickly, but its recipients are dispersed among large, heterogeneous audiences and are anonymous both to media organizations and to each other. It can be seen from the given scheme that media organizations are directly or indirectly regulated by authorities, the public and professional media groups (associations, unions, etc.). The main financial support comes to the media from businesses that use them to advertise their products. Advertising and PR agencies prepare advertising and image materials for business clients. Non-advertising media receive support through the sale of their own media products or seek philanthropic assistance to support their efforts. The system also includes two types of research: academic and commercial. Academic research tries to understand the mass media from a scientific point of view, while commercial research studies specific problems for mass media, media associations and other organizations. It should be noted that, despite its completeness, this Figure does not reflect all the complex relationships that arise between various social and political institutions, groups and individuals in the process of that open public discourse, the tool of which is the means of mass communication in a democratic society.

2. Media System's Main Components

There are four main components of media system, which play the main role in political communication: press (newspapers), radio, TV, and Internet platforms. To analyse these components of a media we use McQuail's position:

> There are essentially three main alternative approaches: the structural, the behavioural and the cultural. The structural approach derives mainly from sociology but includes perspectives from history, politics, law and economics. Its starting point is 'socio-centric' rather than 'media-centric' (McQuail, 2010: 16).

These complex analyses have to show common general trends and certain important aspects of media system's development and functioning.

Newspapers

Newspapers, which became the first mass media, trace their lineage to news reports about events that happened in the city that were distributed in ancient Rome. These reports were handwritten under the title *'Acta diurna populi romani' ('Daily Affairs of the Roman People'*) and were posted in the squares and delivered to politicians and noble citizens. Roman newspapers were wooden boards on which chronicles of events were recorded. News summaries, as a rule, had an unofficial character, until Julius Caesar ordered the mandatory distribution of notices about senate meetings, reports of military commanders, and addresses of foreign rulers. Since then, the process of making newspapers has hardly changed over the following centuries. In Europe, they were still the same handwritten scrolls with the main news and remained a rather expensive attribute of the life of high-ranking officials or wealthy merchants. Though the world's first printed newspaper began to be published in China in the 8th century under the name '*Capital Herald'*. It contained the decrees of the emperor and messages about the most important events. Newspapers were printed from boards on which hieroglyphs were cut, covered with ink, and impressions were made. But this technology was extremely inconvenient, as the board quickly became unusable due to frequent coating with paint.

The real breakthrough began after Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press in Germany in the 1450s. This technology made it possible to reproduce text and images without resorting to the

services of scribes. Gutenberg's invention led to an information revolution and the unprecedented mass spread of literature throughout Europe. It also had a direct impact on the development of the Renaissance, Reformation and humanist movements, as all of them have been described as 'unthinkable' without a printing press. Thus the 'Gutenberg era' unfolded. And it turned newsletters into the press as a means of mass communication.

Newspapers began to acquire their modern appearance in the 16th century Since then, the continental European name '*Gazetta*' appears from the name of the small Italian coin Gazetta, which was paid for the news sheet '*La Gazeta dele novità*' ('*News on the Gazette'*) in Venice. The first bureaus for collecting information - prototypes of news agencies – were formed in this city and the profession of 'news writers' arose here as well. 1605 became the year of birth of the European newspaper periodical. The first edition appeared in Strasbourg. It began with the words "Relation: Aller Fürnemmen". In January 1609, the first surviving newspaper was published in Wolfenbüttel. It was called '*Aviso*' and contained news from Cologne, Antwerp, Rome, Venice, Vienna and Prague. In 1615, the bookseller Egenolf Emmel founded the weekly newspaper '*Frankfurter Journal*' in Frankfurt am Main. In 1622, there were already three newspapers in Vienna. The French newspaper '*La Gazette*', which began to be published on May 30, 1631, is among the first periodicals that strongly resemble modern newspapers. The noble Theophrastus Renaud was its first publisher, in 1630 he received a patent for the distribution of news on the territory of France. The circulation of the newspaper was about 1,200 copies. The role of '*La Gazette*' in the development of this type of mass media became especially significant also because paid advertising began to be placed in '*La Gazette'*. And the political importance of '*La Gazette*' was so great that the King of France, Louis XIII, as well as Cardinal Richelieu personally wrote some information in it. In 1657, one of the English newspapers published the first advertising offer, and soon King Charles II placed a private announcement about the disappearance of his beloved dog. Half a century later, Daniel Defoe started political journalism by founding the weekly '*State Affairs Review*'. **Since the end of 17th century, newspapers began to play an influential role in politics. Their power was reflected in Napoleon Bonaparte's catchphrase: "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets"**.

Since its inception, newspapers have not lost their relevance. World Association of News Publishers' Report: World Press Trends Outlook 2022-2023 shows that print news paper's circulation (audience) is 525.3 million. Although, for the 2021-2022 year, it decreased by 1.3%. Really, after the transition of the press to the online, there is a decrease in the circulation of print media in almost all countries, at the same time, there is a stable dynamic of a significant increase in the audience of online versions of newspapers and magazines. At the beginning of 2023, digital circulation (paid audience) is 57.6 million and has increased by 9.7% per year (World Association of News Publishers, 2023). Newspaper circulation numbers can vary over time and now the most popular print publishing are situated in Asia. Here are the approximate circulation numbers for the top newspapers on the list as of my last knowledge update in September 2021: *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Japan) – Approximately 8-10 million daily circulation; *Asahi Shimbun* (Japan) – Approximately 5-6 million daily circulation; *Dainik Bhaskar* (India) – Approximately 4-4.5 million daily circulation; *The Times of India* – Approximately 2.5-3 million daily circulation; *The Wall Street Journal* (United States) – Approximately 2-2.5 million daily circulation (print and digital); *USA Today* (United States) – Approximately 1.6 million daily circulation.

Theoretical considerations regarding the influence of the media on political processes, in particular on the development of democracy, began with the analysis of the relationship between the government and the press and the defense of the principle of freedom of the press. Since then, the key characteristic of the press as a 'watchdog of democracy' have originated. It was shown in the previous chapter. The peculiarities of the functioning of newspapers in different political systems are analyzed in detail in the fundamental work of Fred S. Siebert, Theodor Peterson, and Wilbur Shramm

'Four Theories of the Press' and subsequent scientific investigations, which we will review in the next chapter. In the Introduction they have wrote: "By *press*, in this book, we mean all the media of mass communication, although we shall talk about the printed media oftener than about broadcast or film because the printed media are older and have gathered about them more of the theory and philosophy of mass communication" (Siebert, Peterson, and Shramm, 1984: 1). So, the press, and newspapers exactly, have established the first floor of the mass media building. Subsequent floors of electronic media are roused above it, but without the press, their construction would have been impossible.

Radio

The age of electronic media began at the end of the 19th century with the invention of the radio as a means of long-distance transmission of signals using electromagnetic waves. The theoretical basis of radio was laid by the English scientist Michael Faraday, who actually proved the existence of electromagnetic waves in the 1830s. Another 30 years later, James Maxwell finished building the theory of the electromagnetic field. In the 1880s and 1890s, almost simultaneously, a number of scientists conducted successful experiments on the use of electromagnetic waves, using improved elements. That is why today several representatives of different countries claim the title of radio inventor. In Germany, Heinrich Hertz is considered the pioneer of methods of transmission and reception of electromagnetic waves. He did it in 1888. By the way, these waves were called 'Hertzian waves' for a long time. Most countries consider the Italian engineer Guglielmo Marconi to be the creator of the first successful information exchange system using Hertzian radio waves. He achieved this in 1895. Russian physicist Oleksandr Popov was only one month behind him. But in the USA, they are sure that the credit for the invention of the radio belongs to Nikola Tesla, who patented the transmitter in 1893, and the receiver in 1895. Tesla's device could convert a radio signal into acoustic sound. All modern radio devices, which are based on an oscillating circuit, have this design.

In fact, the powerful march of radio began in April 1909, when the American inventor Charles Herrold built the first radio station 'San Jose Calling', which began broadcasting to a wide audience (Tapan, 2006: 330-335). The 1930s and 1950s became the 'golden age' of radio in the United States, in Europe it continued until the early 1960s, and in the USSR until the early 1970s. Since the mid-1930s, radio has become the 'central medium' of information in the United States. Two out of three homes had radios, and 4 national and 20 regional networks provided programming across America 24 hours a day. In 1941, 13 million radio receivers were sold in the USA (Bannerman, 1986: 124). **At the stage of radio development we observe the sprouts of seven trends, which in the future will affect the formation of political communication's character in the system of electronic mass media.**

1. Radio began to be actively used by state leaders as a means of political information and, at the same time, political manipulation. In 1934, King George V first announced his Christmas message on the radio. It was then that the British first heard the voice of their ruler, who on an emotional level sought to create a sense of unity among the subjects of the 'empire on which the sun never sets'. An example of political propaganda was Joseph Stalin's dramatic radio address to the Soviet people on July 3, 1941, in which he called on people to selflessly fight fascism to win the Great Patriotic War. As Olena Chyzhevska points out, an appeal to such feelings as patriotism, the creation of an attractive role for the audience, intimization are the main models of strategies of how Stalin rhetorically sought to achieve the support of the people (Chizhevskaya, 2008: 180). Emperor Hirohito's radio address to the subjects of the Japanese Empire on August 15, 1945, in which he announced Japan's surrender in World War II, had a completely different character. It was also the first time that the emperor of Japan addressed the people directly, and his subjects heard his voice for the first time. But even in this tragic speech there was a play on people's deep feelings, appeals to Kokutai national traditions and the feeling of a single family (Fisher, 2012)

were heard. These techniques of 'playing on deep emotions' will be widely used by political leaders on TV and in the Internet age especially. And they will be the key feature of 'post-truth' as an information modality, which will lead to the formation of a new political reality in the network society, which Colin Crouch called 'post-democracy' (Crouch, 2004).

2. Radio appeared as a powerful tool in the election campaign. In the 1936 presidential election, Franklin Roosevelt used radio more effectively than Alf Landon, with both parties spending a record $2 million on radio. That same year, Charles Coughlin formed the Union Party and used radio to attack Roosevelt. But in the 1940 election, it was Roosevelt's radio skills that helped him defeat Wendell Willkie and win an unprecedented third presidential term (Bannerman, 1986: 125).

3. The development of radio exposed the dilemma that, according to James D. Harless, always faces the mass media and is connected with the fact that the mass media combines the functions of an enterprise that makes money and an institution that must satisfy the needs of society in communication (Harless, 1985: 30-31). As early as the 1930s, advertising agencies began to transfer money from newspapers to radio, as the public's trust in print media was declining, but it was increasing in radio. The marked contradiction between commercial interests and the socially responsible purpose of mass media, which is insisted on by supporters of the normative-value approach, will manifest itself more and more strongly at each stage of the development of electronic means of communication.

4. Another key problem of political communication manifested itself during this period – the contradiction between free opinion, which thanks to the possibilities of electronic media receives wide public support, and national security interests, which are defended by the government and which eventually lead to self-censorship. It was evidenced by the work of the American radio station CBS (by the way, a descendant of the first radio station 'San Jose Calling'). After the bombing of Guernica, journalist Norman Corwin expressed his hatred of fascism in a vivid poetic form in his author's radio series, which premiered on February 19, 1939. This broadcast prompted a thousand letters of approval sent to CBS. Leroy Bannerman notes:

> It was actually brave radio at a time when growing isolationism was making even war controversial. In particular, the government tried to maintain a balance between two factions of public sentiment, The fact that CBS management did not try to censor the broadcast is again evidence of the liberal leanings of the radio network. And yet, after seven months, the editors decided that it would be better to cancel the repeat of the program after the news that England and France had declared war on Germany (Bannerman, 1986: 43).

In 1942, the US government created 'Voice of America' to broadcast propaganda abroad. 'Radio of the Armed Forces' created a worldwide network of radio stations for service personnel and became 'Radio Network of the Armed Forces (ARS)' with 306 stations.

5. The dominance of entertainment content, which in the online age will lead to the emergence of the so-called 'play democracy'. Although electronic media emerged as the main provider of political news from the golden age of radio (in the 1940s radio news in the US reached maturity with regular coverage of the bombing of London by Edward R. Marrow in his London After Dark series, which was broadcast on shortwave, and it was on the radio that William L. Shearer reported the fall of France and the dramatic surrender of the Company), music remained the dominant content of radio in those days, occupying 50% of all programs (Bannerman, 1986: 43).

6. Democratic public owes the 'golden age' of radio to the normative consolidation of such a key marker of democracy as pluralism, which was described by Plato long ago. In 1941, the federal 'Mayflower Rule' was passed in the United States, which prohibited radio stations from broadcasting only one point of view. This rule later became known as the doctrine of fairness.

7. **Radio, thanks to the possibility of emotional presentation of information, which distinguishes it from the press, have demonstrated its enormous influence not only on the thoughts, but also on the spontaneous behavior of people.** On October 30, 1938, the radio play 'War of the Worlds' based on the work of writer Herbert Wells was broadcast live on CBS. The director of the production came up with the idea of including 'live news broadcasts' in the radio production. From this reception, the performance began to resemble a report from the scene of events, which caused panic among the listeners, who believed in the reality of the Martian invasion. The program was broadcast from 8 to 9 p.m. And this hour on the air forever changed the idea of radio in the minds of millions of listeners. The legend of the radio play 'War of the Worlds' has grown over the years, and the furore it caused is still debated, because what happened caused endless concern about the influence of electronic media on public life (Vivatenko, 2020: 118-120). This phenomenon caused a surge of interest in behavioral studies of the impact of radio on the behavior of the audience, primarily the electoral one.

Television

Television has its distant prototype in the device, the project of which was developed back in 1726 in Holland. But the first patent for the technology of electronic image transmission, which is still used today, was obtained on July 25, 1907 by Boris Rosing, professor of the St. Petersburg Institute of Technology. And the world's first transmission of a moving image was carried out in 1923 by the American Charles Jenkins, using mechanical scanning. WCFL, the first mechanical sweep television station, went on the air in Chicago on June 12, 1928. Ulysses Sanabria was its creator. On May 19, 1929, he first used one range of radio waves to transmit images and sound. This event can be considered the beginning of modern television.

However, the predicate 'electronic' originates from another event. The first in history transmission of a moving image using an electron beam tube is considered to be the transmission carried out by a device called "radio telephoto" on July 26, 1928 in Tashkent by the inventors B. P. Grabovsky and I. F. Belyansky. However, the 'iconoscope', invented in 1931 by the Russian emigrant Volodymyr Zworykin, a student of Boris Rosing, was a real breakthrough in the clarity of the image of electronic television, which ultimately decided in its favor the competition with mechanical television. At that time, he worked for the Radio Corporation of America, whose president was David Sarnov, who provided an unprecedented amount of financing for Zvorykin's developments and the creation of a new communications system in the United States. However, the German DFR (Deutscher Fernseh-Rundfunk – German television and radio broadcasting), launched in 1934 by the German television and radio company RRG, was the first television channel in the world to regularly broadcast using electronic technology. And the 1936 Berlin Olympics was the first event to be broadcast live (Vinogradova, 2020).

Since the second half of the 20th century, television has become the most influential means of mass communication. At the mid-1980s in the United States, TV was the main source of news for 62% of Americans, newspapers – for 56%, radio – for 13%, magazines – for 9%, and direct interpersonal communication – for only 1% (the sum is more than 100%, so which could be called more than one source) (Kara-Murza, 2015: 234). At the beginning of the 90s of the 20th century. the average family of three or more spent 60 hours a week watching programs. In developed countries, television has entered almost every home. By 2013, 79% of households worldwide had at least one television receiver (Butts, 2013).

The television's capabilities have created the conditions for essential transformations in the democratic system of power sharing. TV plays a key role in agenda setting and shaping public opinion. So, television have made mass media a 'Fourth Estate'.

Since the 70s of the 20th century, no political organization and no political figure could be successful in public politics without access to the television airwaves, so the lion's share of pre-election budgets was already spent on the use of television. Due to the special properties of television, the personification of politics took place. **The technological possibilities of television have changed the methods of political communication**. **Political leaders began to look for new ways of communication with television, sought to master the secrets and laws of television journalism. A new field of activity for politicians has emerged: work with mass media, and, first of all, with the most modern and effective means – television**. They began to hold live press conferences, teleconferences, interviews, and conversations in the studio. At this stage, a new form of competitive pre-election struggle – televised debates – appeared in democratic countries. In order to become a leader, a politician no longer needed to get a crowd in squares, the ability to behave successfully in front of a television camera came to the fore. In some cases, TV channels that had different ideological and political orientations actually began to perform the functions of political parties during the elections. Mass political parties have lost popularity to televised parties. In addition, with the emergence of the effect of interactivity, which provides a 'feedback loop' between public opinion and political actors, certain opportunities appeared for television, which allowed to influence the political process at all its stages, from the stage of development and decision-making to control over its implementation (Nazarbetova, 2014: 74). The set of these phenomena as a whole was even called 'tele-democracy'. The prospects of 'tele-democracy' in the 1980s were assessed very positively (Becker, 1981). So, for example, Ben Barber expected an increase in equality in access to information, more active public participation in debates, as well as stimulation of electronic polls and voting (Barber, 1984: 26). And Richard Hollander stated that the TV technology makes the possibility of direct democracy really likely (Hollander, 1985). At the same time, it should be noted that the behavioral approach highlighted other aspects of the peculiarities of 'tele-democracy'. McLuhan in the book 'Understanding Media' called television and radio 'cool channels', in contrast to newspapers – 'hot channels'. The main difference between them, in his opinion, is that 'hot channels' contain a significant amount of information, which leaves the recipient little opportunity for complicity, guesswork. 'Cool channel' due to its informality implies a significant degree of audience participation in the process of perceiving messages (McLuhan, 2015: 123-126).

The researches of TV have demonstrated some important behavioral features of media influence. Empirical studies have shown that the television audience is largely differentiated by its ability to adequately perceive messages. Five socio-mental groups of TV viewers were identified. The first group is viewers who have the skills to adequately perceive messages of social and political content (12-14%). The second group is people who partially adequately perceive the message (25-30%). They do not clearly identify the goals and motives of propaganda/manipulation and remember secondary information. The third group consists of people who inadequately perceive the materials of TV programs (30-35%). They do not delve into the general meaning of the entire message. Their perception works fragmentarily, and information acquires incredible interpretations. The fourth group includes people who work 'by installation' (18-25%). After watching the TV shows, their interpretations were sometimes completely adequate, sometimes partially adequate, and sometimes inadequate. Often, their reaction to informational influence is highly emotional. A very small group consists of those who wish to engage in communication, especially when dealing with materials of a socio-political nature. Usually, the field for manipulation is represented by group representatives who partially adequately interpret informational messages. It is this group that makes up the most unstable part of the electorate, which votes under the influence of the mood of the moment (*Sociological Studies,* 2000 (8): 74-75). Therefore, tele-democracy was characterized by the instability of electoral preferences and the tendency to be swayed by a large part of the public.

It is important to note that the development of television caused the emergence of such a feature of modern political communication as a globality, which is essential for determining the

nature of modern political communication. Of course, radio stations were also able to cross borders, which was successfully done by 'enemy voices' on the territory of the USSR and Eastern European countries. However, in fact, these were propaganda projects financed by the state. But with the advent and spread of satellite television in the 1980s, the situation changed dramatically. The world has not only turned into a 'global village', according to McLuhan's iconic expression, but **TV information revolution fundamentally transformed the nature and scope of the democratic processes' development.** The 'third wave of democratization' generated by the information revolution also destroyed such a colossus as the Soviet Union (Huntington, 1991). At this stage, mass media and, first of all, television played the role of cement, which held individuals, social groups and national states into a single global liberal-democratic integrity (Kostyrev, 2020: 22). These changes caused not only the birth of optimistic concepts of the global information society among the apologists of information-technological determinism, but also the substantiation of the theory of the 'end of history' by Francis Fukuyama, who predicted the worldwide victory of liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1992).

But at the same time, supporters of the normative and axiological approach drew attention to the constant growth in the television space of the power of such negative factors as, firstly, control by the state bureaucracy and, secondly, the influence of big capital, which pose a threat to the main democratic value - freedom of speech. Commenting on the first factor, John Keane emphasized: "The seeds of despotism there are at the core of all democratic regimes today... The main instruments of limiting freedom, and thus narrowing the information field on the part of the state, are: extraordinary powers, military secrecy, political lies, state advertising, corporatism" (Keane, 1991: 67, 76).

Internet platforms

The development of the Internet in the late 1980s marked the beginning of the media system's new age. **The current Internet period includes: (1) the stage of communication using computer equipment with access to local networks and the Internet; (2) the stage of Web 2.0 networks that connect users of personal computers; (3) the stage of mobile network activity through smartphones and androids. Prospects for the future period are opening due to the use of artificial intelligence in political processes.**

The origins of the computer era date back to the 1950s, they are associated with the development of computers and the emergence of scientific and applied concepts of global computing networks. These start-ups were born almost simultaneously in different countries, primarily in the scientific and military laboratories of the USA, Great Britain and France. On September 2, 1969, a group of scientists led by Leonard Kleinrock managed to establish a data link from one computer to another through a cable (Leiner, Cerf, and Clark, 1997). This moment is considered the beginning of the Internet era. But for more than ten years, the exchange of information between computers remained the prerogative of a narrow circle of specialists, mainly military and scientific and technical personnel. Therefore, it is appropriate to start counting the beginning of the Internet era from the 1980s, when personal computers (PCs) appeared in private use, which created a massive demand for electronic networks (which was preceded by manual transmission of media). E-mail was the first mass networking technology. On its basis, in 1980, the first massive global network for exchanging computer information – Usenet – was created. E-mail is a network based on the use of a single mailbox. Such a network is organized according to the address principle. PC users were able to quickly and cheaply exchange information, including political information, as well as send electronic messages, requests and documents to authorities without leaving their home or office.

Thus, new media was born that continues to expand around the world. According to annual Digital Global Overview Reports, there were 4.66 billion people around the world using the internet in Janu-

ary 2021, Global internet users have climbed to 4.95 billion at the start of 2022, and 5.16 billion internet users were in the world in early 2023. Global internet penetration stood at 59.5 percent of the world's total population at the beginning of 2021, 62.5 percent at the start of 2022, and 64.4 percent in early 2023. Although the pace of growth is gradually slowing down. Data show that the global internet user total increased by 7.3 percent in 2020, by 4.0 percent in 2021, and by 1.9 percent in 2022 (Kemp, 2021, 2022, 2023). This trend reflects the growth patterns of social networks that were described in Chapter 1.

