



**POLITICAL
SCIENCE
LITERATURE
REVIEW
EXAMPLE**



Media is the most important source of information on politics and conflicts, which provides them with a significant influence on the perceptions, opinions and behavior of citizens. Reporting on some conflicts, not about others, and presenting them in a certain way, the media significantly affect the dynamics and conflict results and thus shape the prospects for successful conflicting sides. That is why participants in political conflicts - state officials, rebels and other warring parties, political parties and social movements, workers-strikers, and democratic activists in authoritarian regimes - try to exploit the media for their goals, adapting to their logic of functioning. This paper analyzes literature on media and political conflicts, especially that part of the media representation of interstate and civil wars, institutionalized conflicts, protests and social movements in the West's democracies, as well as conflicts in undemocratic regimes and during democratization. The comparison of media reporting on this, very different forms of political conflicts, suggests lessons - in the form of arguments and hypotheses - for the empirical research of the media representation of the conflictual side of contemporary democratization.

Although the influence of media specializing in entertainment programs should not be underestimated, this paper analyzes the reporting of key information media that most influence the perception of politics and conflict by individuals. The policy also includes routine events and conflicts. Law Enforcement, Administration, payment and collection of taxes, military service, lobbying, clientelism and similar phenomena make the routine part of the policy. Contrary to this, controversial politics includes "occasional, public, collective relations groups that point out the political requirements and those that are the target of these demands" in cases where the government is directly or indirectly involved and when some interests of the participants in the conflict put into question. The policy of confrontation consists of conventional and unconventional politics, i.e. institutionalized politics, and which mostly takes place out of or out of political institutions (McAdam et al., 2001, p. 5 - 8).

The term political conflict mostly corresponds to the concept of opposing policy. Some authors do not use the previous because they think it is too far apart from the participants, the causes, and the dynamics of political activity. Yet, the notion of political conflict is widely accepted in literature in social sciences, while the notion of opposing politics is largely used by researchers of social movements. Literature about the media and conflicts specializes almost exclusively in one of the forms of political conflicts. First, some authors analyze the use of media in international conflicts, primarily inter-state wars (Bennett et al., 2007; Entman, 2004; Carruthers, 2011; Seib, 2005). Other conflicts with large-scale violence that are media coverage (and studied from the media angle) are civil wars and humanitarian crises, especially if they were conducted with international intervention (Carruthers, 2004, Ruigrok et al., 2005). Second, there is extensive literature on media and non-violent conflicts, primarily in the democracies of the West, which deals with electoral campaigns, other institutional conflicts (D'Alessio & Allen, 2000, Howarth, 2010), as well as those involving social movements (Koopmans, 2004; Cottle, 2008). Researchers in recent times also study the role of media in conflicts in authoritarian regimes as well as in democratization (Vltmer, 2013; Lynch, 2012; Jebri et al., 2013). (Widespread literature on normative aspects of media and democracy relations and about media regulation in the new democracies is not analyzed in this paper.) There is also a significant literature on media influence on violent conflicts and conflict regulation (Wolfsfeld, 2004, Gilboa, 2009).

Specialization in the literature on media coverage of political conflicts is not surprising, but reflects the exploratory orientation of literature on political conflicts in the whole - not just from the media angle. Protests and social movements, revolutions, industrial conflicts, stakeholder policy, democratization, nationalism, civil wars and inter-state wars are traditionally studied separately from each other, regardless of significant similarities. Some of the recent literature tries to unite the findings of the research of the mentioned branches of literature into a wider exploration policy of "policy of opposing" (i.e., political conflicts) and to overcome at least some of these divisions.

A similar attempt to integrate different research results from the perspective of media studies focuses on various forms of violent conflicts (wars, revolutions, unrest, armed uprisings and terrorism) and in protests. Wars usually take up the key role in media information programs as episodic, sensational and emotionally charged events that provide dramatic images of violence and its consequences. and national emotions, especially when our "side" is directly involved in the conflict, so war reports usually broadens the media outlets and, due to the increased interest of advertisers, the benefits of media organizations (or at least the absence of significant resistance), so great attention is paid to shaping public opinion through information media.

Authorities can use censorship, rely on selected media, provide reporters to be directly involved in appropriate military units, but also subject to various constraints, carefully prepare military briefings, provide information of suspicious credibility, and organize secret operations whose goal is journalists and the media, all to win the propaganda war. Reporting attempts from "the other side" often correspond to the charges of the issuing country (Cottle, 2006, p. 75 - 76). The media itself set additional constraints for journalists not reporting on all aspects of the war. Reporting the mainstream media about international conflicts largely reflects the dynamics of relations within the ruling circles and the political elites as a whole. The consensus on key political issues in the official circles is largely reflected in media reporting, even when there are findings from trusted unofficial sources about the serious weaknesses of a particular policy or important events that are not being reported. However, if some groups of government, individual institutions, or influential political parties openly oppose official policy in a particular area, the media report more freely and usually reflect different views of the given problem, albeit in proportion to the perceived power of political players and their ability to "spin" information. Accordingly, the content of the news, their significance and duration, and thus opens access to the media to some participants in political life, but not to others. It is of little importance whether certain observations of the events in the vestments are based on reliable knowledge of who puts them in the first place and