Social changes, which were called the 'information revolution', began even before the appearance of the World Wide Web, but the Internet has significantly accelerated these processes. The Internet has given users the opportunity to address an unlimited number of people directly and directly and, moreover, with an individual approach. At the same time, specific costs were significantly reduced and became available to almost everyone. Studies by Manuel Castells and Barry Wellman have shown that the Internet has caused profound shifts in social structures. Among such shifts stand out, in particular, such as organizational outsourcing, functions of work in fluid teams, general increase in social roles. And if in the mid-1990s the Internet seemed like something special, available only to advanced prodigies, then from the beginning of the 21st century it became part of everyday life. People have integrated the Internet as a way of communication into their routine existence.

The radical changes in the communication field caused by the development of Internet significantly reform the system of distribution of power. **World Wide Web have transformed the politics and transferred it into online network space. PCs connected to the Internet built the material base for the birth of new forms of political communication and participation.** Leading American political scientist Joseph Nye emphasized:

> The current information age, sometimes called the 'Third Industrial Revolution', is based on rapid technological advances in computers, communications, and software, which in turn have led to a dramatic fall in the cost of creating, processing, transmitting, and searching for information of all kinds. And this means that world politics can no longer be the sole province of governments.
>
> As the cost of computing and communication comes down, the barriers to entry decline. Individuals and private organizations, ranging from corporations to NGOs to terrorists, have thus been empowered to play a direct role in world politics.
>
> The spread of information means that power will be more widely distributed, and informal networks will undercut the monopoly of traditional bureaucracy. The speed of Internet time means that all governments will have less control over their agendas. Political leaders will enjoy fewer degrees of freedom before they must respond to events, and then will have to compete with an increasing number and variety of actors in order to be heard (Nye, 2011).

Social media

The second stage of Internet communication is related to the development of social media, that is, online networks that function on the basis of Web 2.0 software. If the postal network (e-mail) is a directed address network, then the social network, organized with the help of software, is usually a non-directed network of users ('friends', followers), which has a scale-free character.

As stated in the annual Digital Global Overview Reports, in January 2021 there were 4.20 billion social media users around the world (more than 53 percent of the world's total population), in January 2022 there were 4.62 billion social media users around the world (58.4 percent of the world's total pop-

ulation), and there were 4.76 billion social media users around the world in early 2023 (60 percent of the total global population). Europe has more than 300 million active users on social media. But social media user growth has slowed over recent years though. This figure has grown by 490 million in 2020, delivering year-on-year growth of more than 13 percent. Global social media users have grown by more than 10 percent, with 424 million new users starting their social media journey during 2021. And with 2022 year's net addition of 137 million new users equating to annual growth of just 3 percent (Kemp, 2021, 2022, 2023). So, like in the case of the Internet as a whole, the rise of social media will be stabilized to the degree of around 2/3 of the world population.

Facebook became the first and most extensive online network of this type in the world. It was founded on February 4, 2004 by Harvard University students Mark Zuckerberg and his roommates – Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskowitz and Chris Hughes (Carlson, 2010). Since then, Facebook still reigns supreme in the social media universe and is without a doubt one of the most powerful social media platforms available. Facebook bought Instagram in 2009 and Whatsapp in 2014. In October 2021, 'Facebook Inc', the parent company of all three platforms, changed its name to 'Meta'. Facebook network has demonstrated unprecedented growth rates. 400 new users join Facebook every minute. Globally, there are 2.96 billion active users (MAUs) on Facebook as of Q3 2022. This is a 5.3% increase from the same time in 2021. There are 1.98 billion Facebook Daily Active Users (DAUs) worldwide as of September 30, 2022. This is an increase of approximately 54 million from September 2021. As of January 2021, the top five countries by Facebook audience are India (349.7 million), the United States (182.3 million), Indonesia (133.8 million), Brazil (114.7 million) and Mexico (92.1 million). (Algren, 2023). The second type of social media – the global Twitter network – actually represents a branched set of microblogs. Created by Jack Dorsey in 2006, Twitter soon gained worldwide popularity. On March 21, 2006, it all started with a single tweet. Twitter is still a strong platform. In 2023, there were 1.3 billion Twitter accounts in total, but only 368.4 million were active users, with the daily active users (mDAU) reaching 238 million. 500 million tweets are posted every day. In January 2023, former US President Barack Obama had the most followers on Twitter (133 million followers), followed by Elon Musk (125 million followers). On October 27, 2022, billionaire Elon Musk bought the platform for a cool $44 billion (Algren, 2023).

Online social media provided users with the opportunity to quickly go beyond the 'communication core' and 'important connections' zones to receive the necessary social support along the lines of 'weak connections' (Dorogovtsev, and Mendes**, 2003:** 398). **The results of several behavioral empirical studies conducted at the end of the first decade of the 21st century by the Pew Internet Research Center showed that the influence of social media on the processes of social communication and participation is due to several factors. First, online communication increases the level of trust between communicators. Secondly, users of online networks have closer relationships with the people around them, including within the framework of traditional identities. Thirdly, they receive more social support. Fourth, they are recognized as more active participants in social construction and social life in general** (Rainie, Purcell, and Smith, 2011).

The development of opportunities for political communication and participation through Twitter and Facebook has led to an increase in the influence of these social media on democratization processes. The surge in political activity of Moldovan citizens in 2009 was called the 'Twitter revolution' not without reason. Social media played a huge role in spreading information during the peak of the so-called 'Arab Spring' in 2011 also. Egyptians used Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as means of communication and organizing demonstrations and rallies. Participants of these events commented on the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak: "We Facebooked him!". Statistics show that during this time, the number of tweets from Egypt increased from 2,300 to 230,000 per day, and the top 23 protest videos had approximately 5.5 million views (Telhami, 2013: 34-36). These facts, as well as examples of the use of social

media for the organization of mass protests in Kyiv in 2013-2014, indicate that at this stage social media gave an impetus to the replacement of outdated structures of the public hierarchy, including political ones, with new democratic forms of social organization. As a famous Dutch communication scientist Jan van Dijk noted:

> The vision of the 'new democracy' at the turn of the century is connected with the expectation of expanding participation in democratic processes through Internet-supported means. Popular technologies Web 2.0 or social media predict an increase in the participation of citizens in the development of politics and democratic life in various new formats (van Dijk, 2010: 50).

Analyzing this stage in the evolution of mass media, it should be noted that the emergence of a new communication channel – the Internet – at the end of the 20th century was initially perceived only as another stage in the development of the mass information society with all its advantages and disadvantages. But the technological and social processes that have developed over almost two decades of the 21st century and are associated with the deployment of such a segment as social media in the Internet space have forced scientists to change this point of view. Professor of New Media at New York University Clark Shirky highlighted:

> Digital networks have had a massive positive impact on the cost and distribution of information, the ease and range of public speaking by citizens, as well as the speed and scale of group coordination (Shirky, 2011).

At this stage, the interpretation of social media as a 'Fifth Estate' was born. William H. Dutton – the author of this definition – notes:

> The rise of the press, radio, television and other mass media enabled the development of an independent institution: the 'Fourth Estate', central to pluralist democratic processes. The growing use of the Internet and related digital technologies is creating a space for networking individuals in ways that enable a new source of accountability in government, politics and other sectors. This emerging 'Fifth Estate' is being established and this could challenge the influence of other more established bases of institutional authority. The governance of this new social and political phenomenon could nurture the Fifth Estate's potential for supporting the vitality of liberal democratic societies. 'Fifth estate' is not some ideal mechanism with the help of which it is possible to divide and expose the truth or form politics. Just as in the 'Fourth Estate' – traditional mass media – biases, corruption and fake news will definitely appear. The only difference between the 'Fourth Estate' and the 'Fifth Estate' is not idealism, pragmatism or truth – it is the fact that someone can become influential (Dutton, 2009: 1, 12).

Mobile Devices

The so-called 'mobile, or cellular revolution' can be considered the next stage in the development of new-age media, which has unfolded within the framework of the modern Internet period. According to the annual Digital Global Overview Reports, 5.22 billion people used a mobile phone at the start of 2021, equating to 66.6 percent of the world's total population. In January 2022, unique users reached 5.31 billion, and 67.1 percent of the world's population used a mobile phone. A total of 5.44 billion people used mobile phones in early 2023, equating to 68 percent of the total global population. Unique mobile users have increased by just over 3 percent during the 2022 year, with 168 million new users (by 1.8 percent over the 2021, with 95 million new mobile users, and by 1.8 percent with 93 million in

2020). From 2017 to 2020, the number of Internet accesses by mobile gadgets exceeded the number of entries by a PC, but in 2021 this indicator actually equaled (Kemp, 2021, 2022, 2023). The use of smartphones for communication on the World Wide Web not only made communication truly ubiquitous, but also opened up new forms of participation through the use of various applications.

The spread of mobile gadgets also led to a change in the popularity ratings and the level of influence of social media. New platforms of online communication began to gradually win back positions from recognized leaders of the previous stage. In 2021, the WhatsApp online messenger topped the world popularity ratings, 15.7% of Internet users around the world named it their favorite social network, the network has 2 billion people. In terms of its popularity, Instagram took second place (14.8%), overtook Facebook (14.5%), although it had a smaller number of users – 1.3 billion people. WeChat ranked fourth in terms of popularity. Although TikTok gained in popularity only 4.3% of the total number of votes, however, in the last three months of 2021, the number of people who named it as their favorite social platform increased by 71%. Launched in China in September 2016, it has gained global distribution over the past five years . According to App Annie, the TikTok mobile application became the most downloaded in 2021. TikTok statistics show that in 2021 there were already 732 million users worldwide on this platform. In parallel, the popularity of the Telegram online platform is growing. The number of monthly active users of this service, which combines the functions of a messenger and social media, in 2021 already amounted to about 550 million people (Kemp, 2022; SkillFactory Media, 2022). The dynamics of statistical data is also reflected in the dynamics of changes in the influence of individual online platforms on political processes. For example, during the mass protests in Belarus in 2020, it was the 'Nexta' Telegram channel that became not only the main means of political communication, but also an effective tool for coordinating the actions of activists from the camp of the democratic opposition.

These facts prove that at the first quarter of the 21st century, social media and mobile devices have activated the process of public sphere's formation and intensified its functioning, they also changed the established ideas about democracy, which were formed within the framework of the classical liberal model. It should be noted that this stage in the development of political communication is expediently called 'network democracy'.

3. Media Ecosystem

Some researchers believe that the fourth age of communication buried Gutenberg's Galaxy, because the massive 'typographic man', described by McLuhan, gave way to the 'network individual', which was defined by Wellman and Castells. In the similar way McLuhan insisted that the invention of movable type was the decisive moment in the change from a culture in which all the senses partook of a common interplay to a tyranny of the visual. So, instrumentalists argue that for the break between the time periods in each case, the occurrence of a new medium is responsible: the hand-writing terminates the oral phase, the printing and the electricity revolutionize afterward culture and society. An unusual dialectic of media history has been developed by Vilém Flusser. This apologist of a radical philosophy of freedom argues that pre-history's image-based media were mythic in tone and magical in orientation. They intended to control the world by picturing it. The invention of the alphabet created a new mode of control: lineal, causal, and ultimately scientific. In the invention of photography, he sees the return of the mythic image, but this time an image not of the world but of texts. Rather than image the world, film, television, photography, and computer-generated imaging depict scientific knowledge, philosophical arguments, political beliefs, and commercial messages. Since writing marks the beginning of history, the technical image marks its end.

However, the communication field as a constructive power of the media system is not managed by the dialectical logic of denial denial. Its cross-temporality is synergistic, because the network society

of the Internet age does not reject, but includes the social constructs of the so-called Gutenberg era, which were formed by classical mass media, and those, in turn, absorbed the social structures that were formed in the field of the original direct oral communication. **In this way the new-age media system became multi-layered and multi-functional. Media platforms converge and are interconnected.** Traditional mass media and social media are both expected to be subjected to mediatization (Blach-Ørsten, 2016: 212).

Thus, as Frank Esser and Barbara Pfetsch have proved, the functioning of today's political communication is characterized by two parallel modes of operation: the logic of traditional, top-down oriented mass communication, and the decentralized, participative interactive logic of Internet communication (Esser, & Pfetsch, 2020: 338). This concurrence and its dynamics have turned contemporary media systems into 'hybrid media systems' (Chadwick et al. 2016), which means we can no longer reduce media systems to a single, one-dimensional communication logic and we can no longer define dynamically changing media systems, using static classification schemes (Nechushtai 2018). Due to the logic of hybrid media systems (Chadwick et al. 2016), the exchange relations between media, politics, and citizens have also become more complex. While in the past their interrelations were described as an ordered political communication system, some examples of which were shown in previous chapter, conditions have changed so much that Esser and Pfetsch propose the term 'political communication ecosystem'. These authors illustrate their innovation by such Figure:

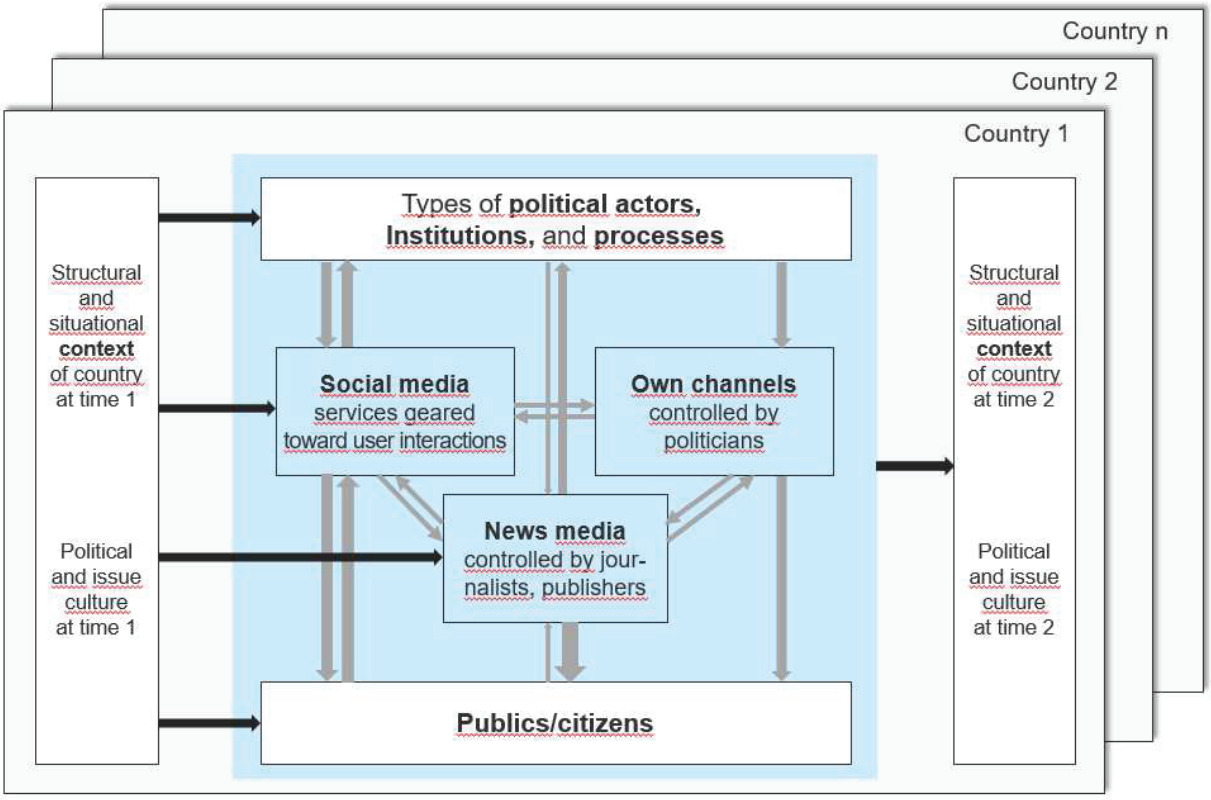

Figure 2.2. Political Communication Ecosystems (Esser, & Pfetsch, 2020: 340**)**

The essential elements of political communication ecosystems' interplay can be significant in five ways:

(1) From a cross-territorial perspective, the model refers to the significance of the structural, cultural, and situational context for explaining the communication behavior of political actors, media actors, and public actors.

(2) From a cross-temporal perspective, the model refers to the effects of political communication. In the long term, changes in political communication can lead to changes in the structural, cultural, and situational conditions of a society. In the short term, the political communication partners influence each other by means of messages sent, communicative reactions, and anticipated adaptations.

(3) From a cross-media perspective, the model refers to the different functions of the three key channels, each of which is characterized by different logics. Communication is possible through channels that are under the complete control of political actors, for instance, via email and direct messaging, newspaper ads, TV commercials, Internet videos, billboards, or personal websites. News media organizations are under the communication control of journalists (e.g., Fox News, Washington Post, Politico); they follow organized decision-making processes according to the norms of the media profession and the editorial mission set by the publisher or management. Social media services focus on the distribution of content that comes from a wide range of contributors, including citizens, politicians, and journalists; this content is disseminated according to dynamics influenced by human interaction and algorithmically programmed connectivity (e.g., at Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube).

(4) From a communication flow perspective, the model refers to the fact that, in principle, any content that appears in or on one channel can be picked up, amplified, or challenged by another. The flow of political communication consists of action, reaction, and counter-reaction. In order to optimize the attention one's own content receives, communicators associated with one channel observe all other channels and adapt their strategies in anticipation of the other channels' operating logics.

(5) From an impact perspective, the pursuit of discursive power has become challenging for political actors. On one hand, many leading news organizations have long since ceased to see themselves merely as intermediaries; rather, they see themselves as active co-shapers of public opinion. On the other hand, social media services have also gained considerable power because politicians, journalists, and citizens have become extremely dependent on them as information sources and distribution mechanisms. In order to expand their dominant position, platforms like Facebook have continuously adjusted their operating modes in a controversial and intransparent manner (ibid: 339).

This structural and functional analysis show that at the threshold of the second quarter of the 21st century, the media system loses its rigid structural characteristics and acquires the characteristics of a fluid, living multi-network, which was named a media-ecosystem.

Conclusions

Media system is a subsystem of the wider social system. And it has all attributes of system:

1. The main object of media system is to maintain mass communication. This object distinguishs it from other social aggregates, such as the economic and political systems, with which it interacts. At the same time these subsystems of whole social system are interdepended. And related to social system mass media performs not only the such instrumental functions as information transmission but also a function of constructing social reality (Luman, 2000) and, therefore, constructing relations in social networks and forming social, including political, institutions, as well as establishing value norms to ensure social interaction. Besides, the media appear as special subjects of economic relations, they are sold twice – first to the advertiser, and then to the consumer (reader, listener, viewer, user).

2. Media system is a structured organisation. It consists of different components, which were created during the history. Mass media are the core components of media system. Depending on the technology of production and dissemination of information, they are divided into printed and electronic. The modern media system includes such functional levels: (1) traditional mass media (press, radio, cinema, television), supplemented by home audio-visual devices; (2) multi-network of Internet media

(web sites, social media, online messengers, blogs, podcasts, etc.); (3) organizational media structures (news agencies, publishing houses, studios, management bodies and public organizations of journalists, press services and advertising agencies).

3. Media system is an integrated formation, which is involved in social environment. All its components and levels interact with each other. They have both specific internal and external functions and act as a whole. Interrelations between the components of the media system, between the media system and the economic and political systems, as well as the functioning of the media system within the social system are regulated by cultural traditions, moral norms, legal prescriptions, financial levers, political decisions and actions, as well as interpersonal relationships. The detailed analyses of historical, structural, behavioural and cultural features of the main media system's components – newspapers, radio, television, and Internet platforms – have revealed common general trends and certain important aspects of such interaction and mutual influence. Depending on the scope of media coverage, systems are divided into local, national and global. Local and national media systems are distinguished by the nature of the defined internal and external relations.

4. Media system is an interdepending construct. It was formed historically and continuously develops at an accelerated rate. The traditional media – newspapers, radio, television, and new age media – Internet sites, blogs, social media, podcasts, online messengers, which based both on PC and mobile devices, as well as its owners, rulers, and audiences, always compete, but do not destroy their predecessors and form a complex fluid multi-media ecosystem.

Questions for Self-Assessment:

1. What is the object of media system?
2. How can media system construct reality, social relations, and political institutions?
3. What are the mass media?
4. How are mass media classificated?
5. What are the functional levels of modern media system?
6. How do the components of media system interact according with James Harless's model?
7. What are the political aspects of the historical, structural, cultural, and behavioural features of newspares? Why press is a 'watch dog of democracy'?
8. What are the political aspects of the historical, structural, cultural, and behavioural features of radio? What are the seven trends of political communication manifested by radio?
9. What are the political aspects of the historical, structural, cultural, and behavioural features of television? How TV have made media a 'Fourth Estate'?
10. What are the political aspects of the historical, structural, cultural, and behavioural features of Internet? What is the mediatization of politics?
11. What new tools of political communication are proposed by social media and mobile devises? How they impact on politics?
12. What are the characteristics of new age media ecosystem?

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EFFECTS OF MEDIA ON POLITICS

The mediatization of politics is generally interpreted as a process, where political institutions increasingly are dependent on and shaped by mass media but nevertheless remain in control of political processes and functions (Mazzoleni, and Schulz, 1999: 247). At the same time, there is no consensus on the extent of media's influence on political processes, both among thinkers of the past and contemporary scholars. The entire multifaceted palette of scientific opinions on this matter can be categorized into four theoretical and methodological approaches: (1) normative-value, or social-axiological; (2) behavioral or socio-psychological; (3) informational and technological determinism, and (4) systems approach.

1. Normative-Value (Social-Axiological) Approach

The normative approach is based on the belief that freedom of speech is the main value and condition for the existence of democracy. Therefore, the development of ICT – from oral folk art to modern online networks – is considered everywhere through the prism of its influence on the dynamics of distribution and normative consolidation of freedom.

The first theoretical works advocating freedom of speech as the main principle of press relations with political institutions, primarily with the state, appeared in treatises of the early modern period when the connection between the development of printing technologies and the spread of liberal ideas became obvious. According to John Kean, at least four different types of arguments regarding the social significance of press freedom have been formed in Britain, where this new principle was born (Kean, 1991). We will consider them in detail, as they help to understand the essence of the socio-axiological approach to the role of mass media in the process of democratic development of society.

(1) **The theological type of argument defended the freedom of the press in the name of the God – given gift of the human mind.** It was most eloquently explained in John Milton's 'Areopagitica' (1644). God has endowed individuals with reason, so that we have the ability to read and choose, according to the demands of conscience, between good and evil. God shows his trust in us by allowing us to read whatever books we want and judge them for ourselves. The virtues of individuals must be constantly developed and tested through the use of conflicting reasoning and experience. Milton called: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties" **(**Milton, 1644**)**. This theological argumentation reveals the high purpose of freedom of the press, first of all, as a necessary condition for effective communication.

(2) **The second type is based on the principle of the press freedom as natural right.** It was first clearly formulated by Mathew Tindal in 'Arguments against restraining the press' (1704). Tindal argued that freedom of the press guarantees society freedom from political narcissism, parliamentary lies, and government slavery. He described the socially significant function of the press as follows:

> Surrounded by dependents who are ready to justify their masters in any situation, the states embellish the worst of their actions and depict the most disastrous projects in wonderful colors. The free press will anticipate all surprises and warn of any danger as a faithful gatekeeper… It will ensure good government based on the natural rights of rational individuals, who are able to live under the rule of law, together with their elected officials (Tindal, 2010 [1704]: 18).

The understanding of the free press function as a gatekeeper later was transformed into the well-known proverb about the press as a watchdog of democracy and became a recognized norm. But in general, it should be noted that supporters of the freedom of the press naturalness have already emphasized that it expands the opportunities for citizen participation in governance and makes it more effective.

(3) **The third type is presented by the utilitarian argumentation on the benefit of the free press public value.** It was based on the assertion that the creation and application of laws that provide 'the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people' is made possible precisely by the freedom of the press. A free press is thus an ally of public good. It helps to control the 'customary privileges' of rulers. It reveals their secrets and makes them more accountable to their subordinates. It increases the possibility of sound decisions by giving the public access to conflicting information about the real world. A free press is also a tireless public eye that keeps a check on the bureaucracy and averts nepotism between the legislature and the executive.

Arguments in favor of 'good governance' through 'freedom of the press and public discussion' are most carefully developed in the letters of Jeremy Bentham 'On the Liberty of the Press and Public Discussions' (1820-1821). The ideas of this thinker have not lost their relevance even after 200 years and help to understand the problems of modern democracy. Bentham argued that a good political system should perform two tasks in particular: to form governments that provide for the good of citizens by aligning civil society structures with law and free-market exchange, and to protect those citizens from government greed. He was convinced that governments are always guided by their own interests:

> Such is the nature of human character, when it is combined with power: if he has not committed some abuse today, he will wait until tomorrow and then will do it tomorrow, if he is not limited by the fear of public opinion and actions… Despotism of this type – the 'lust for arbitrary power' – needs to be restrained, which was almost achieved in the USA, thanks to the mechanism of expanded suffrage, secret ballot and regular elections. The freedom of the press is especially important, because without it elections cannot be considered a free and effective expression of voters' wishes (Bentham, 2012 [1820-1821]): 18-19).

Bentham rejected the claim that freedom of the press creates unrest and the danger of civil war. Misfortune is never a product of freedom of the press: "In any freedom there is a greater or lesser danger, but it is also in any power. Good government implies effective opportunities for public criticism, resistance and removal of the current leadership" (ibid: 21). Therefore, freedom of the press maximizes the public good. Thus, we are specifically talking about the expansion and deepening of citizen participation in political communication. In addition, this reasoning will be very useful for us in the context of considering the debate about the relationship between the freedom of speech and public safety, especially on the Internet.

(4) **The fourth type is based on deliberative principle. It was developed by admirers of the idea to achieve the Truth through unrestricted public debate among citizens.** The most influential version of such argumentation was appeared in the 19th century by John Stuart Mill in the work 'On Liberty' (1859). He had defined the main reasons why the guarantee of free opinions' exchange in the press is important for social progress. First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. It can be tested by facts and overcome strong counterarguments. Thus, anger at one's own infallibility is a suppression of potential truth. Secondly, although the opinion may turn out to be wrong, it always contains a grain of truth. The prevailing view on any issue is rarely entirely correct. It is about the fact that only through confrontation with other, opposing views, the complete truth can be found out. In public affairs, truth inevitably combines and reconciles opposites. Therefore, according to Mill, the truth needs the liberty of the press as its ally. There should be no laws to prevent the freedom

of newspapers, magazines, books and pamphlets to print facts and justify opinions. Only a free press can guarantee a rich supply of facts and arguments about facts that cultivate the habit of questioning or revising views, thus ensuring the victory of truth over falsehood. Mill had proclaimed: "The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by, when any defence would be necessary of the 'liberty of the press' as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear" (Mill, 2001 [1859]: 18). The idea of striving to achieve the truth in the process of broad and free public discussion of problems will become fundamental for substantiating the understanding of democracy as communication.

These various socio-axiological ways of arguing in favor of 'press freedom', which were outlined here briefly, contain many shortcomings, but they significantly influenced the development of democratic ideas in society at the beginning of the early modern era. They also have scientific value as a methodological basis for further research into the role of ICT in the development of democratic processes.

The normative-value approach gives us the opportunity to understand how the development of such a means of communication as the press developed the awareness of press freedom as a fundamental social value, and this awareness, in turn, launched the mechanisms of democratic transformations. It should be noted that since then freedom of the press is considered the main feature of democracy. German scientist Ferdinand Tönnies emphasizes that the need for press freedom is a characteristic principle of the modern European and North American world, where the theory and practice of public expression of opinions through the mass media has developed like nowhere else in the world and is an important means of limiting power (Tönnies, 2001: 13). In democratic countries, this principle has become a recognized legal norm, which is designed to ensure effective participation of citizens in elections and control over governments, as well as open meaningful communication during the discussion of public goals and political decisions.

However, the socio-axiological assumption that a free press is capable of renewing the close and direct social ties characteristic of the polis ignored the problem of how to ensure freedom of communication among citizens in a fragmented, complex civil society. At this stage, the theory of 'press freedom' neglected the key aspect that in large-scale societies representative mechanisms in the field of communication cannot be bypassed, so some people will necessarily communicate on behalf of others, at least for a certain time. Therefore, differentiated access to the press is its inevitable feature. And this opens up the possibility of manipulation of public opinion, which is dangerous for democracy.

We can analyse that with the example of communist ideology devolution. Its founder Karl Marx in 1849 emphasized that the press "by its vocation is a social watchman that tirelessly exposes those in power, an eye that sees everywhere, a hundred-mouthed voice that zealously protects its own freedom of the people's spirit" (Marx, 1963: 79). In the middle of the 19th century, his friend and associate Friedrich Engels highlighted that "the first duty (of the press) is the duty to protect citizens from the arbitrariness of officials" (Engels, 1963: 84), and "to prove the necessity of democracy, ... to investigate to what extent it is possible to count on the immediate implementation of democracy" (Engels, 1963: 36). But already at the beginning of the next century, the Russian apologist for Marxism Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) clearly declared that "the newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and agitator but also a collective organizer" (Lenin, 1967: 12). According to Hannah Arendt (1958), Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski (1965), German Nazism and Soviet Bolshevism established their bloody totalitarian regimes precisely by the propaganda and manipulation of people's minds through the state mass media. Besides that, in the era of mass media, the normative-value approach proved unable to provide a clear scientific understanding of the mechanisms by which information technologies influence political processes.

However, turning to the origins of the normative-value approach is important not so much from the point of view of historical retrospectives, but because its assessments have become especially in demand at a new stage in the development of the communication field – in the postmodern Internet age. This will be shown in the following chapters.

2. Behavioral (Social-Psychological) Approach

But in the age of modernity, which had transformed the press-organised communication field by the spread of mass newspapers, the dominance of radio and the birth of television, the normative-value approach, which operated with qualitative indicators in assessing the mutual influence of the press and democracy, was replaced by a new approach that seeks to adopt precise quantitative indicators for evaluation of the effectiveness of media affects. We called this approach socio-psychological, or behavioral. This approach was developed on the basis of a psychological behaviorist model that operates with the concepts of 'stimulus – reaction'. Its adaptation to the mass media meant the study of the extent to which mass media activity can cause a measurable and predictable reaction of individual and group social actors.

And although, both in this activity and in the corresponding reaction, it is practically impossible to separate the participative and communicative components, nevertheless, for clarity of the analysis of the behavioral approach, we propose to divide its supporters into two blocks – participatory and communicative. The first block unites those scientists who focused their attention on the study of the mass media impact on the most important behavioral element of constitutional democracy – participation and voting in elections. The second one – those scientists who studied the socio-psychological tools by which mass media influence democratic public discourse and public opinion.

When considering the first block, it should be noted that **behavioral researchers can be divided into three camps: (1) those who believe that the mass media have a decisive impact on the electoral choice of citizens, which can be calculated, predicted and masked; (2) those who prove that there is no such impact and that citizens are guided by their own value convictions in elections, which are almost unshakable; (3) those who admit that such an impact exists, but it is very complex and multifactorial.** Discussion and exchange of arguments between these camps has been going on with varying degrees of success for a hundred years.

The theoretical basis of the first concept of mass media effects in the political process was served by the works of the famous American sociologist and journalist Walter Lippman. In the 20s of the last century, Lippman wrote about the omnipotence of mass media that broadcast the world to us. He considered that their impact on the audience is direct, tangible, and connected with the formation of ready-made ideas about the political process and its subjects (Lippmann, 1997 [1922]: 56, 300).

But at the end of the 1930s, sociologists began to actively use practical surveys, psychological tests and other empirical methods in their work. The new methods of data collection were also applied to the study of mass media and their impact on society. Carl Hovland and his colleagues at Yale University formulated a second model of interaction between mass media and the audience, which was called 'psychodynamic'. In the framework of this model, the mass media are recognized as a source of individuals' knowledge about certain events, but at the same time they influence the basic attitudes of social subjects in very rare cases (Hovland, 1953).

Paul Lazarsfeld had conducted the first study of factors affecting the formation of electoral behavior. The study was mainly aimed at measuring the influence of information about the election campaign on the mass audience. Lazarsfeld noted two main trends. According to the first, mass media are not the only source of political information, interpersonal communication is no less important in this

process. According to the second trend, information obtained from broadcasts of radio, television and print media first reaches the so-called «opinion leaders» in society, who then transmit it to other voters through the process of interpersonal communication. According to Lazarsfeld, political preferences and electoral behavior are better explained with the help of socially determined characteristics, such as social status, income, profession, religious affiliation and others. However, he still admits that one of the forces that can compete in terms of influence with socially determined characteristics is the media (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 2021 [1948]).

The tradition of studying the role of mass media in the electoral process was developed in the works of Bill Campbell, William Miller, and Michael Gurin. As a result of the conducted empirical research, they made the following two conclusions: (1) the effect of mass media can be characterized as minimal and temporary; (2) the long-term impact on the audience is caused by party affiliation, which is defined as an indicator of psychological commitment to a certain political party, and acts as a permanent filter of information about the election campaign (Campbell, 1986).

A widely spread concept of understanding the place and role of mass media in the political process was presented by John Klapper in the work 'Effects of Mass Communication' (1960). His main idea was that voters use mass media only to confirm and strengthen their political affiliation. Continuing in Lazarsfeld's research tradition, Klapper had found it unlikely that voters who supported parties of the 'left' block would watch television programmes or read press materials that promoted the ideas of the 'right' block's parties, but if they did watch or read them, it was unlikely that they will trust everything what they hear and see, even if the arguments presented in these broadcasts are convincing at first, then after watching or reading they will be forgotten (Klapper, 1960). Klapper's work had significant consequences for further research on political communication – the search for indicators of media influence on the audience had disappeared from the most researchers' field of view. Moreover, the conclusions of Lazarsfeld and Klapper were confirmed by further studies of mass media role in political propaganda.

But in the 1980s, the concept of significant mass media impact on the political process was revived. John Zaller proved that, at least in the communicative sphere, the real value of the mass media lies precisely in the formation, and not in strengthening the attitudes of citizens, and this influence is huge and long-term. This conclusion was obtained based on the results of an empirical study conducted by them in 1984 in the USA during the presidential elections. In conclusion, Zaller had claimed that mass media have a significant impact on individual and public consciousness, on political attitudes and voter behavior (Zaller, 1996). In our time, the facts of influence on election campaigns by various fake news have fueled the flame of the century-old debate.

Another direction of behavioral research, which was devoted to the socio-psychological aspects of the mass media's impact on the democratic processes, was focused on the empirical determination of those communication patterns, according to which public opinion formation takes place, and to evaluate the potential of the press, radio and television in this activity. After the advent of mass society era, the public opinion became the most powerful driver of political processes in democratic societies, which is immersed in the information field created by the mass media**.** As Philips Davison defines, **public opinion** is an aggregate of the individual views, attitudes, and beliefs about a particular topic, expressed by a significant proportion of a community. Some scholars treat the aggregate as a synthesis of the views of all or a certain segment of society; others regard it as a collection of many differing or opposing views. (Davison, 2023). Studing the process of public opinion formation, scientists discovered several basic elements that formed the methodological set that remains an integral part of the analysis of the course of communication processes in democratic systems.

The first element is so called 'agenda setting' effect. 'Agenda setting' is a metaphor that describes the cognitive process by which society thinks about the topics of the day that are covered by the media. This concept come into the mainstream of behavioral media effect interpretation. The idea of

'agenda setting' can be traced back in the 1920s when Water Lippmann, journalist and social commentator, argued in his *Public Opinion* (1922) that people were not capable of directly experiencing the bigger world, thus had to rely on the images and messages constructed by news media to form perceptions (Lippmann, W. (1997 [1922]). Bernard Cohen refined Lippmann's ideas by pointing out that the media do not tell people what to think, but what to think about. Cohen had formulated the definition of such an effect of mass media as 'agenda setting' (Cohen, 1963), which became a classical now.

Analyzing the mechanisms of mass media influence on public opinion, American scientists Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw first put this idea to empirical test by comparing news media agenda and public agenda during the 1968 US presidential election. Their study found strong correlations between the prominent issues of the news media and the leading public issues (McCombs, & Shaw, 1972). McCombs explains how the principle of agenda setting works:

> When connecting to the world outside our family, neighborhood, and workplace, we deal with a second-hand reality created by journalists and media organizations. However, due to time and space constraints, the mass media focus their attention on a few topics that are deemed newsworthy. Over time, those aspects of public affairs that are prominent in the media usually become prominent in public opinion. This ability to influence which issues, persons, and topics are perceived as the most important of the day is called the agenda-setting role of the mass media (McCombs, 2004).

In 2019, Maxwell McCombs in cooperation with Sebastian Valenzuela developed the theory and formulated the two-level agenda-setting concept. The first level of agenda-setting is the transmission of object salience. The second level is the transmission of attribute salience. Explaining their concept, the authors note:

> The agenda-setting role of the news media is not limited to focusing public attention on a particular set of issues but also influences our understanding and perspective on the topics in the news. This becomes clear when we think about the concept of an agenda in abstract terms. Theoretically, the items that define an agenda are "objects." In most agenda-setting research, these objects are public issues, but they also could be public figures, organizations, countries or anything else that is the focus of attention. In turn, each of these objects has numerous 'attributes', those characteristics and traits that describe and define the object. While some attributes are emphasized, others receive less attention, and many receive no attention at all. Just as objects vary in salience, so do the attributes of each object. Thus, for each object, there also is an agenda of attributes, which constitutes an important part of what journalists and, subsequently, members of the public have in mind when they think and talk about news objects. The influence of the news agenda of attributes on the public is the second level of agenda setting (Valenzuela, & McCombs, 2019).

Meantime, as the evidence for mass media's impact on setting public agenda accumulated, by the 1980s, scholars began to ask the question that "If the press sets the public agenda, who sets the media agenda?" (McCombs, 2005: 548) **Three elements were prompted as key influencers for media agenda: the traditions and norms of journalism professions, daily interactions among news organizations, and news sources and their interactions with media** (ibid).

Continuing behavioral research in this direction, Sharon Friedman, Sharon Dunwoody, and Carol Rogers have shown that public opinion and political preferences are the direct result of the 'agenda-setting' effect that occurs by the media. Thus, if the news pays attention to the national economic situation during a political campaign, then citizens will use economic indicators, rather than foreign problems, to evaluate the government's activities. As a result of numerous studies of the theory of agenda-setting in re-

lation to mass media, these specialists came to the following conclusions: **(1) the need to agenda setting is revealed first of all when the audience needs orientation or when there is a high degree of indiscernibility of the agenda; (2) mass media do not set agenda independently, the agenda arises from a complex process of changing influences between mass media and the surrounding world; (3) mass media set the agenda primarily because they have a monopoly on sources of information in such areas as public life, international relations, economy (inflation, unemployment), criminality, local politics; (4) mass media have a great importance at the initial stage of understanding the problem.** If the state or public organizations begin to deal with it, the mass media turn to other topics, because the new agenda's spreading is important to them (Friedman, Dunwoody, & Rogers, 1999: 352-401).

Some research has looked into the consequences of agenda-setting effects on attitudes and behavior. Among all, scholars have identified **three distinct consequences of agenda setting: forming opinions, priming opinions by emphasizing on particular issues, and shaping opinions by emphasizing on particular attributes; these consequences further lead to behavior changes** (Stacks, Zongchao, & Spaulding, 2015).

Although agenda setting originated as political communication studies, its research scopes and applications extend beyond political settings to a wide range of public issues. The concept of 'agenda setting', which was born in the era of traditional mass media, does not lose its relevance in relation to social media. And although this process in the Internet space has a more differentiated character, the basic scheme remains unchanged. In general, the agenda setting theory was developed by more than 400 empirical investigations, which have been conducted and published since its origin (Stacks, Zongchao, & Spaulding, 2015). **The agenda-setting role of the mass media converges with many other behavioral concepts in the communication field, including framing, priming, gatekeeping, cultivation and the spiral of silence.**

In social and political science, **'framing' refers to the way information is presented to shape public perception and opinion.** It involves presenting an issue in a particular context or with specific language to influence how people understand and respond to it. This concept is often used to discuss how media, politicians, and interest groups present information to the public. Attribute agenda setting converges with framing theory in that they both draw attention to how particular attributes dominate – or frame – the way certain topics are addressed among publics. A media frame is a "central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Tankard et al., 1991: 3). This definition of framing converges with attribute agenda setting by emphasizing how the media picture certain topics through the news contents. Another approach of framing diverges from agenda setting by defining frames as overall principles that become socially accepted over time (Valenzuela and McCombs, 2019). The similarities and differences between agenda setting and framing are among the most discussed and investigated theoretical connections in the communication field. The theoretical approach of framing examines the presentation, selection, emphasis, and exclusion processes inherent in organizing news stories. News frames provide cues as to how to think about dramatized problems; how to diagnose their causes; how to evaluate their generators, victims, and effects; how to cast (or avoid casting) blame; and if and how these problems should be resolved. Indeed, studies have identified how frames influence how individuals think, process topical information, discuss issues with others, and move to public action (Semetko, 2009: 133).

The notion of media priming also has connections to the agenda-setting studies. As Stephen *Ansolabehere*, Roy L. *Behr*, and Shanto *Iyengar* note in their *The Media Game: American Politics in the Television Age*, priming refers to the ability of the media to "isolate particular issues, events, or themes in the news as criteria for evaluating politicians" (Ansolabehere, Behr, & Iyengar, 1993: 148). Iyengar states that news stories have a priming effect on the public by guiding viewers into evaluating political leaders by the criteria dis- cussed in news stories (Iyengar, 1996) In their experimental examination

Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder found that "through priming (drawing attention to some aspects of political life at the expense of others) television news help to set the terms by which political judgments are reached and political choices made" (Iyengar & Kinder, 2010: 114).

Holly A. Semetko mentions an example when in a study of citizens' responses to Watergate, it was found that those with a "high need for orientation about politics" actually learn what issues "to use in evaluating certain candidates and parties, not just during political campaigns, but also in the longer period between campaigns (Weaver, McCombs, & Spellman, 1975: 471). This process came to be described as priming. Earlier seminal studies also found evidence of the media's role in shaping the standards by which citizens evaluate political leaders and candidates (Semetko, 2009: 132).

Social psychologists Susan Fiske and Shelley Taylor defined priming broadly as the effects of prior context on the interpretation and retrieval of information (1 (Fiske, & Taylor 1984). Joan Miller and John Krosnick defined priming more specifically as changes in the standards used by the public to evaluate political leaders, and found support for the priming hypothesis in their experiments (Miller and Krosnick 2000). There are more than thirty studies from the fields of psychology, communication, and political science that deal explicitly with media priming, and provides a valuable theoretical contribution. Roskos-Ewoldsen, Klinger, and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2002) provide a meta-analysis of the priming literature that incorporates the research in the areas of violence as well as politics questions whether media priming actually shares characteristic common to the priming studied by cognitive and social psychologists. An important question for future media and psychological priming research is whether stronger priming effects result from more intense media primes. Together, these two studies illustrate the need to further distinguish priming effects from what has been described as that which is "chronically".

The so-called 'spiral of silence' became the next element of the communication behavior, which was discovered by supporters of the social-psychological approach. This concept was proposed in the 1970s by the German sociologist Elisabeth Noel-Neumann. She examines the relationship between mass communication, interpersonal communication, and how an individual relates his or her opinion to the opinion of others. **Noel-Neumann's study showed that each person forms his/her own idea of public opinion, but limits him/herself in one's statements, fearing to come into conflict with the dominant opinion in society, as it may cause disapproval of his/her environment and, as a result, isolation.** Thus, the bearer of an opinion, which person considers unpopular in most cases, either remains silent, without revealing it, or even joins the opposite side, focusing on the winners, representatives of the prevailing opinion, thereby minimizing his/her social risks. At this stage, the spiral makes its first turn, but continues to unfurl in the sense that the 'social skin' of other members of society will perceive public opinion and based on the information presented by the first bearer who took a conforming position. This effect continues further, twisting the spiral in a number of cases until the real majority adopts a position of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1974).

Noelle-Neuman regards media central to the formulation of the spiral of silence theory. The results of polls, which are widely covered in the mass media, directly affect the nature and content of the election campaign, forcing candidates to make appropriate adjustments to their positions. It is so called 'success effect', when a person tends to adopt positions that, in their opinion, are shared by a larger number of people. So, mass media may have a decisive influence on the formation of public opinion. **If the media repeatedly (in a 'cumulative' way) and concordantly (in a 'consonant' way) support one side in a public controversy, this side will stand a significantly higher chance of finishing the spiral-of-silence process as winner.**

According to Noelle-Neumann, the media are a "one-sided, indirect, public form of communication, contrasting threefold with the most natural form of human communication, the conversation" (Noelle-Neumann, 1993). When an issue hits the media and proves salient, a dominant point of view usually emerges. These characteristics of the media in particular further overwhelm one's individual

ideas. Whereas some scholars argue whether the dominant idea in one's social environment overwhelms the dominant idea that media propose as the perceived social norm. In general, the spiral model assumes an active audience "who consumes media products in the context of their personal and social goals". (Ball-Rokeach, & Cantor, 1986: 12) Shirley S. Ho, Vivian Hsueh-Hua Chen, and Clarice C. Sim have proved that "knowledge gained from the mass media may offer ammunition for people to express their opinions and offer a rationale for their own stance" (Ho, Chen, & Sim, 2013: 125).

The 'spiral of silence' theory became an important component of the behavioral approach and was confirmed by studies of the television influence on political communication. Although, as shown by a number of studies, in particular by Irfan Chaudhry, and Anatoliy Gruzd, the application of the 'spiral of silence' theory to the Internet and new media has some important specifics (Chaudhry, & Gruzd, 2019), nevertheless, its influence on political communication in online networks remains key. This effect manifests itself in the formation of echo chambers and filtration bubbles, which will be discussed in Chapter 9.

A generalizing conclusion within the framework of the behavioral approach was made by Michael Harrop and Walter Miller. Conducting comprehensive socio-psychological research they formulated **four main conditions under which mass media act as important communication agents for citizens: (1) mass media are important in a situation of weakly expressed party identification (today, in most developed democracies, party identification is weakening, compared to the second half of the 20th century); (2) mass media are more important when they cover new, previously unknown topics and areas of politics; (3) mass media are more important when reaching a significant audience and when using as many expressive means as possible, and, in addition, the combination of audio and video media also leads to a strengthening of mass media impact on public opinions and attitudes; (4) mass media are more important when people rarely discuss politics – television here not only provides topics for discussions, but also replaces the interlocutor** (Harrop, & Miller, 1987: 78-82). Despite the fact that Harrop and Miller had studied the effect of traditional mass media, the construct of media influence on political communication identified by these authors is unlikely to be significantly corroded in the online sphere too.

And here we should mention the concept of Silvio Lenart, which is distinguished by an original approach to the analysis of mass media impact on society. He notes that mass media do not have a monopoly on information flows, but act together with interpersonal communication. Therefore, the influence of the media cannot be considered in isolation, as many researchers do. Lenart characterizes the political information flow as a process by which information obtained from mass media materials reaches its target directly or indirectly through interpersonal communication. Lenart concludes: **(1) mass media are the main sources of information about candidates and parties; (2) interpersonal communication can strengthen the attitudes of voters, which are formed with the participation of mass media; (3) interpersonal communication can influence the formation of voter attitudes, directly opposite to the influence of mass media; (4) interpersonal communication can be a separate source of new information about candidates** (Lennart, 1994: 15-20). The value of the conclusions obtained by Lenart lies in the confirmation of the thesis about the independent importance of interpersonal communication. It is not always carried out in line with the topics set by the mass media, as it is presented in the concept of 'agenda-setting'. Interpersonal communication can be a source of alternative information and at the same time create one's own interpretation of media messages. The importance of interpersonal communication proved by Lenart will be the basis for researching the role of online networks in the deployment of communication processes.

In general, it should be noted that the behavioral approach is still quite fruitful, particularly in social media research. Among the authoritative scientists working in this direction, we can mention Lance Bennett, Damiano Palano, Russell Neumann, Lauren Guggenheim, Rosanna Guadagno, Karen Guttieri, whose works we will rely on in Chapter 9.

But, at the same time, it is worth noting that the behavioural approach, having as its object the behaviour of individuals and certain social groups, does not provide an opportunity to look at the role of mass media in the democratic development of society more broadly. This gap became evident with humanity's entry into a new era dubbed the 'information society', when the communication field became global, thanks first to satellite television and then to the worldwide Internet.

3. Information and Technological Determinism

Such a global vision was proposed within the framework of the approach we called information-technological determinism. Scientists who develop this methodology of research on the impact of communication tools on society assume that the nature and properties of social constructs that are formed in the process of communication are determined by the ways in which it is carried out. The father of the media-deterministic Toronto School, Harold A. Innis, believed that communication tends to change political, juridical, religious and economic structures (Innis, 1951).

And his follower, Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan, described radical civilizational and cultural shifts caused by changes in means of communication. In his *Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) McLuhan studies the emergence of what he calls the Gutenberg Man, the subject produced by the change of consciousness wrought by the advent of the printed book. Apropos of his axiom, "The medium is the message", McLuhan argues that technologies are not simply inventions which people employ but are the means by which people are re-invented.

The main concept of McLuhan's argument is that new technologies (like alphabets, printing presses, and even speech itself) exert a gravitational effect on cognition, which in turn affects social organization: print technology changes our perceptual habits ('visual homogenizing of experience'), which in turn affects social interactions ("fosters a mentality that gradually resists all but a... specialist outlook") (McLuhan, 1962: 124-126).

The invention of movable type was the decisive moment in the change from a culture in which all the senses partook of a common interplay to a tyranny of the visual. Movable type, with its ability to reproduce texts accurately and swiftly, extended the drive toward homogeneity and repeatability already in evidence in the emergence of perspectival art and the exigencies of the single 'point of view'. It was the first step to mass-media, which formed a mass-human. According to McLuhan, the advent of print technology contributed to and made possible most of the salient trends in the Modern period in the Western world: individualism, democracy, Protestantism, capitalism and nationalism (ibid: 154). Thus, ICT determinism reveals how the development of media changes people, not how media influence people's behavior only like behavioralism does.

Key to McLuhan's argument is the idea that technology has no per se moral bent – it is a tool that profoundly shapes an individual's and, by extension, a society's self-conception and realization: "Print is the technology of individualism. If men decided to modify this visual technology by an electric technology, individualism would also be modified. To raise a moral complaint about this is like cussing a buzz-saw for lopping off fingers" (ibid: 158).

At the same time, ICT determinism does not bypass the moral aspects of media influence. But unlike the normative-value approach, it does not indicate how the media should improve society, it demonstrates how they change its cultural and value ground. And it can be seen on the example of how McLuhan outlined the future information society. In the early 1960s, he wrote that the visual, individualistic print culture would soon be brought to an end by what he called "electronic interdependence": when electronic media would replace visual culture with aural/oral culture. In this new age, humankind will move from individualism and fragmentation to a collective identity, with a "tribal base". McLu-

han's coinage for this new social organization is the *global village*. Instead of tending towards a vast Alexandrian library the world has become a computer, an electronic brain, exactly as an infantile piece of science fiction. And as our senses have gone outside us, Big Brother goes inside. In our long striving to recover for the Western world a unity of sensibility and of thought and feeling we have no more been prepared to accept the tribal consequences of such unity than we were ready for the fragmentation of the human psyche by print culture (ibid: 32). Entering into communication with each other by means of electronic means of communication, people reason and act in such a way as if they were very close, if they lived in the 'same village'. They freely or involuntarily interfere more and more thoroughly in each other's lives, reflecting on everything they have seen and heard. McLuhan believed that this process causes people to be involved in each other's affairs as if they were our own affairs. Today, the term 'global village' is mainly used as a metaphor characterizing the information society.

The concept of information society became the result of ICT determinism development. As Frank Webster noted:

> Contemporary culture is manifestly more heavily information-laden than its predecessors. We exist in a media-saturated environment which means that life is quintessentially about symbolisation, about exchanging and receiving – or trying to exchange and resisting reception – messages about ourselves and others. It is in acknowledgement of this explosion of signification that many writers conceive of our having entered an information society (Webster, 2006: 19).

'Information society' can be defined as a society in which the quality of life, as well as the prospects for social change and economic development, increasingly depend on information and its exploitation. In such a society, living standards, forms of work and leisure, the education system and the market are significantly influenced by achievements in the field of information and knowledge (Martin, 1978).

The basement floor of the information society theory is Daniel Bell's concept of the post-industrial society which was outlined in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (1973). Bell offers a typology of different societies that is dependent on the predominant mode of employment at any one stage. In his view, the type of work that is most common becomes a defining feature of particular societies. Thus Bell suggests that while in pre-industrial societies agricultural labour is pretty well ubiquitous, and in industrial societies factory work is the norm, in post-industrial societies it is service employment which predominates. Service work is information work (Bell, 1973). Necessarily, then, the predominance of service employment leads to greater quantities of information. To restate this in Bell's later terminology, it is possible to distinguish three types of work, namely 'extractive', 'fabrication' and 'information activities' (Bell, 1979: 178). A key point here is that a 'post-traditional' society that is characterized by intensified reflexivity of actors and institutions hinges on information/knowledge. Media are the key these actors and institution. As Webster emphasized:

> That people become aware of changes largely through media alerts us to the fact that a key feature of upheaval is information and, of course, the technologies which handle, process and act upon it. The mass media themselves have been radically changed by new ways of gathering and transmitting information – from lightweight video cameras which make it possible to access areas once hard to penetrate, to global satellite links which make it feasible to receive pictures on screens thousands of miles away in the space of a few minutes. The whole world could watch as the Berlin Wall came down, when the former Yugoslavia was torn apart between 1992 and 1996, and when the Twin Towers were demolished by highjackers using civilian aircraft as bombs in September 2001 (Webster, 2006: 61).

The scientific concept of another American philosopher and sociologist Alvin Toffler became an improvement of Bell's views. In the work 'The Third Wave' (1980), Toffler substantiated the idea of waves-types of society that replace each other. The first wave was the result of the agrarian revolution, which changed the culture of hunters and gatherers. The second wave was the result of the industrial revolution, which is characterized by the nuclear family type, the conveyor system of education and corporatism. The third wave is the result of the intellectual revolution, that is, the information society, in which there is a huge variety of subcultures and lifestyles. Information can replace a huge amount of material resources and becomes the main material for individuals who freely join in association (Toffler, 1980: 246). The key message is that, according to Toffler, the information sphere will play a defining role in the nature of communication between people, and it will determine the system of norms and values.

In the following studies, Toffler pays special attention to the role of the media in social and political transformations. He points out that due to the development of Internet communication, a 'mass man' of the era of 'mass consumption' and 'mass communication' will be replaced by the individuality of a single person who is able to construct social networks of his communication at his own discretion:

> With the income of advanced communication technologies, the 'demassification' of information is observed, followed by the demassification of consciousness. Today, not masses of people receive the same information, but small groups of people exchange images created by themselves. Opinions are becoming less and less unified, which means the end of the era of the masses (Toffler, 1990: 142).

The term 'network society' was first proposed by the Norwegian scientist Stein Braten in the book 'Models of Man and Society' in 1981, although the English researcher James Martin used a similar concept ('wired society') for three years before. However, **the complex concept of the network society as a result of the impact of Internet communication on socio-political relations was developed by three sociologists: Canadian Barry Wellman, Spanish Manuel Castells, and Dutchman Jan van Dijk, independently of each other.**

Wellman's reasoning starts from the fact that computer networks are social networks. The social benefits of computer-based social networks—wider bandwidth, wireless portability, globalized connectivity, personalization—are driving the transition from 'door-to-door' and 'place-to-place' communities to 'person-to-person' and 'role-to-role' communities. People communicate in social networks, not in communal groups. Individual and computer communication are integrated into communities characterized by a personalized network. Such transformations created a new basis for community that Wellman called 'networked individualism'. Along with this, the network society becomes a society of interpersonal connections that provide social interaction, support, information, a sense of belonging to a group and social identity, which create a special type of social capital – 'network capital' (Wellman, 2001). Continuing to develop the concept of network society, Wellman reveals such a problem of modern communities as 'glocalization'. 'Glocalization' is a neologism meaning the combination of intensive local and extensive global interaction. It is this process that appears today as a significant trend of evolution all over the world.

The concept of network society is presented in the most detailed works by Castells. He proposed the hypothesis that a new culture is being formed, a culture of true virtuality, in which digitized networks of multimodal communications have so encompassed all manifestations of culture and personal experience that they have made virtuality a fundamental dimension of our reality (Castells, 2001: xxx).

Our attention should be paid to the fact that the network society is significantly different from the information society of the time of the dominance of television. Castells says that it is necessary to abandon the concept of "information society" and define society in the light of what will really be new in the modern era, namely through information technology networks (Castells, 2000: 6). According to Castells's concept, in the modern world individuality prevails over the 'sense of community', but indi-

vidualism is not reduced to social isolation, and people, living in nation-states, strive for global community, to search for 'identity directed to the future' (Castells, 2001: xxv).

Castells declares that "all societies of the information age are indeed permeated – with varying intensity – by the ubiquitous logic of the network society. whose dynamics gradually absorb and conquer previous social forms" (ibid: xviii). He calls the social structure of the information age a network society because it is created by networks of production, power and experience that form a culture of virtuality in global flows that cross time and space.

The basic category in Castells' theory of network society is the definition of flow. By flows, he understands purposeful, repetitive, programmed sequences of exchanges and interactions between physically separated positions occupied by social actors in the economic, political and symbolic structures of society. According to Castells, modern society is built around flows of capital, information, technologies, organizational interaction, symbols (ibid: xviii).

Manuel Castells identified the main signals of socio-political changes, which are caused by the intensification of the processes of virtualization and online communication in the context of crises, conflicts and protest movements that are intensifying all over the world.

The first signal is the world financial crisis experienced in 2008-2009. The computerization and virtualization of the financial sector around the world led to the creation of a global financial market, which, together with the national policy of deregulation and liberalization of economies, caused the uncontrolled movement of capital in the world. The global financial crisis of 2008-2009 showed the impossibility of exercising control over the economy, which is densely based on networks: national institutions of power practically lost the ability to control and regulate global flows of material values and information.

The second signal of changes in society is the transformation of the structure and format of work, as well as employment around the world. The introduction of high technologies in production has led, on the one hand, to the disappearance of hundreds of professions, but, on the other hand, many new specialties have emerged that require a high level of education. In this regard, the general level of education of the population is increasing all over the world, including in Ukraine.

The third signal can be called spatial. It is due to the fact that thanks to the opportunities provided by the Internet and mobile wireless devices, the flexibility of the workforce increases, its spatial and geographical dependence disappears. In connection with increasing social mobility, multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism are growing almost everywhere. At the same time, despite the fact that large nodes concentrate more and more capital, power, and innovation on the planet, only a small layer of people in the world identify themselves with a single global, cosmopolitan culture built around the spaces of flows: most people feel their rigid local identity. According to the sociologist, this indicates the emergence of a fundamental contradiction of the network society: in a world built according to the logic of the space of flows, people live in the spaces of places. Therefore, the key spatial feature of the society of network structures is the network interaction of the local and the global. Developing the concept of glocalization in parallel with Wellman, Castells proves that, in a network society, processes and practices, including political ones, are determined by their functional meaning, and not by the place where actors are located (ibid: xxxix).

The fourth signal is defined by Castells as a factor in the emergence of 'timeless time'. He explains this paradox by the fact that in the conditions of the spread of mobile means of communication and the Internet, which allow you to be in touch 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the boundaries between personal, family and working time are blurred. According to Castells, people live in the world of their omnipresent avatars – virtual reality becomes the basis of life, destroying the concept of "time". And this creates a deep conflict in society,

The fifth and, perhaps, one of the most important signals felt in society is the completely new nature and never-before-existing forms of communication that emerged in the first decade of the 21st century. In recent years, revolutionary changes in the field of communication technologies have been taking place at an accelerated pace. The pace of Internet's spread is accelerating every year. Online communities spread not only as a virtual reality, but also as a phenomenon integrated into everyday real life and changed many spheres of people's life. Thus, a new communication social system is created. The communication field of the network society is fundamentally different from the information field of the times of traditional media channels in terms of its properties. The central feature of the network society is the transformation of the sphere of communication, including mass media. So, as Castells claims, digital communication is becoming less centrally organized, but it is absorbing an increasing share of social communication into its logic.

This observation also applies to political communication. And it can be considered as the **sixth signal**. In an interview at *Radio Liberty*, Castells drew attention to the fact that in modern society, the distribution of power depends on the ability to control not only information, but also communication between people. The idea of democracy, which consists in the fact that every four years you vote in an election, the outcome of which is determined by the media, the control of the government and big business corporations, is coming to an end. Now we have moved forward, but we do not have a democracy adequate for the Internet century. Either democratic institutions open to the general public and become more transparent, or society faces serious conflicts and even violence (Castels, 2012).

The concept of network society is also developed by the Dutch sociologist Jan Van Dijk. In the work *'Network Society'*, he presented his conclusions regarding the transformation of politics and political communication in the realities of the second decade of the 21st century (Van Dijk, 2012). The researcher argues that the possession of power in the age of the Internet is determined by access to networks and the number of connections within them. Like Castells, van Dijk believes that instead of bureaucratic vertical management of society, a horizontally differentiated public structure (which we can call electronic democracy) is being formed on the Internet. However, he claims that power in the network society does not flow to social media, but remains with the state. In his opinion, power in networks does not necessarily 'wash away'. On the contrary, through them it can be concentrated by a strong state that controls technology and social network connections. The Dutch sociologist agrees that significant changes in the political process in such aspects as the exchange of political information, socio-political debates, and the development of new forms of political participation are indisputable. However, the scientist does not give an unequivocal prediction about the arrival of direct democracy through Internet technologies.

Empirical studies of online communication confirm that the ease of access to a variety of information "allows people to personalize their sources in a way that is consistent with their biases" (Bartlett, 2018: 45) And this not only undermines the control of state and financial elites over mass communication, which Yascha Mounk calls one of the three conditions for the stability of liberal democracies (Mounk, 2018), but also generally changes the understanding of political communication as 'mass', that is, standardized according to the opinion of the majority and targeted depersonalized Considering the political aspects of the influence of Internet communication, Aleksander Nazarchuk concluded that the network society, by multiplying and changing information flows in the political sphere, inevitably democratizes the established order of power sending (Nazarchuk, 2008: 71). These scholars' analysis shows that the Internet provides an impetus for replacing outdated structures of the social hierarchy, including political ones, with new forms of social organization.

However, media technology deterministic views were challenged (McQuail, 1994: 87-93). Proponents of the systems approach Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini point out:

> We see the relation between media and political systems more in terms of coevolution than of strict causal ordering. Indeed, the relative influence of the media system on political institutions and vice versa may vary historically, with political forces dominating the media system in some periods, while in other periods the media system is more independent (or more determined by economic forces), and may exercise greater autonomous influence on the political world. The influence of technology cannot be separated from the social context in which technologies are adopted and implemented, of course, and we should not exaggerate the standardizing effects of technologies of mass communication. (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 47).

This is confirmed by the fact that, as was noted in the previous Chapter, utopian revolutionary talk of digital culture has been increasingly criticized since 2016 and even early. For instance, technology critic Evgeny Morozov has questioned the visions and intentions of Californian Silicon Valley that promises that the revolution in online technologies will save the world (Morozov, 2013). The indicated changes require the turning to a system approach to understand the media-politics effects as a complex of interactions.

4. Systems Approach

Karl Deutsch emphasized that political communication is the nerve of governance. He argued that a political system's functioning relies on a constant flow of information from its environment and continuous feedback about its own activities. Deutsch views government as a decision-making system dependent on these information flows. In this process, mass media serve dual roles: they act as receptors, gathering information from the environment, and as effectors, transmitting information about decisions and the system's status (Deutsch, 1977).

From a systemic approach, mass media are essential for maintaining the political system's 'input' and 'output' functions, which are vital for its survival. David Easton, a pioneer of the systems approach in politics, explained that the input side of **the political system receives demands and support from the environment, while the output side issues decisions and actions** (Easton, 1965). Supplementing these arguments concerning the input and output functions of the media with our understanding of communication as an absolutely cyclical process, we state that **the media system provides a complete communication cycle for the political system. This cycle includes input functions, output functions and feedback.**

Media as an 'Input' Channel for the Political System

As an 'input' channel the media deliver demands and support from society to the political system.

Demands express public opinion on the distribution of societal values and resources. Through mass media, a variety of information—expectations, opinions, motivations, ideologies, and interests—enters the political system. This constant flow is essential; without it, the system risks 'underloading' and dysfunction. On the other hand, if demands exceed the system's capacity to respond, it may experience 'overload' or stagnation. Therefore, demands must align with the system's capabilities.

Four key functions of the mass media in managing demands can be identified:

(1) **Formulating Demands (Articulation of Interests)**: Media help articulate and present various societal demands to the political system. Agenda setting is the first step in this process, marking the boundary between society and politics.

(2) **Regulating Demands**: Media play a regulatory role by filtering and directing demands through specific channels. This process may involve a "spiral of silence" where certain

views are suppressed due to social norms or values. Cultural norms also regulate which demands are considered legitimate.

(3) **Aggregating Interests**: Through framing and priming, media systematize and reduce the multitude of demands to a manageable number, providing the political system with coherent alternatives.

(4) **Self-supplying Demands**: Political elites can influence the media to introduce demands that align with their interests, often anticipating unexpressed public concerns to maintain popularity or neutralize potentially destabilizing demands. Easton refers to this as 'input from inside'.

Support is equally important, encompassing all favorable attitudes and behaviors toward the political system. **The media help organize support by:**

(1) Publishing positive messages about the government, leaders, or ruling party while criticizing opponents.

(2) Facilitating public discussion.

(3) Shaping public opinion.

(4) Highlighting real or fabricated displays of public support.

Media support occurs at different levels: support for the political system as a whole, the regime's rules of the game, the governing authorities, and political parties or leaders.

Media as a 'Feedback' Channel for the Political System

The mass media also serve as a channel for the political system's output, transmitting signals about decisions made and actions taken from the political system to society. Easton highlights that symbolic statements and information campaigns are as significant as the decisions themselves (Easton, 1990: 88).

At the output stage, the media contribute by:

(1) Disseminating information about decisions.

(2) Shaping public opinion.

(3) Mobilizing support for policy implementation.

(4) Engaging the public in political actions.

(5) Encouraging political socialization.

(6) Regulating social relations.

Media as a 'Feedback' Channel for the Political System

In fulfilling these roles, the media conceptualize the political system's responses to its environment and provide feedback to adjust future inputs. As noted in Chapter 2 of *'Political Communication: Theoretical Background'*, communication is incomplete without feedback (Kostyrev, 2024: 23-24). **Systemic interaction requires feedback**. **The media play a vital role in establishing a feedback loop, which ensures the political system's responsiveness and adaptability.**

The construction of political information transmission channels, both direct and feedback, operates at four levels. The media serve as the primary channel for this cycle of political communication:

(1) Between the social system and its political subsystem;

(2) Between institutions within the political system of society;

(3) Between a specific political institution, acting as a governing body, and its target audience or constituency;

(4) Within individual political institutions themselves.

This complex construction of connections is illustrated in the combine model of political communication (Kostyrev, 2024: 58).

Media as a Creator of Political Reality

At the same time, it is important to emphasize that **in the process of mediatization the media manifest themselves not only as a channel of information transmission, but also as a creator of information, and therefore of the reflected reality, and therefore of the system of social, including political relations.**

In Chapter 1 of *'Political Communication: Theoretical Background'*, I argued that information influences the object in the process of interaction with a subject (Kostyrev, 2024: 8). So, the contradiction in the role of the media within the social system lies in the fact that, on one hand, the media fulfill the information needs of the recipient (public), while on the other hand, they shape these needs according to the goals and interests of the communicator (government or/and owner). **The media, therefore, perform both reproductive and productive functions for the political system. On the one hand, they reflect the current political situation (reproductive), and on the other, they actively participate in and shape political processes (productive). In this way, the media act as a governing body – the 'fourth estate'.**

Gerd Strohmeier notes that the media often transmit information about events that does not accurately reflect reality. While these events may be real, their coverage is shaped by the demands of media production, and they can even be staged by media directors or PR managers. In this way, the media create what is known as 'media reality', which becomes the only version of reality available to consumers of information. The media constructs a virtual space that, for both political actors and the public, becomes the sole reality.

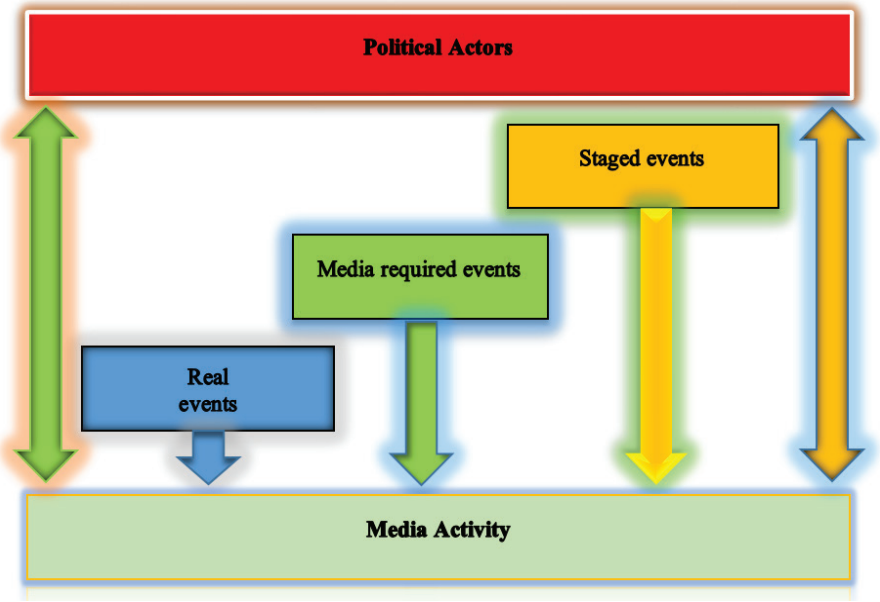

Figure 3.1. The Media's Mechanism for Selecting Events and Shaping Reality (Strohmeier, 2004: 120)

Lester Milbrath, in his analysis of government as a communication network, noted that rulers base their decisions on what comes to their attention, not necessarily on objective truth. Thus, influencing communication is the key to shaping the perceptions of decision-makers (Milbath, 1976: 34-35).

At the same time, according to Strohmeier, the media may not be aware of the constructed nature of this reality; they often believe in its truthfulness themselves. A notable example of this situation occurred with the coverage of the assassination attempt on Donald Trump during a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on July 13, 2024.

Thus, the media, while influencing their audience, also fall under the manipulative effects of external forces. In this context, the media serve not only as conduits of information but also as tools for propagating specific narratives. When the media influence the audience, they act as organs of mass information; conversely, when they are manipulated by political structures, they function as instruments of propaganda. We will consider these models in next Chapter.

As essential channels for the information input – output – feedback cycle, the media not only provide communication support to the political system but also play a role in shaping and constructing it.

Media and Political Systems' Boss-Subordinate Relationship

Examining the multi-layered structure of political communication reveals a systemic challenge in studying the mediatization of politics: does politics depend on the media, or does the media depend on politics?

The German author Gerd Strohmeier develops three key concepts to explain the relationship between politics and mass media:

(1) **Instrumentalization** – when mass media become a tool for political purposes;

(2) **Dependence** – when political structures rely on mass media;

(3) **Interdependence** – where politics and media influence each other simultaneously.

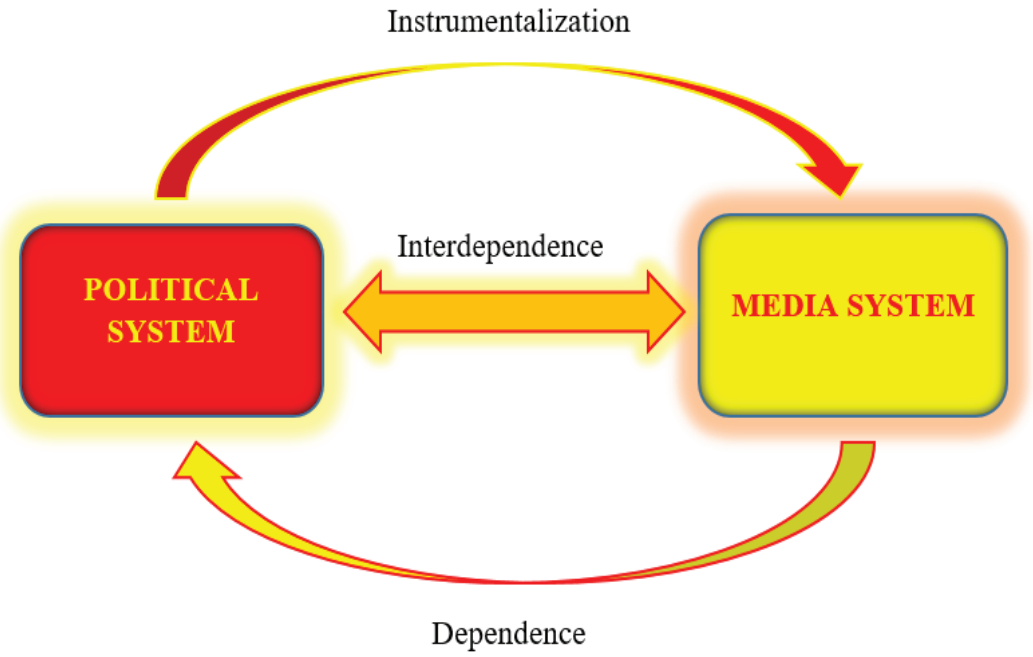

Figure 3.2. The Concepts of Instrumentalization, Dependence and Interdependence (Strohmeier, 2004: 121)

The Concept of Media System Instrumentalization. This concept is based on the idea that mass media often depend heavily on political forces, leading to a loss of independence. In such cases, the media serve mainly as an instrument for political agendas, fulfilling the role of an 'executive body' for politics. Supporters of this view argue that the media should act as a platform, providing political information and serving the interests of political actors by shaping public opinion.

The Concept of Political System Dependence on Mass Media. This concept highlights the media's advantage due to its expertise in interpreting and shaping public understanding of central political issues. Advocates of this view argue that the media should actively intervene in political affairs. As a result, they expect the media to inform the public thoroughly and objectively, as well as to monitor and critique government actions.

The Concept of Political and Media Systems' Interdependence. Strohmeier's concept of interdependence highlights the mutually dependent relationship between politics and mass media. He points out that empirical evidence supports both the dependence and instrumentalization concepts, making it difficult to definitively determine whether politics depends more on media or vice versa. As a result, Strohmeier concludes that it is more accurate to view politics and media as fundamentally interdependent, with each continuously shaping and influencing the other (Strohmeier, 2004: 121-122).

According to the concept of interdependence, mediatization of politics represents a certain interference of political and media systems.

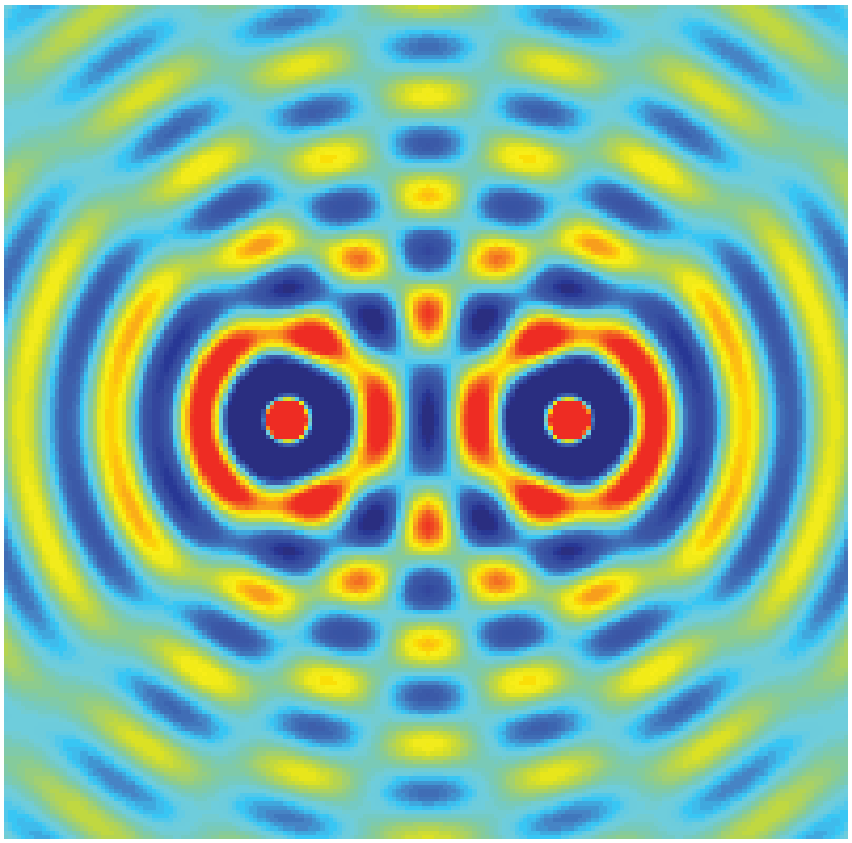

Figure 3.3. The Interference of Political and Media Systems

A systematic approach allows us to view the mediatization of politics as the interaction of two waves of influence – media and politics – creating alternating phases of heightened and diminished media impact and political activity. In Chapter 1 our analysis of the communication field's pulsation effect demonstrated this process in the historical retrospective.

Conclusions

Public and academic ideas regarding the interplay between politics and the media have evolved over time, shaped by historical, technical, and social factors. These include (1) advancements in media technology, (2) the establishment of socio-political relations, (3) the prioritization of values and goals that served as societal guidelines, and (4) specific practices in political communication.

The **normative-value (social-axiological) approach** emerged during the early modern period, spurred by the rise of the printing press, the formation of sovereign national states, the development of liberal ideals, natural law, and the establishment of free political communication in parliamentary parties and elite clubs. This approach relied on philosophical methods and focused on the media's role in ensuring freedom, justice, and public welfare. Four types of media-politics argumentation are identified within this approach: (1) theological arguments, (2) press freedom as a natural right, (3) utilitarian arguments emphasizing the public value of a free press, and (4) deliberative principles aimed at achieving truth through open public debate.

The **behavioral (social-psychological) approach** developed with the rise of mass media, particularly electronic media, and the introduction of universal suffrage. It also arose from the tension between democracy and capitalism on one hand, and authoritarianism and socialism on the other, as well as the use of propaganda in political communication. This approach is based on empirical psychological methods, focusing on the media's influence on electoral preferences and voter behavior. Researchers in this field are divided into three groups: (1) those who believe the media has a decisive impact on voter behavior that can be calculated, predicted, and concealed; (2) those who argue that media influence is minimal and that voters rely on deeply held convictions; and (3) those who acknowledge media influence but consider it complex and multifactorial. Key mechanisms through which the media influence public opinion include (1) agenda-setting, (2) framing, (3) priming, and (4) the spiral of silence.

The **deterministic approach** emerged alongside the rise of electronic media, such as television and the Internet, and the globalization of socio-political processes. This approach argues that advances in communication technology alter human nature, reform social relations, and ultimately transform political institutions. Based on broad statistical and predictive methods, the deterministic approach has evolved into futures studies, focusing on large-scale regional or global phenomena. The development of the information society is one such outcome.

Simultaneously, the **systems approach** developed, focusing on the complex structural and functional relationships between political and media systems, which are viewed as subsystems of the broader social system. Drawing on the ideas of Easton and Almond, this approach highlights three key roles of the media: (1) as the primary input channel, conveying societal demands and support to the political system; (2) as the main output channel, delivering information about political decisions and actions to the public; and (3) as the feedback channel, ensuring political system stability. There are the media's reproductive functions. Dysfunction in any of these roles can lead to systemic failures, potentially causing radical political transformations. Through its control of key channels, the media not only shapes public opinion but also constructs political realities. There are the media's productive functions. These dual reproductive and productive functions enhance the media's role in politics. The systems approach includes three perspectives on media-politics relations: the **instrumentalist position**, where the media serve as tools for politicians (politicization of the media); the **dependence position**, where the media control politicians (mediatization of politics); and the **interdependence position**, where the media and politics operate as partners or competitors (commonly still referred to as the mediatization of politics).

It is important to note that each approach has not entirely replaced its predecessors but has integrated elements from them, driving further research. Today, the normative-value approach has been revitalized by examining the influence of the Internet on participatory and deliberative democracy. The

behavioral approach is now used to study political communication in social media and online networks. Additionally, the deterministic concept of the information society has branched into various projects of the network society. And the systems approach proposes considering interaction between political and media systems as interference of their influences. As a result, these foundational approaches do not contradict each other but together form a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the media-politics effects.

Questions for Self-Assessment:

1. What are the key theoretical foundations of the normative-value (social-axiological) approach, and what types of argumentation are associated with it?
2. What are the main perspectives among behavioral researchers regarding the media's impact, and what underpins their positions?
3. How do media and public opinion interact and influence each other?
4. How does the agenda-setting function operate in shaping public discourse?
5. What are the socio-psychological mechanisms behind the framing effect?
6. How does priming influence public opinion and behavior?
7. What is the spiral of silence, and how does it develop in public communication?
8. What are the theoretical principles of information determinism?
9. What are the defining features of an information society?
10. What is the concept of a network society, and how does it differ from the information society?
11. What are the input and output functions of the media system in relation to political system?
12. What are the key arguments behind the concepts of (1) media system instrumentalization, (2) the political system's dependence on mass media, and (3) the interdependence between political and media systems?

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MODELS OF POLITICAL AND MEDIA SYSTEMS INTERACTION

The collision processes of mediatization of politics and politicization of the media led to a close intertwining of the political and media systems. This intertwining has given birth to a new superpower. Its value orientation largely determines the essence of current social relations. The German social system theorist Richard Münch calls to consider media-political communication as a space of intersystem interaction between political and media systems, in which media and politics interact so closely that they form a separate subsystem – the system of media-political communication (Münch, 1997: 102). So, the model of interaction between political and media systems is a key characteristic of the entire sphere of political communication.

We highlight two complementary comparative approaches to construct the models of interaction between political and media systems: (1) value-normative and (2) structural and functionalist.

1. The Value-Normative Approach

Normative approach was firstly presented by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm in their *"Four Theories of the Press"* (1956). Siebert, F. S., Peterson, T., and Shramm, W. (1984). *Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility, and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the Press Should Be and Do.* University of Illinois Press. DOI: 10.5406/j.ctv1nhr0v

In this book the authors aimed to find an answer to the question: "Why does media (they accent on the press extra) apparently serve different purposes and appear in widely different forms in different countries?" (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm, 1956: 1). The presented formulation of the research question clearly identifies the normative-value approach. Because, as I substantiated in the previous book *"Political Communication: Theoretical Background"*, the distinctive characteristic of the normative-value approach is the dominance of the axiological and value criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of political communication (Kostyrev, 2024: 31, 62-65)**.**

Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm shown how different purposes determine different forms of political and media systems relationships in various countries. They noted that "**the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates**. Especially, it reflects the system of social control whereby the relations of individuals and institutions are adjusted" (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm, 1956: 1-2).

These authors formulated four major theories behind the functioning of the world's presses that have become classical:

(1) the Authoritarian theory;

(2) the Libertarian theory;

(3) the Social Responsibility theory;

(4) the Soviet Communist theory.

Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm stressed:

> To see the differences between press systems in full perspective, then, one must look at the social systems in which the press functions. To see the social systems in their true relationship to the press, one has to look at certain basic beliefs and assumptions which the society holds: the nature of man, the nature of society and the state, the relation of man to the state, and the nature of knowledge and truth. Thus, in the last analysis, the difference between press systems is one of philosophy (ibid: 2).

From this philosophical point of view, which is similar to what we used to define the two main paradigms of political communication (see Kostyrev, 2024: 49-52, 68), **two main types of interaction between political and media systems are distinguished: Democratic and Non-Democratic.** This does not contradict the position of Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm. Because they noted that the latter two 'theories' are merely developments and modifications of the first two. The Soviet Communist theory is only a development of the much older Authoritarian theory, and the Social Responsibility theory is only a modification of the Libertarian theory (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: 2). Based on their theories, we state that **the Non-Democratic type includes two models – Authoritarian and Totalitarian, and the Democratic type involves two models – Libertarian and Social Responsibility.**

The main criterion for their classification is the level of media freedom. It is determined in relation to the influence of state power, the money of media owners, and public interest. This relationship is determined by the structure of political communication (see Kostyrev, 2024: 58) and the structure of the media system (see Chapter 2). In order of increasing the specified criterion, the models of interaction between the political and media systems are arranged in the following order: totalitarian, authoritarian, libertarian, socially responsible.

Let's take a closer look at the features of these models.

The Non-Democratic Type of the Interaction between Political and Media Systems

The Totalitarian model originates from the absolutist theory of state governance, wherein the regime exerts absolute (total) control over all aspects of public and private life. A key characteristic of totalitarianism is the state's absorption of civil society and the absence of pluralism. This is achieved through mechanisms such as an official "totalitarian ideology, a [political] party reinforced by a secret police, and monopolistic control of industrial mass society" (Cinpoes, 2010, p. 70). Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski developed the concept of totalitarianism, describing it through a monolithic model of six interlocking, mutually reinforcing characteristics, including the monopoly control of mass communications media (Brzezinski, and Friedrich, 1956: 22). Similarly, Lawrence Britt, in *Fascism Anyone?*, lists controlled mass media as one of the 14 characteristics of fascism. He notes that "sometimes the media is directly controlled by the government, but in other cases, it is indirectly controlled through government regulation or sympathetic media executives and spokespeople" (Britt, 2003).

Under the totalitarian model, media control is not limited to directing the dissemination of political information. The authority exercises comprehensive ownership and regulation over the entire media system.

In a simplified form, such a model is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

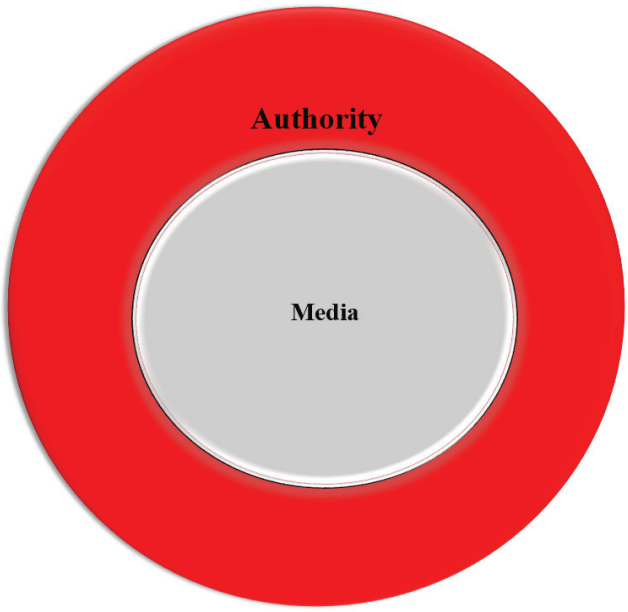

Figure 4.1. The Totalitarian Model of Political and Media Systems Interaction

As discussed in Chapter 1, **mass media serves as a critical tool for the emergence and maintenance of totalitarianism**. Through it, ideological indoctrination is carried out, unified standards of lifestyle and worldview are imposed, and individual and universal values are systematically eroded (Kozenyuk, 1998).

Public discourse is effectively nonexistent in this model. Instead, the primary function of mass media becomes the manipulation of public consciousness and the cultivation of a specific type of political culture. While this is most characteristic of the totalitarian model, other governance systems have also occasionally weaponized the press.

As noted in Chapter 3, this model was first implemented in the Bolshevik dictatorship of the proletariat. In early 1918, Lenin directed the Bolshevik Party to transform the press "from an organ of sensationalism and news reporting into a weapon of economic re-education of the masses and a means of instructing them on organizing work for the new socialist order" (Lenin, 1982 [1918]): 34). After the October Revolution of 1917, this model became a reality in Russia, persisting in the Soviet Union until the late 1980s. It was also adopted by the National Socialists in Germany (1933–1945) and remains in use today under the regimes in North Korea and Afghanistan.

Since Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the Kremlin's authoritarian model has increasingly taken on features of totalitarianism under Putin. Notable indicators include the ideological reshaping of the media space, the monopolization of Putin's perspective, and the criminalization and public harassment of dissent.

The Authoritarian model is the oldest one. As Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm noted:

> It came into being in the authoritarian climate of the late Renaissance, soon after the invention of printing. In that society, truth was conceived to be, not the product of the great mass of people, but of a few wise men who were in a position to guide and direct their fellows. Thus truth was thought to be centered near the center of power. **The press therefore functioned from the top down.** The rulers of the time used the press to inform

> the people of what the rulers thought they should know and the policies the rulers thought they should support. Only by special permission was private ownership of the press permitted, Publishing was thus a sort of agreement between the power source and publisher, in which the former granted a monopoly right and the latter gave support. But the power source kept the right to set and change policy, the right to license, and in some cases the right to censor. This theory of the press **– the press being a servant of the state** responsible for much of its content to the power figures in charge of government at any given moment (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: 2-3).

Harold Innis demonstrated that empires – and monopolies of power, in general – are intrinsically dependent on communication (Innis, 2022). However, this dependency is that of the master upon the servant. In the context of authoritarian regimes, the freedom of the media signals the demise of authoritarianism. Napoleon, for example, was famously wary of the press, recognizing its potential threat to his power. He once remarked, *"If I were to give liberty to the press, my power could not last three days"* (Napoleon Guide, 2024), underscoring his belief in the necessity of strict control over information to maintain authority.

The Authoritarian model is characterized by a vertical, top-down structure of political communication, where the media unconditionally serves state authority. This defines the essential feature of authoritarianism – control over the media.

In a simplified form, such a model is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

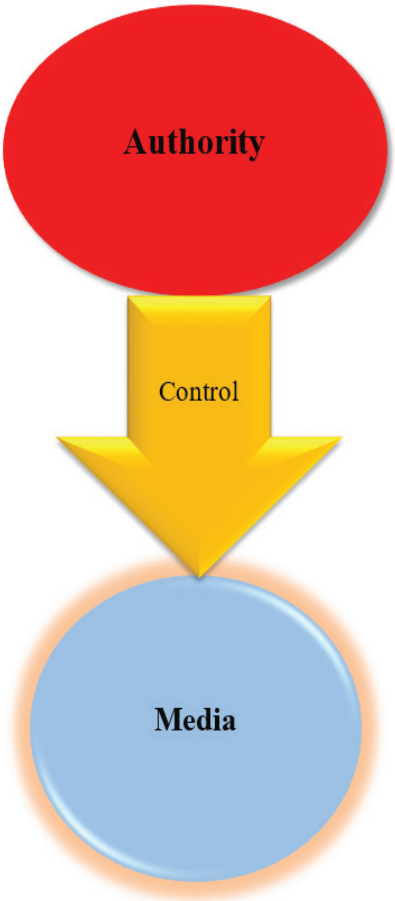

Figure 4.2. The Authoritarian Model of Political and Media Systems Interaction

In this model, the media's role is to support the regime and stabilize its rule. Most media outlets are state-owned, while others exist based on patents, licenses, and censorship regulations imposed by the government. In authoritarian systems, loyalty to the regime is not strictly required, but public opposition is to be avoided, meaning the media should not perform a critical function. Unlike totalitarianism, authoritarianism does not involve mass participation in political life, nor is there a singular unified ideology.

Despite its long history, the authoritarian model remains resilient and adaptable. Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm put attention that:

> Of the four theories of the relation of the press to society or to government, the authoritarian has been most pervasive both historically and geographically. It is the theory which was almost automatically adopted by most countries when society and technology became sufficiently developed to produce what today we call the "mass media" of communication. It furnishes the basis for the press systems in many modern societies; even where it has been abandoned, it has continued to influence the practices of a number of governments which theoretically adhere to libertarian principles (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: 3).

Analysis of political processes of the first quarter of the 21st century shows that the authoritarian model is inherent in societies for which modernization is associated with the transformation of the totalitarian system, or in which processes of 'rollback' from democracy are observed. The latter are characterized by attempts by the authorities to use the mass media to marginalize the population. Such a function of the media as socialization is transformed into a function of alienation of the population from political life, the purpose of which is to prevent the public from realizing the existing conflict situation, to ensure the inertia of society.

Nowadays, this model is most clearly manifested in the states that, according to the Reporters Without Borders organization (Reporters Without Borders, 2024), occupy the last ten positions in the 2024 press freedom rating: 171st position – Myanmar (24.41), 172nd – China (23.36), 173th – Bahrain (23.21), 174th – Vietnam (22.31), 175th – Turkmenistan (22.01), 176th – Iran (21.3), 177th – North Korea (20.66), 178th – Afghanistan (19.09), 179th – Syria (17.41), 180th – Eritrea (16.64).

The Maghreb-Middle East region is the one with the worst situation in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index. It is followed by the Asia-Pacific region, where journalism is suffocating under the weight of authoritarian governments. Africa, although less than 10% of the region is in a 'very serious' situation, almost half of the countries are in a 'difficult' situation.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, media censorship has intensified in a spectacular mimicry of Russian repressive methods, especially in Belarus (down 10th to 167th), Georgia (103rd), Kyrgyzstan (120th), and Azerbaijan (down 13th to 164th). Kremlin influence has reached as far as Serbia down 13th to 164th (7th to 98th), where pro-government media carry Russian propaganda and the authorities threaten exiled Russian journalists. Russia (162nd), where Vladimir Putin was unsurprisingly reelected in 2024, continues to wage a war in Ukraine (61st) that has had a big impact on the media ecosystem and journalists' safety.

However, we should not assume that this disease has bypassed developed countries. The so-called classic 'cradles of democracy' are not at all leaders in terms of media freedom. The United Kingdom ranks 23rd (77.51), occupying a place between Samoa and Jamaica, and the United States is in 55th position (66.83), between Belize and Gabon. This indicates the absence of a strict relationship between the level of economic development of a society and the level of media freedom. And Reporters Without Borders' map shows that authoritarian tendencies prevail in the modern world.

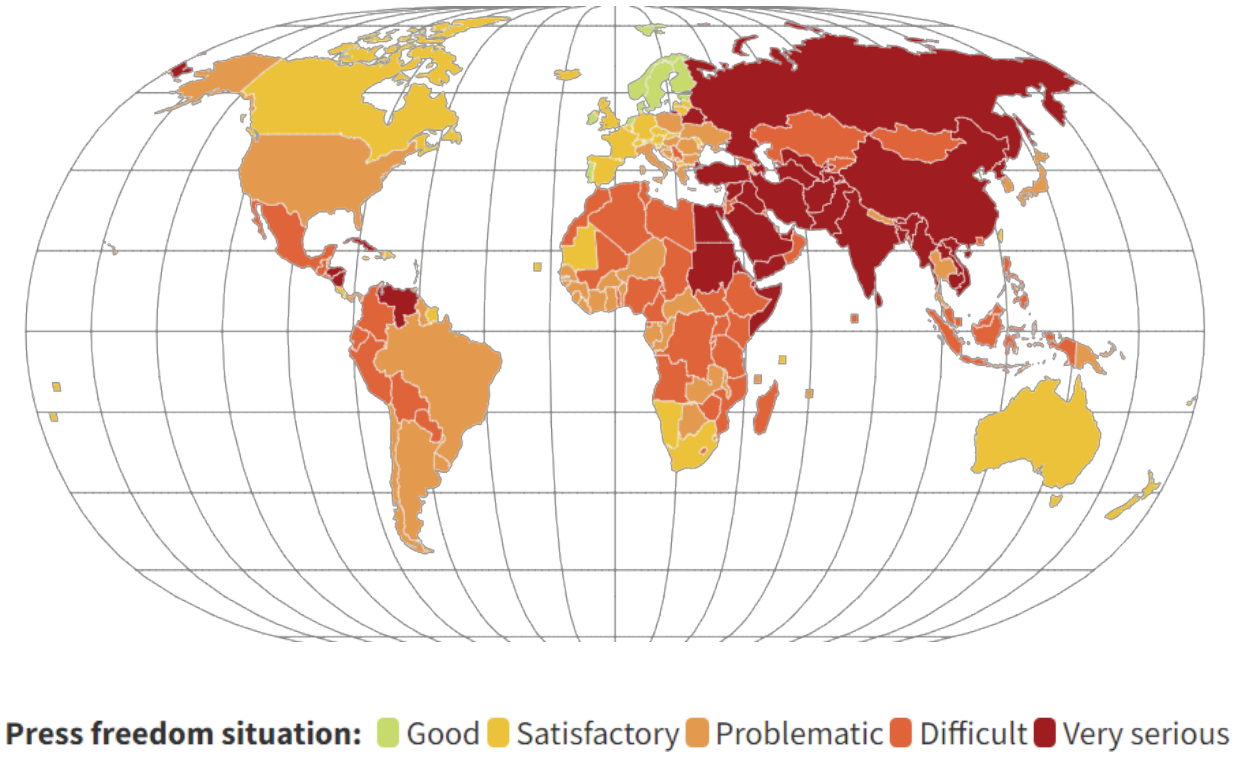

Figure 4.3. The 2024 World Media Freedom Situation (Reporters Without Borders, 2024)

In the early 1990s, John Keane explained the rise of certain concerning trends in democratic regimes:

> At the core of all democratic regimes today are the seeds of despotism. The historical transformation of former absolutist states into modern constitutional parliamentary states (which was never fully completed) has stopped in our time. Today, all Western democracies face an increasingly serious problem: a long-term, almost uncontrolled drift towards an informal community of interconnected states, in which undemocratic decision-making structures become multi-level, almost multinational, and are armed with mechanisms for powerful influence on information flows and the formation of public opinion in their societies (Keane, 1991: 67–68, 94).

Keane further identifies **the primary tools used by authorities to curtail press freedom and limit the communication space, including *"extraordinary powers, military secrecy, political lies, state advertising, and corporatism"*** (Keane, 1991, pp. 68–76).

The models and trends of the non-democratic type shape the process of mediatization of politics in two ways:

1. **Manipulation of the media**
2. **Manipulation by the media**

The first is exemplified by U.S. President Richard Nixon's candid observation: "The success of the presidency lies in the ability to manipulate the press, but God forbid you demonstrate to the press that you are manipulating it" (Kara-Murza, 2000: 148).

The second aspect reflects Marshall McLuhan's prediction that future rulers would no longer need repressive measures to suppress dissent or unrest. Instead, they could simply change television programming to pacify the masses (McLuhan, 2001 [1968]: 83).

Under the non-democratic type of authority relations with the media, the mediatization of politics increasingly aligns with a phenomenon known as Orwellism. This concept, derived from George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, refers to draconian policies of control through propaganda, surveillance, disinformation, and the denial of truth (*doublethink*). Orwellism also includes the practice of making individuals 'unpersons', erasing their existence from public records and memory (Orwell, 2008 [1949]). Orwellism frequently emerges worldwide, manifesting as institutional and systemic invasions of political communication by state authorities, bureaucracies, and individual officials. These practices aim to control political behavior, both at the individual and societal levels. This insidious trend poses a significant threat to modern democracy, undermining its foundational principles and enabling repressive governments to consolidate power.

The Democratic Type of the Interaction between Political and Media Systems

Democratic models of political and media interaction clearly distinguish between civil society, the state, and the media between them. Both aim to strengthen communication networks that have their roots outside the state. This is most clearly demonstrated by the words of Thomas Jefferson: "The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter**"** (Jefferson, 1787). Note how these words contrast with Napoleon's statement above. Unlike authoritarianism, democratic principles emphasize the role of the media as a 'watchdog of democracy'. In the words of Jefferson, it was to provide that check on government which no other institution could provide. Therefore, the following figure simply illustrates the democratic type of interaction between the political and media systems.

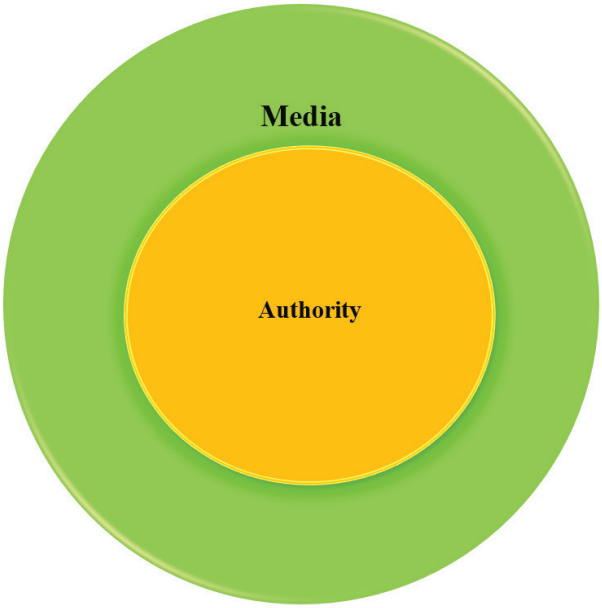

Figure 4.4. The Democratic Type of the Interaction between Political and Media Systems

According to nomative theories of Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm, this type includes two models: Libertarian and Socially responsibility.

The Libertarian model is a child of the Enlightenment and capitalism, emerged in England through the ideas of John Milton, John Locke, and John Stuart Mill, and in the United States with figures like Thomas Jefferson. The value aspects of the normative approach are clearly expressed in the description of the characteristics of this model. The praise of its virtues is based on argumentation

regarding the social significance of press freedom (see Chapter 3). **Humanism that was spiritualized by Immanuel Kant's, principle: "Always treat humanity… never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" (Kant, 2017 [1797]: 66) constitutes the philosophical axiological core of the libertarian model and the democratic type of relationship between the political and media systems as a whole.**

Describing this model, Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm note:

> The Libertarian theory reverses the relative position of man and the state as we saw it in the Authoritarian theory. Man is no longer conceived of as a dependent being to be led and directed, but rather as a rational being able to discern between truth and falsehood, between a better and worse alternative, when faced with conflicting evidence and alternative choices. Truth is no longer conceived of as the property of power. Rather, the right to search for truth is one of the inalienable natural rights of man. The press is conceived of as a partner in the search for truth. **In Libertarian theory, the press is not an instrument of government, but rather the device for presenting evidence and arguments on the basis of which the people can check on the government and make up their minds as to policy. Therefore, it is imperative that the press be free from government control and influence.** In order for the truth to emerge, all ideas must get a fair hearing; there must be a "free market place" of ideas and information. Minorities as well as majorities, the weak as well the strong, must have access to the press (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: 3-4).

These authors **defined the purpose and functions of the media under the libertarian model. Basically the underlying purpose of the media was to help discover truth, to assist in the process of solving political and social problems by presenting all manner of evidence and opinion as the basis for decisions.**

The functions of the mass media of communication are (1) to inform and (2) to entertain, also (3) economic support and thus to assure financial independence, which determine the sales or advertising function, and finally, (4) the function of the press as a political institution charged with the duty of keeping government from overstepping its bounds (ibid: 51).

Proponents of the Libertarian model argue that in a liberal market environment, the media serves society by pursuing truth as an active participant in public discourse, rather than functioning as a mouthpiece for government propaganda. They also emphasize that media organizations should adhere to market-driven principles, shaped by profit and loss, advertising revenue, consumer preferences, and the constant threats of bankruptcy or external censorship. At the same time, its supporters view mass media primarily as an economic activity focused on generating profit. A key principle among these theorists and practitioners is the demand for deregulation – advocating minimal restrictions and limited interference in both the economy at large and the media in particular. Under this model, media outlets operate as private enterprises competing within a 'free market of ideas' and media involvement in scrutinizing government or political parties is not subject to punishment. The modern liberal 'political economy of mass communications' views the media as primarily an economic phenomenon with a 'direct' role (through commodity production and exchange) as a creator of surplus value, and with an 'mediated' role, through advertising, in the production of surplus value in other sectors of commodity production. This analysis, focusing on the media product as a commodity, correctly points to the profound importance of defending 'deregulation'.

The well-known apologist of the libertarian model, media magnate Rupert Murdoch, argues that market competition is key to freedom of the press and speech, understanding it as freedom from state interference, as the unrestricted right of individuals to exchange ideas (Murdoch, 1989: 12-13). The mass media organized and supported by the state, especially in the field of television and radio broad-

casting, are completely condemned by supporters of the liberal model. Controlled only by the market, the mass media, in their opinion, ensure competition. Competition ensures freedom of entry into the market of ideas for any initiative that believes that it has something special, worth reading, listening to, or watching. As a result, based on market principles, the mass media serve both audiences – the mass and the minority – freeing them from bureaucrats on television, radio, and in the press. Market-driven media free individuals from the pressure of state-imposed 'commonly accepted' values.

But it is becoming obvious that, in full accordance with the laws of capitalist development, the media market significantly restricts freedom of communication by creating barriers for newcomers, monopolizing and limiting choices, and changing the prevailing perception of information from a 'public good' to an object of purchase and sale. According to the law of capital concentration, multi-media transnational corporations have become masters of the information market. Having analyzed the functioning of multimedia transnational corporations, whose broadcasting is shaped and driven by the economic imperatives of the market, Herbert Schiller (1973) identified four trends in the development of the media (television) operating under market liberalism: monopolization, internationalization (globalization), unification, and commercialization (see Chapter 1). This is the maintenance of the power of big business, its right to organize, determine, and, consequently, censor the choice of individuals in the field of what they listen to, read, or watch. Ordinary citizens have no opportunity to make sure that the developers of certain political decisions were not guided by the interests of some narrow interest groups, they do not even have the formal right to learn about the considerations that guided the authorities when making this or that decision.

This leads to a deep contradiction between freedom of communication, which is a condition and a sign of democracy, and unlimited freedom of the market. Therefore, we can conclude that in modern conditions, **the libertarian model of interaction between the media and the authorities with its ideology of individual free choice in the market of opinions is actually the establishment of a privileged status of corporate discourse, which provides much greater opportunities for choice to investors than to citizens**.

Analyzing this trend, Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm note:

> As a matter of fact, they rigorously protect the press against government. But the very fact that control of the press is so limited puts a new and uneasy power into the hands of media owners and managers. No longer is it easy for the press to be a free market place of ideas, as defined by Mill and Jefferson. As the Commission on Freedom of the Press said, "protection against government is not now enough to guarantee that a man who has something to say shall have a chance to say it. The owners and managers of the press determine which persons, which facts, which versions of these facts, shall reach the public" (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm, 1956: 4-5).

There is a strange paradox here. It turns out that modern market liberalism peacefully coexists with a deep neoconservative sympathy for political and cultural authoritarianism and information imperialism.

It should not be mistaken that this trend was characteristic only of traditional media – the press, radio and television. Researchers of the interaction between politics and 'new media' – social networks are also sounding the alarm. They draw attention to the colossal possibilities of political influence of the owners of such powerful Internet platforms as Google and Facebook. Miguel Moreno, professor of philosophy at the University of Granada, Spain, an expert in ethics, epistemology and technology, commented, "There is a clear risk of bias, manipulation, abusive surveillance and authoritarian control over social networks, the internet and any uncensored citizen expression platform, by private or state actors". Robert Epstein, senior research psychologist at the American Institute for

Behavioral Research and Technology, said, "As of 2015, the outcomes of upward of 25 of the national elections in the world were being determined by Google's search engine. Democracy as originally conceived cannot survive Big Tech as currently empowered. If authorities do not act to curtail the power of Big Tech companies – Google, Facebook and similar companies that might emerge in coming years – in 2030, democracy might look very much as it does now to the average citizen, but citizens will no longer have much say in who wins elections and how democracies are run" (Anderson, and Rainie, 2020).

And it would be quite fashionable to attribute to these processes the assertion of the authors of the *'Four Theories of the Press'*:

> While the Libertarian theory has been wrestling with its own problems and shaping its own destiny, a new and dramatic development of authoritarianism has arisen to challenge it. This uneasiness is the basis of the developing Social Responsibility theory: that the power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm, 1956: 5).

The Social Responsibility model is based on the ideals of socially active public life, the key element of which is an open civil society, which inspires the communication process and transforms one-sided messages into a dialogue in society. The main premise of the theory, according to its founders, on which a socially responsible model of interaction between the political and media systems should be built, is that: freedom carries with it corresponding obligations, therefore the press, which has received the right to a privileged position in subordination to the government, is obliged to be responsible to society for the performance of certain essential functions of mass communication in modern society (ibid: .74).

To understand the nature of the social responsibility model we have to consider its functional distinguishes. According to creators' theories, **six tasks came to be ascribed to the media under the Democratic type of relation with political system**: (1) servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs; (2) enlightening the public so as to make it capable of self-government; (3) safeguarding the rights of the individual by serving as a watchdog against government; (4) servicing the economic system, primarily by bringing together the buyers and sellers of goods and services through the medium of advertising; (5) providing entertainment; (6) maintaining its own financial self-sufficiency so as to be free from the pressures of special interests.

And the functions of the media under social responsibility model are basically the same as those under libertarian model. **But it reflects a dissatisfaction with the interpretation of those six functions by some media owners and operators and with the way in which the press has carried them out.** Social responsibility model accepts the role of the press in servicing the political system, in enlightening the public, in safeguarding the liberties of the individual; but it represents the opinion that the press has been deficient in performing those tasks. It accepts the role of the press in servicing the economic system, but it would not have this task take precedence over such other functions as promoting the democratic processes or enlightening the public. It accepts the role of the press in furnishing entertainment but with the proviso that the entertainment be 'good' entertainment. It accepts the need for the press as an institution to remain financially self-supporting, but if necessary it would exempt certain individual media from having to earn their way in the market place (ibid: .74).

Building on the comparative analysis of interactions between political and media systems by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, John Keane presents a diagram that, while somewhat simplified, effectively illustrates the structural differences between the libertarian and social responsibility models.

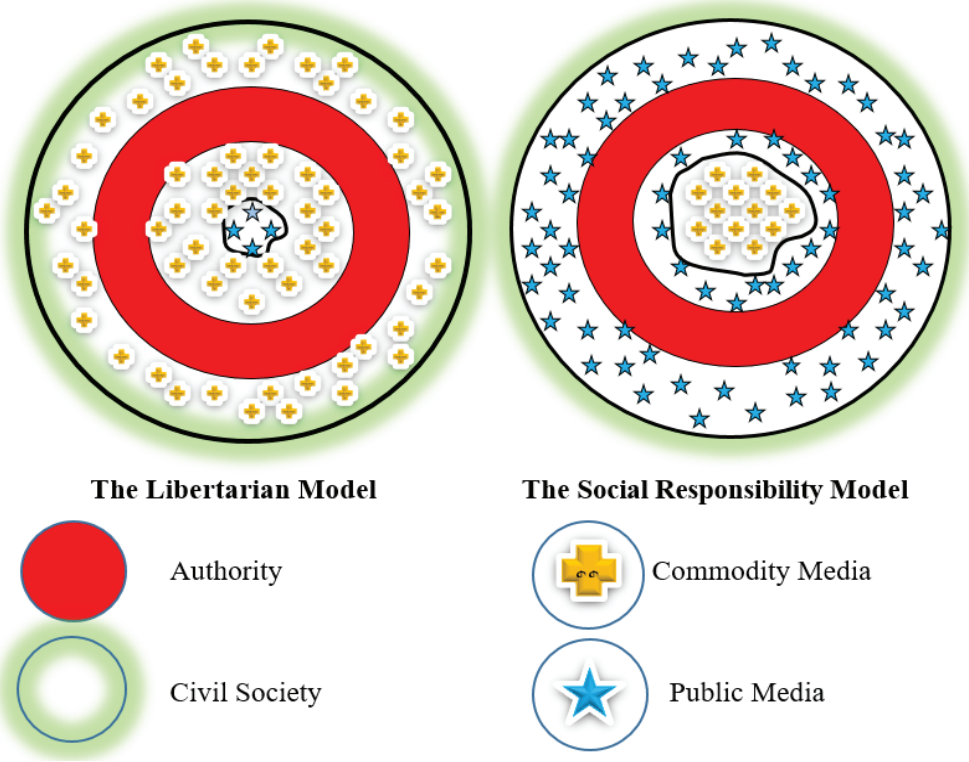

Figure 4.5. The Libertarian and Social Responsibility Models' Comparison (Keane, 1991: 102)

These theoretical considerations become clearer from the example given by Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: "Today, when newspaper publishers speak about their calling, such phrases as "the public's right to know" and "the public responsibility of the press" are likely to creep into their talk. Such ideas and the press performance resulting from them represent an important modification of traditional libertarian theory, for nothing in libertarian theory established the public's right to information or required the publisher to assume moral responsibilities" (Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm: 73). This remark shows how **the social responsibility model really brings moral criteria into the relations between elements of the political and media systems.**

In this context, **Keane highlights that under the social responsibility model, the mass media must fulfill the following key requirements set by modern society:**

(1) Provide truthful and comprehensive reporting: Media should not only present accurate facts but also contextualize them intelligently to give them meaning. In today's landscape, it is no longer sufficient to merely report facts truthfully; the media must convey the truth behind those facts. (Under the liberal model, the primary rule for the press is "not to lie", whereas the socially responsible model emphasizes "telling the truth").

(2) Act as a forum for public dialogue: The media should facilitate the exchange of comments and criticism, fostering healthy discussion among diverse voices.

(3) Represent societal diversity: Media should reflect the various groups and components that make up society, offering a balanced and inclusive portrayal.

(4) Promote social awareness: It is the media's duty to present and raise awareness of shared social goals and values.

(5) Ensure accessibility: Media should provide broad access to news and information, facilitating the widespread dissemination of messages and opinions (Keane, 1991: 100-101).

Based on the theory of Siebert, Paterson, and Schramm and adapting it to modern realities, we can identify the following features of the social responsibility model:

(1) The social responsibility model corresponds to the principles of social democracy and the most appropriate regulation and limitation of the power of private corporations over civil society, therefore the best landscape for its formation is situated in the countries focused on ideals of social justice. The media freedom ranking data from Reporters Without Borders confirms this. The top ten for 2024 are as follows: Norway (91.89), Denmark (89.6), Sweden (88.32), Netherlands (87.73), Finland (86.55), Estonia (86.44), Portugal (85.9), Ireland (85.59), Switzerland (84.01), Germany (83.84) (Reporters Without Borders, 2024).

(2) The social responsibility model is based on the interactivity of participants in the process of political communication, therefore a network society are a favorable environment for its functioning. This correlates with the findings of Manuel Castells and Jan Van Dijk (see Chapter 3).

(3) The social responsibility model provides for the development of publicly funded, self-governing and supranational structures of civil society, which would be truly pluralistic, and would not depend on commodity relations, therefore globalizing civic society is a fruitful space for its development. This is reflected in the processes of glocalization described in the works of Barry Wellman and Manuel Castells (see Chapter 3).

Contemporary democratic norms allow mass media to operate within both the liberal and social responsibility models. However, which model is better suited to advancing democracy in the context of the network society? This question sparks intense debate between proponents and critics of each approach. Advocates of the liberal model vehemently oppose state intervention in regulating the Internet, while supporters of the social responsibility model equally passionately highlight the inherent risks and shortcomings of unrestricted information flow on the World Wide Web. It is undeniable that the models described above do not exist in their pure form in any country. This is particularly evident in societies undergoing transformation, where unique variants of interaction between political institutions and mass media structures are emerging.

When comparing modern democratic systems to totalitarian ones, the degree of institutional autonomy stands out as a critical distinction. Both systems maintain their own forms of mass media, yet their functions differ significantly. An analysis of these two political systems reveals that, in democracies, the mass media operates with relative autonomy, whereas in totalitarian regimes, the media is tightly controlled by the ruling elite and bureaucratic apparatus. Thus, the level of media autonomy serves as a key criterion to distinguish liberal-democratic systems from authoritarian or totalitarian ones, as the latter strive to control the media to shape public opinion in their favor.

Gabriel Almond and James Coleman identify key characteristics of political information, including homogeneity, mobility, volume, and directionality, which reflect the development level of a political system (Almond, and Coleman, 1960: 50-59). In democratic systems, political messages disseminated by the media are generally accessible and comprehensible to all. Conversely, in totalitarian and authoritarian systems, information is often heterogeneous and tailored to specific social groups, creating a fragmented flow of messages. The extent of this fragmentation depends on the socio-cultural and political maturity of the country. Furthermore, democratic systems facilitate the free circulation of information, encountering minimal barriers, whereas totalitarian and authoritarian regimes impose strict limitations, restricting access to certain communities or regions. The volume of political information available in authoritarian systems is also significantly lower than in democratic ones.

Another important difference lies in the direction of information flow. In totalitarian and authoritarian systems, communication predominantly moves in one direction – from the rulers to the citizens. In contrast, democratic systems are characterized by a mutual exchange of information, enabling genuine communication between the government and the public.

In current conditions, where the volume of information directed at the political system increases exponentially, the system may face the challenge of information overload, leading to a blockage in communication channels and a reduced capacity to respond effectively. The system has two potential solutions to this issue. The first is to expand the capacity of communication channels by increasing both the number and variety of information channels – a strategy typically employed by democratic regimes. The second option is to filter and simplify demands in a way that significantly reduces their volume, which is more common in totalitarian and authoritarian systems. Democratic systems strive to achieve the most accurate and comprehensive understanding of reality possible. In contrast, totalitarian systems often suffer from insufficient information, as messages are filtered or blocked from reaching decision-making centers. Although a totalitarian system can speed up its response times by rapidly transmitting orders from the top down, this advantage diminishes over time because it creates barriers to the flow of information in the opposite direction – from the bottom up. In societies with underdeveloped or slow-growing mass communication networks, the political system may be significantly hindered by the limited information it receives about both the external environment and its own internal condition. Moreover, such a system may filter out or even suppress older information stored in society's collective memory, often due to political motives or ideology. Any political system that ceases to absorb new messages or neglects certain political experiences risks losing its effectiveness in leadership and coordination. It becomes increasingly dependent on citizens' subordination rather than their trust, often resorting to authoritarian and repressive measures. Therefore, political communication is essential for democracy. It enables the circulation of information both within the political system and between the system and society. In a democratic society, mass communication ensures a continuous process of mutual exchange of information among individuals and groups at all levels.

Additionally, the functioning of mass media is also influenced by the overall state of the political system. Even well-established democratic systems can experience a 'tense' state, for example, during times of military conflict, which inevitably affects the interaction between political and media systems.

A review of the normative approach allows us to summarize the defining features of the models of interaction between political and media systems, as shown in Table 4.1. (Kostyriev, 2004: 109).

Table 4.1. Comparative Analysis of Interaction Models Between Political and Media Systems

Type/Model	Ownership of Leading Media	Primary Goal of Media Owners	Information Flow Directions	Characteristics of the Commnication Field	Dominant Functions of Media (Reproductive/Productive)	Role of Media in Relation to the Population	Associated Political Regime
Non-Democratic/ Totalitarian	A party usurping state power	Ideological control	Vertical (Top-down)	Heterogeneity, stability, dependence on ruling party	Ideological/Mobilization	Manipulation	Totalitarian
Non-Democratic/ Authoritarian	The state and state-controlled business clans	Supporting government	Political information - Vertical (Top-down), Other - Horizontal	Heterogeneity, conservatism, dependence on authority	Entertainment/Management	Marginalization	Authoritarian
Democratic/ Libertarian	Media moguls	Profit making	Vertical two way (Top-down and Bottom-up), Horizontal	Homogeneity, mobility, dependence on capital	Informational/Advertising	Information	Classical Liberal democracy
Democratic/ Social Responsibility	Civil society institutions	Promoting democracy	Circular (Feedback loops)	Homogeneity, mobility, autonomy	Oversight/Communication	Communication	Social Democracy

The four theories of the press by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm have been modified several times. For example, the German scholar **Ulrich Sakser proposed a modification in which the relationship between media and political systems is characterized by five parameters: the purpose of the media; normative expectations of the media; institutional justifications of the media; property relations; taxation and control.** As a result, he classified four ideal types of such relationships (not always strictly different from each other): economic-liberal, democratic-controlled, authoritarian and totalitarian. As we can see it was a step, that allied the normative approach with the structural-functional.

A key feature of the normative approach is its emphasis on values, particularly media freedom, and its focus on the goals of societal development, such as democratization.

2. The Structural-Functional Approach

The structural-functional method was employed by Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini to conduct a comparative analysis of the interaction between political and media systems within democratic contexts. Unlike Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, Hallin and Mancini exclude authoritarian and totalitarian models, such as those found under National Socialism or in communist and socialist regimes. Their influential book, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* (2004), advances the field of comparative media studies, particularly in light of new global trends following the end of the Cold War. Explaining the object of their scientific research, they pay special attention to the role of media structures in a democratic political system:

> All of the systems considered in this book are pluralist, democratic systems. In each, a wide variety of political parties, social groups and movements (both organized and unorganized), individuals and institutions compete for voice and power, and the media systems reflect, incorporate, and shape this pluralism in a variety of ways. At the same time, all are systems of power. In each system, there are structured inequalities in the relations among these actors; some have much greater access to resources or are better positioned to exercise influence than others. The media must be seen not only as part of a process of democratic competition but also as a part of this structure of power (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 83). Any judgment we make about a media system has to be based on a clear understanding of its social context – of such elements as the divisions existing within society, the political process by which they were (or were not) resolved, and the prevailing patterns of political belief (ibid: 15).

Their analysis focuses on media-politics relationships at the structural level, while also accounting for broader factors to provide a comprehensive understanding. This methodology combines dimensions of media and political systems, applied to specific national contexts.

Hallin and Mancini identify four major dimensions according to which media systems in Western Europe and North America can usefully be compared:

(1) the development of media markets, with particular emphasis on the strong or weak development of a mass circulation press;

(2) political parallelism; that is, the degree and nature of the links between the media and political parties or, more broadly, the extent to which the media system reflects the major political divisions in society;

(3) the development of journalistic professionalism; and

(4) the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system (ibid: 21).

Hallin and Mancini have identified a number of political system and summarized they in terms of five principal dimensions:

(1) the relation of state and society, and particularly the distinction between liberal and welfare-state democracy;

(2) the distinction between consensus and majoritarian government;

(3) the distinction, related to consensus and majoritarian patterns of government, between organized pluralism or corporatism, and liberal pluralism;

(4) the development of rational-legal authority;

(5) the distinction between moderate and polarized pluralism (ibid: 65).

By analyzing the interplay of these dimensions, **Hallin and Mancini have identified the three models both by the geographical region in which they predominate and by a key element of the political system that they consider crucial to understanding the distinctive characteristics that mark the media-politics relationship in each model: the Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model, the North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist Model, and the North Atlantic or Liberal Model.** The authors argue that these models identify patterns of development that are both coherent and distinct, and that the sets of countries we have grouped together under these headings share many important characteristics. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that these are 'ideal types' (ibid: 69).

The Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model (France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain) is characterized by an elite-oriented press with relatively small circulation and a corresponding centrality of electronic media. Freedom of the press and the development of commercial media industries generally came late; newspapers have often been economically marginal and in need of subsidy. Political parallelism tends to be high; the press is marked by a strong focus on political life, external pluralism, and a tradition of commentary-oriented or advocacy journalism persists more strongly than in other parts of Europe. Instrumentalization of the media by the government, by political parties, and by industrialists with political ties is common. Public broadcasting tends to follow the government or parliamentary models. Professionalization of journalism is not as strongly developed as in the other models: journalism is not as strongly differentiated from political activism and the autonomy of journalism is often limited. The state plays a large role as an owner, regulator, and funder of media, though its capacity to regulate effectively is often limited. Many Mediterranean countries are characterized by a particularly rapid and uncontrolled transition from state controlled to commercial broadcasting (ibid: 75). The Polarized Pluralist Model is characterized by a high level of politicization, with the state and political parties intervening strongly in many areas of social life, and with much of the population holding strong loyalties to widely varying political ideologies. Loyalty to these ideologies goes along with widespread skepticism about any conception of a 'common good' that would transcend them, and a relative absence of commonly agreed rules and norms. Polarized Pluralist systems, finally are characterized by unequal consumption of public information, with a fairly sharp division between the politically active population that heavily consumes political commentary in the press, and a politically inactive population that consumes little political information. The news media are similarly characterized by a high degree of external pluralism, in which media are seen as champions of diverse political ideologies, and commitment to these ideologies tends to outweigh commitment to a common professional culture. Ties between journalists and political actors are close, the state intervenes actively in the media sector, and newspapers emphasize sophisticated commentary directed at a readership of political activists (ibid: 299).

The North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist Model (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland) is characterized by early devel-

opment of press freedom and the newspaper industry, and very high newspaper circulation. It is also characterized by a history of strong party newspapers, and other media connected to organized social groups. This political press coexisted with the commercial press through much of the twentieth century, though by the 1970s it was fading. Strong commercial media industries have coexisted with politically linked media and a high degree of political parallelism; high political parallelism has also coexisted with a high degree of journalistic professionalization; and a strong liberal tradition of press freedom and freedom of information has coexisted with strong state intervention in the media sector as in other sectors of society. Liberal institutions generally developed early in the Democratic Corporatist countries. The welfare state is strong, though with significant variations in its extent. Rational-legal authority is also strongly developed (ibid: 75). The Democratic Corporatist Model is characterized by a strong emphasis on the role of organized social groups in society, but simultaneously by a strong sense of commitment to the 'common good' and to rules and norms accepted across social divisions. A strong value is placed on the free flow of information, and at the same time the state is seen as having a positive obligation to promote that flow. There is, finally, a culture of heavy consumption of information about public affairs. The media culture is characterized by a surviving advocacy tradition that sees the media as vehicles for expression of social groups and diverse ideologies, and at the same time by a high level of commitment to common norms and procedures. State intervention in the media is extensive, but a high value is placed on media autonomy. Political information is relatively highly valued and is produced for dissemination to a mass audience (ibid: 299).

The North Atlantic or Liberal Model (Britain, United States, Canada, Ireland), similar to the Democratic Corporatist Model, is characterized by early development of press freedom and the mass-circulation press, though newspaper circulation today is lower than in the Democratic Corporatist societies. Commercial newspapers dominate, political parallelism is low, and internal pluralism predominates – with the important exception of the highly partisan British press. Professionalization of journalism is relatively strong, though without the kind of formal organization that prevails in the Democratic Corporatist countries. Journalistic autonomy is more likely to be limited by commercial pressures than by political instrumentalization. Liberal institutions of course developed relatively early in these societies, where the role of the market is traditionally strong and the role of the state relatively limited. All are characterized by moderate pluralism and tend toward majoritarianism, and none have the strongly organized social groups (ibid: 75). The Liberal Model is characterized by a more individualistic conception of representation, in which the role of organized social groups is emphasized less than in the other two systems and is often seen in negative terms, as elevating 'special interests' over the 'common good'. The latter tends to be emphasized over ideological loyalty or consistency. The role of the state tends to be seen in negative terms and the free flow of information is understood as requiring the limitation of state involvement. An emphasis on consumption of public information as essential to citizenship is modified by the individualism and anti-political elements of the culture, which tend to privilege private over public life. The role of the media tends to be seen less in terms of representation of social groups and ideological diversity than in terms of providing information to citizen-consumers and in terms of the notion of the press as a 'watchdog' of government. A common professional culture of journalism is relatively strongly developed, though not formally institutionalized as in the Democratic Corporatist Model. Strong emphasis is placed on limiting government intervention in the media sphere. The media tend to target a wide mass audience and also to emphasize public affairs less than in the other models (ibid: 299).

The general characteristics of these three models are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. The Hallin and Mancini's Models of Media-Politics Relations

Dimensions	Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist Model	North/Central Europe or Democratic Corporatist Model	North Atlantic or Liberal Model
Media System Characteristics			
Newspaper Industry	Low newspaper circulation; elite politically oriented press	High newspaper circulation; early development of mass-circulation press	Medium newspaper circulation; early development of mass-circulation commercial press
Political Parallelism	High political parallelism; external pluralism, commentary-oriented journalism; parliamentary or government model of broadcast governance; politics-over-broadcasting systems	External pluralism especially in national press; historically strong party press; shift toward neutral commercial press; politics-in-broadcasting system with substantial autonomy	Neutral commercial press; information-oriented journalism; internal pluralism (but external pluralism in Britain); professional model of broadcast governance; formally autonomous system
Professionalization	Strong state intervention; press subsidies in France and Italy; periods of censorship; 'savage deregulation' (except France)	Strong state intervention but with protection for press freedom; press subsidies, particularly strong in Scandinavia; strong public-service broadcasting	Market dominated (except strong public broadcasting in Britain and Ireland)
Political System Characteristics			
Political History; Patterns of Conflict and Consensus	Late democratization; polarized pluralism	Early democratization; moderate pluralism (except Germany, Austria pre-1945)	Early democratization; moderate pluralism
Consensus or Majoritarian Government	As predominantly consensus as predominantly majoritarian	Predominantly consensus	Predominantly majoritarian
Individual vs. Organized Pluralism	Organized pluralism; strong role of political parties	Organized pluralism; history of segmented pluralism; democratic corporatism	Individualized representation rather than organized pluralism (especially United States)
Role of the State	Dirigisme, strong involvement of state and parties in economy; periods of authoritarianism, strong welfare state in France and Italy	Strong welfare state; significant involvement of state in economy	Liberalism; weaker welfare state particularly in United States
Rational-Legal Authority	Weaker development of rational-legal authority (except France); clientelism	Strong development of rational-legal authority	Strong development of rational-legal authority

At a very general level the authors summarize the differences among these systems by saying that in the Liberal countries the media are closer to the world of business, and further from the world of politics. In the Polarized Pluralist systems they are relatively strongly integrated into the political world, while in Democratic Corporatist countries the media have had strong connections to both the political and economic worlds, though with a significant shift away from political connections particularly in recent years. In terms of the three models, the Liberal Model is characterized by a high degree of differentiation of the media from "other social bodies," particularly those historically active in the political sphere – parties, interest groups, and in some cases religious groups. The Polarized Pluralist and Democratic Corporatist systems, on the other hand, are characterized by lower levels of differentiation of media from such organized social and political groups, with a more recent trend toward differentiation particularly in the Democratic Corporatist countries.

Hallin and Mancini extended their research further, culminating in the 2012 publication of *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World*. This book comprises a series of case studies in which various scholars analyze the media systems of countries including Israel, Poland, Lithuania, Brazil, Russia, China, South Africa, Arab nations (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Qatar), and countries in Southeast Asia. The authors aimed to critically assess the applicability of the three models proposed in their earlier work to these non-Western contexts. They explored whether the four dimensions outlined in the original framework sufficiently support comprehensive analysis of media systems outside the Western world.

The media systems examined in their earlier work were characterized as liberal, with limited state power, relatively robust legal protections, and clear differentiation between the state and other social institutions, including the media. In this context, the media were viewed as separate from the state, and variations were considered in terms of state influence and institutional differentiation. In contrast, many of the countries studied in the second book exhibit strong state involvement in the media (with Libya as a notable exception, where state authority is weak and heavily influenced by external actors). The degree of state power varies significantly across these nations. For instance, state control is particularly prominent in China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia, while countries like Israel, Poland, Lithuania, and Brazil demonstrate relatively less state influence. In non-Western countries, state intervention is often perceived as more problematic than in Western systems, where public broadcasting and legal protections for freedom of speech are strong. Western nations analyzed in the first book are distinctive in the global context for their early development of liberal capitalist and democratic institutions, which are closely intertwined.

By contrast, Southern European countries, discussed in the second book, underwent more recent and tumultuous transitions to democracy. These systems are marked by ideological heterogeneity, significant state roles in socio-economic development, weak differentiation between political and economic institutions, patronage systems, and a blending of journalism with literature and politics. The region's historically low literacy rates and contentious transitions to liberal norms also stand out. Interestingly, many of these traits align with those of non-Western media systems. Another key theme of the book is the decreasing differences among media systems due to globalization, European integration, and the rise of global media markets. These forces are erasing national distinctions, contributing to a more unified global media culture. Some experts argue this shift reflects the movement of European media systems toward a liberal model. However, scholars from Russia and China challenge this view, arguing that the trend is not as dominant as it seems. In contrast, representatives from Poland and Lithuania see significant alignment between Eastern European media systems and European models, suggesting a shift toward hybrid systems that align more closely with the polarized pluralistic model than the liberal one. The Israeli media system, while it might have evolved toward the liberal model, has been constrained by the country's culture of national security and ongoing conflicts. In Brazil, American norms strong-

ly influence journalism, but Brazilian journalists and media owners have adapted these norms to suit their cultural and political context, fundamentally altering their original meanings. This phenomenon—where global media norms are reinterpreted to align with local political structures and cultural practices – emerges as a common trend. Reflecting this perspective, the analysis of the Chinese media system emphasizes the state's central role, diverging from Hallin and Mancini's earlier work, which prioritized the market and discussed the state's role only as a secondary factor.

The conducted collective comparative structural and functional analysis significantly expanded the variability of classification of models of interaction of political and media systems in the world. The founders of this methodology note:

> We need to be conscious of the sharp differences that separate the historical experience of Western Europe and North America from other world regions, but we should not treat the differences between 'Western' and 'non-Western' media systems as more radical than they actually are. Many phenomena found in non-Western media systems that are commonly seen as divergences from Western models – the use of media as tools for private intervention in politics, reliance of media on state financial support, "formal and informal links between political or integrated political/economic elites and journalists" (Vartanova, Chapter 7), the selective application of media regulations, journalistic forms that merge opinion and reporting –are not unknown in the West. They are easiest to see when we look at Southern Europe, and in that sense the comparison with Southern Europe helps relativize a bit the dichotomy of 'the West' and 'the rest of the world' (ibid: 284).

Although the findings reflect a diverse spectrum rather than a rigid system, they affirm the effectiveness of the structural-functional approach in analyzing the characteristics of political mediatization across different countries. This gives Hallin and Mancini grounds to conclude:

> Political and media institutions, moreover, are indeed constituted and changed by particular actors and cannot be taken as preexisting or fixed. Certainly, a focus on this process of constitution is crucial to a sophisticated analysis of media and politics. However, does this mean that it is not valid to speak at all about structure or system? We would say that this does not follow. We think it is evident that the comparative analysis of media and politics needs to keep the two perspectives in balance. Agents shift and innovate in ways that cannot be reduced to any fixed, all-determining structure. Yet their agency is also shaped by conditions that are outside of their control, by realities of where their news organizations get the resources to function, for example, or the power relationships that prevail in the political system in which they live (ibd: 302-303).

Swiss researcher Roger Blum fruitfully developed Hallin and Mancini's experience of comparative structural-functional analysis of the interaction of political and media systems. His works were published in 2005 as an article, and in 2014 as a book *'Propagandists and Critics. Introduction to Comparing Media Systems'*. To consider the features of interpreting the processes of the mediatization of politics, it is important to note that, **according to Blum, the political systems of individual countries determine their media systems**. Assessing the various models of interaction between the political and media systems, he stated:

> There are political systems in which the mass media completely serve the state power as propagandists. There are others in which the mass media act against governments as critics. There are also third and fourth systems of government in which the state and the mass media are in complex, ambivalent relations (Blum, 2014: 12).

Blum, wondering whether it is possible to expand the list of criteria and include all countries for a comparative analysis of media systems, developed the theory of a 'pragmatic differentiated approach'. According to this theory, the real structural and functional nature of media systems is described first, then a theoretical approach is developed. The author describes in detail the models of media systems in various regions of the world using specific countries (23 states) as examples.

Blum developed and used 11 political and media parameters for analysis: (1) history of development, (2) system of government, (3) political culture, (4) freedom of speech, (5) media owners, (6) media financing, (7) political parallelism, (8) state control over media, (9) media culture, (10) media orientation, (11) professionalism of journalists (ibid: 24).

Based on this analysis, **Blum classifies 6 models of media systems in various regions of the world:** (1) media in ideologically closed systems; (2) media in patriotically oriented systems; (3) media in controlled semi-closed systems; (4) media in free-client systems; (5) media in public service systems; (6) media in liberal systems (ibid: 33-36).

Media model in ideologically closed systems (North Korea, China, Syria, Cuba). Countries within this model are ideologically closed, the political system is based on the ideology of a single party, and political, cultural, religious, and intellectual dissenters are imprisoned or sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and fines. All countries have typical features of a totalitarian system. In this model, the mass media are in public service, acting as propagandists of the official authorities. Only insignificant private mass media can express a different opinion. Despite the constitutionally enshrined freedom of speech, the mass media are accompanied by constant censorship. There is no self-regulation, no Press Councils or ombudsman. Regulation of the activities of the mass media is the business of the state since almost all media belong to it and are financed by it. It follows that the mass media cannot perform the functions of criticism and control. Blum also included Laos, Burma, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, and Libya after Gaddafi in this model.

Media model in patriotic systems (Iran, Egypt, Belarus). This model includes states known for their authoritarian political structures. In these countries, the rulers decide everything and make all important decisions. Elections are formally democratic, with only certain parties or candidates allowed to participate, and the results are rigged. Parliament debates, but must not contradict the decisive principles of the state. The separation of powers is only formal. In such a political system, the presence of critically minded mass media is problematic. They are oppressed and suppressed and may be accessible to a limited number of the population. At the same time, the mass media, which are consumed by the masses, serve the interests of the authorities and act as their propagandists. Blum also included the following countries in this model: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Bhutan, Brunei, Fiji, Tunisia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Namibia, Mozambique, Swaziland, Angola, Cameroon, Chad.

Media model in controlled semi-closed systems (Russia, Turkey, Thailand, Senegal). Countries committed to this model are within a fragile democratic structure. They have democratic institutions, free party building, free elections. But one can never be sure that democratic foundations will be left out of force. There is always interference in fundamental and political rights. Mass media are theoretically free, unprohibited, and critical. However, there is a risk that if they are too critical, they will get into trouble (harassment of journalists, editorial offices, intimidation, detention, murder of individuals, harassment and closure of media enterprises). A permanently fear-free journalism culture cannot be created. Bloom also included the following countries in this model: Ukraine, Philippines, Malaysia, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Kuwait, Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Guinea, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Togo, Nigeria, Havana, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa, Rwanda,

Burundi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Suriname. Media model in free client systems (Italy, Lithuania, Libya, Ghana). These countries are united in recognizing democratic structures. However, they carry with them the legacy of dictatorship, foreign domination or colonialism. There are countries where the inhabitants treat the state with great mistrust and rely more on other ties, such as family, tribal, religious, party, or corporate. Here the proximity of the mass media to politics is much stronger. The state plays an important role in the media system, in which it is deeply embedded. The state is also the media owner. Public service is often poorly developed. The mass press is absent today, and television plays a central role. Blum also included in this model: Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Monaco, Malta, Cyprus, Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, Tonga, Maldives, Mali, Sierra Leone, Benin, Tanzania, Malawi, Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa, Haiti, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Samoa, Trinidad and Tobago.

Media model in public service systems (France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Great Britain). These countries have in common that they belong to the Christian-Western European culture and are stable democracies. All countries have a system of government with a well-functioning representative or direct democracy with a multi-party system, free elections, and high transparency of the state. At the same time, the political culture is ambiguous. The media systems of these countries are such that a large role is played by profit-oriented media enterprises and, accordingly, commercially oriented, the main source of funding is advertising. In the mass media, there are partly private, and partly public owners, financed by the market or the state. Journalism is partly an opponent and partly a companion of the government. The professionalism of journalists is observed, in most countries, and there is an increase in self-control. Blum also attributed to this model: the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Canada, Australia, and Liechtenstein.

Media model in liberal systems (USA, Luxembourg, Brazil). This model includes countries whose media systems are heavily dependent on private initiatives, and receive profits and funding from private capital and advertising. These are media systems in which the mass media are as free as possible and are highly distanced from the state. Citizens are not taxed for the maintenance of the mass media. In this case, the risk is that the mass media are focused only on commercial goals and do not perform specific tasks. As a rule, media people have a solid education. Professionalization in these countries is higher than anywhere else, but compliance with journalistic ethics is left to individuals and editorial offices. This model is followed by countries that are democratic, capitalist, and technically modern. Bloom also included Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay in this model.

The general characteristics of these six models are presented in Table 4.3. (ibid: 312)

Table 4.3. The Bloom's Political-Media Systems Interaction Models

Criteria	Models					
	Liberal Model	**Free-Client Model**	**Public Service Model**	**Controlled Semi-Closed Model**	**Patriotically Directed Model**	**Ideologically Closed Model**
Historical development	Continuity	Intermittency	Continuity	Intermittency	Intermittency	Intermittency
Political regime	Democratic	Democratic	Democratic	Democratic	Authoritarian	Totalitarian
Political culture	Polarized	Dual	Dual	Dual	Conciliatory	Conciliatory
Media freedom	Ban censorship	Ban censorship	Ban censorship	Censorship in separate cases	Censorship in separate cases	Constant censorship
State control of Media	Weak	Average	Weak	Strong	Strong	Strong
Media Owners	Private	Private and public	Private and public	Private and public	Private and public	Public
Media Financing	Market	Market and state	Market and state	Market and state	Market and state	Market and state
Political parallelism	Weak	Average	Weak	Average	Strong	Strong
Media orientation	Commercial	Divergent	Public services	Divergent	Public services	Public services
Journalistic culture	Investigative	Dual	Dual	Dual	Conciliatory	Conciliatory
Professionalism of journalists	High, with self-control	Low, without self-control	High, with self-control	Low, without self-control	Low, without self-control	Low, without self-control
Examples (countries)	USA, Luxembourg, Brazil	Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Ghana	France Germany Austria, Switzerland United Kingdom	Russia, Turkey, Thailand, Senegal	Iran Egypt , Belarus	North Korea, China, Syria, Cuba

A defining characteristic of Hallin and Mancini's structural-functional methodology, and that of their followers, is its focus on analyzing the interactions between elements of political and media systems.

Another scientific concept builds on Ernest Gellner's insights into media and politics, drawing from his broader structural-functional approach to analyzing societal dynamics. Then, scholars like Gerd Strohmeier have adapted and expanded his ideas to examine media systems in democratic contexts. Strohmeier in his *'Politics and Mass-Media'* (2004) presents a typology of the relationship between political and media systems in democratic countries. This structural-functional analysis uses a comparative approach to evaluate the relative strength or weakness of political parties and mass media. Employing this methodology, the author identifies **five distinct types (models) of political communication:**

(1) **Paternalistic-Hierarchical;**

(2) **Representative-Democratic;**

(3) **Budgetary-Bureaucratic;**

(4) **Individualistic-Anarchic;**

(5) **Populist-Mediocratic**.

The correlations of these models is presented on Figure 4.5.

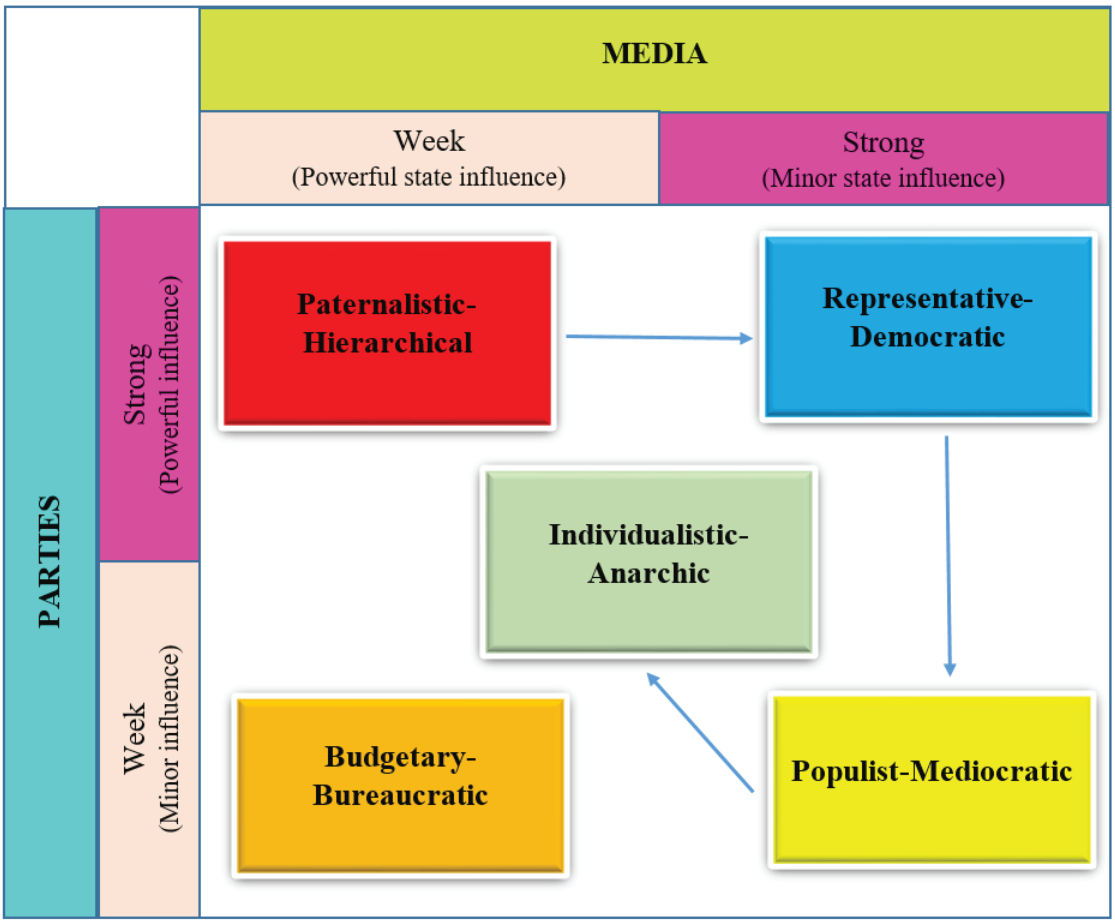

Figure 4.6. Strohmeier's Political-Media Systems Interaction Types (Strohmeier, 2004: 123)

Budgetary-Bureaucratic Type. In this type of political communication, both mass media and political parties are weak, resulting in the dominance of the state-administrative sphere. Neither the media nor the parties play an independent or significant role. The media are constrained, carrying out state directives without editorial autonomy and functioning as regulated communication channels. Similarly, political parties lack structural and substantive strength, making them ineffective in shaping public opinion or political will. Gellner (1994) notes that central state institutions largely control the political communication process. This dynamic underscores how, within this model, the political system – albeit not the parties – exerts more influence than the media. Gellner identifies modern France as a key example of this type, where neither parties nor media possess stable structures capable of challenging the administrative bureaucracy (Strohmeier: 123).

Paternalistic-Hierarchical Type. Here, strong political parties dominate weak media. The mass media primarily serve as tools for advancing party-political interests, with little editorial independence. Political power emanates from the state, and parties exert significant influence over communication channels. Gellner associates this model with younger, developing democracies, particularly the post-Cold War states of Eastern Europe. These systems often reflect a clear dominance of political parties over the mass media.

Representative-Democratic Type. This type features a balance of power between strong media and strong political parties, creating a stable equilibrium. The media are free and independent, shaping editorial policy autonomously. Political parties maintain significant influence over public opinion and political will while performing their typical democratic functions. According to Gellner, this type represents an evolutionary step beyond the paternalistic-hierarchical model, as the media increasingly assume their role as the 'fourth estate'. From a normative perspective, the representative-democratic type is considered ideal, as it best aligns with pluralistic democratic principles and promotes a balanced distribution of power. Gellner identifies Germany as a prime example, where this model prevents a slide into the populist-mediocratic type (Strohmeier: 124).

Populist-Mediocratic Type. In the populist-mediocratic model, strong media overshadow weak political parties. The media dominate public opinion formation and political will, with editorial agendas often driven by self-interest and profit maximization. This type reflects trends of 'Americanization', where media increasingly construct events or thematize themselves, replacing reality with pseudo-reality (Gellner, 1994: 26). Gellner views this type as the successor to the representative-democratic model, driven by factors such as media competition, technological advancements, and the media's inherent dynamics. Countries like the United States and Italy exemplify this type, although Germany also shows growing characteristics of this model (Strohmeier: 125).

Individualist-Anarchist Type. In this type, both mass media and political parties lose influence, and institutional political communication is virtually absent. Communication occurs primarily between individuals, creating an anarchic or radically pluralistic structure. Neither the media nor parties play significant roles, becoming marginal phenomena. Gellner attributes this development to the pseudo-reality fostered by mass media and the rise of new communication technologies, such as the Internet. While this type remains more theoretical in modern democratic societies, early signs are evident in internet-based communication trends (ibid).

Strohmeier's structural-functional methodology, inspired by Ernest Gellner, is distinguished by its emphasis on analyzing the roles played by the components of political and media systems.

Conclusions

The mediatization of politics represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, manifested in diverse forms of interaction between political and media systems. These interactions are shaped by the methodological approaches adopted in political communication research, particularly the **normative-value** and **structural-functional** frameworks.

The **normative-value approach** emphasizes axiological (value-based) and teleological (goal-oriented) criteria, focusing on indicators such as media freedom and societal democratization. Grounded in the classic theories of Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, this approach categorizes the interaction between political and media systems into two overarching types: **Democratic** and **Non-Democratic**. The Non-Democratic type encompasses **Authoritarian** and **Totalitarian** models, while the Democratic type includes the **Libertarian** and **Social Responsibility** models. Each model highlights specific relationships between the media's societal role, ownership interests, information flows, and the dominant functions of mass media.

An analysis of these models reveals that the interaction between political and media systems is deeply intertwined with a state's political regime and societal political culture. The shift in media functions within these models profoundly alters their role: from a manipulative tool in totalitarian regimes to a medium of genuine communication in socially responsible systems. Notably, the **liberal model**, historically associated with freedom of speech, has evolved under the pressures of an information-driven society. Its dependence on market forces often consolidates the 'power of information' within a small elite, enabling manipulation and undermining democratic ideals. Trends such as **monopolization**, **commercialization**, **unification**, and **globalization** further erode democratic processes.

Conversely, in the **network society**, the **social responsibility model** offers a more viable path forward. This model prioritizes media independence from both governmental and corporate influence, fostering a space for open communicative discourse. It underlines the mutual responsibility of media, government, and civil society in promoting democratic values.

The **structural-functional approach** examines the specific elements of political and media systems and their interactions. Hallin and Mancini's influential methodology integrates dimensions of media systems – such as media market structures, political parallelism, journalistic professionalism, and state intervention – with political system variables like democracy types, pluralism, and rational-legal authority. Their classification of three media-politics models – **North Atlantic Liberal**, **Democratic Corporatist**, and **Mediterranean Polarized Pluralist** – reflects regional patterns and provides a robust framework for analysis. Subsequent adaptations, including Blum's **pragmatic differentiated approach**, expand these typologies to global contexts, identifying six additional models that capture the nuanced interactions of media systems worldwide.

Moreover, the works of Strohmeier, grounded in Gellner's social philosophy, identify five distinct political communication models, highlighting the varied roles political and media systems play within systemic interactions. This author identifies five distinct types (models) of political communication: **Paternalistic-Hierarchical; Representative-Democratic; Budgetary-Bureaucratic; Individualistic-Anarchic; Populist-Mediocratic**.

The presented analysis shows that the diverse typologies of political-media interaction underscore the complexity of mediatization in contemporary politics. These frameworks reveal the importance of studying each specific manifestation of political communication, as they illuminate the profound influence of media on political structures, cultural dynamics, and societal values.

Questions for Self-Assessment:

1. What are the defining characteristics of the Totalitarian model?
2. What are the key features of the Authoritarian model?
3. What are the main characteristics of the Libertarian model?
4. What are the defining features of the Social Responsibility model?
5. What are the primary characteristics of the Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralist model?
6. What are the distinguishing features of the North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist model?
7. What are the main characteristics of the North Atlantic or Liberal model?
8. What are the defining traits of the media model in ideologically closed systems?
9. What are the key features of the media model in patriotic systems?
10. What are the main characteristics of the media model in controlled semi-closed systems?
11. What are the defining features of the media model in public service systems?
12. What are the primary characteristics of the media model in liberal systems?
13. What are the distinctive features of the Budgetary-Bureaucratic type?
14. What are the key characteristics of the Paternalistic-Hierarchical type?
15. What are the main features of the Representative-Democratic type?
16. What are the defining traits of the Populist-Mediocratic type?
17. What are the main characteristics of the Individualist-Anarchist type?

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FINAL REMARK

The mediatization of politics highlights a profound transformation in the relationship between media and politics. Media has evolved from being a passive observer to an active participant, shaping political realities and influencing governance, public opinion, and democratic processes. Understanding this multifaceted phenomenon is essential for analyzing modern political communication and its societal impact.

The mediatization of politics represents a dynamic and layered process rooted in the interplay of political communication, media systems, technological advancements, and societal values. A synthesis of historical and systems analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of this transformation across four interconnected dimensions:

1. Political Media History

The history of political media reflects a trajectory shaped by technological innovation, sociopolitical dynamics, and changing communication paradigms. Five theoretical approaches offer distinct interpretations:

- **Linear Instrumentalism** views political media history as a linear progression aligned with advancements in media technology. Media served as tools for disseminating political messages, following a top-down communication model.
- **Social Network Constructivism** sees social networks as arenas for collaborative and competitive narrative construction. This perspective acknowledges that communication fields, shaped by technological advancements, cyclically alternate between centripetal and centrifugal forces.
- **Structural Functionalism** emphasizes the role of media in political communication across four stages of mediatization, from media dependence on political institutions to the dominance of media logic in political processes.
- **Normative Value Approach** evaluates media history through the lens of individual freedom and democratization. It highlights the dual role of media as a democratizing force and a tool for manipulation, especially with the rise of AI-driven technologies that transform media into active participants in political processes.

2. Media System

The media system serves as the foundation of mediatization, encompassing its evolution, structure, and ecosystem dynamics:

- **Evolution and Structure:** The transition from traditional to digital media has redefined how political messages are produced, distributed, and consumed. Media structures now respond to technological advancements, audience fragmentation, and market pressures.
- **Key Components:** Journalists, platforms, regulators, and audiences contribute to shaping political discourse. Traditional gatekeeping has shifted toward algorithmic gatekeeping, decentralizing power.
- **Ecosystem Dynamics:** The interplay between mainstream and alternative media, user-generated content, and algorithmically driven platforms creates a complex ecosystem. This fosters diverse political expression but raises concerns about echo chambers, misinformation, and polarization.

3. Effects of Media on Politics.

Media's influence on politics is analyzed through various theoretical lenses:

- **Normative-Value Approach:** Media is seen as a cornerstone of democracy, promoting transparency and accountability. However, sensationalism, bias, and commodification challenge its normative role.
- **Behavioral Approach:** Media shapes political behavior by influencing perceptions, attitudes, and decisions. Mechanisms such as agenda-setting, framing, priming, and emotional appeals significantly impact public opinion.
- **Technological Determinism:** Each technological innovation, from radio to AI, redefines political engagement and media influence.
- **Systems Approach:** Media and politics function as interconnected systems, mutually influencing and adapting to one another.

4. Models of Political and Media Systems Interaction

Theoretical models provide frameworks for understanding the interplay between political and media systems:

- **Normative Approach** (Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm): The '*Four Theories of the Press'* link media roles to political ideologies, including authoritarian, libertarian, Soviet-communist, and social responsibility models.
- **Structural-Functional Approach** (Hallin, Mancini, Blum, and Strohmeier): Hallin and Mancini's typologies (liberal, polarized pluralist, democratic corporatist) highlight regional variations in media-political interactions. Blum's media matrix and Strohmeier's models expand these frameworks, integrating cultural, economic, and technological dimensions.

The mediatization of politics is not a singular phenomenon but a complex and evolving process shaped by historical contexts, systemic structures, technological advancements, and theoretical perspectives. While media systems have democratized access to political information and empowered diverse voices, they have also introduced challenges such as fragmentation, misinformation, and manipulation.

To leverage the potential of media in strengthening democracy while addressing its risks, a concerted effort is required from policymakers, technologists, media professionals, and citizens. By embracing adaptive strategies and fostering an informed understanding of media's complexities, the mediatization of politics can serve as a force for inclusive and resilient democratic governance.

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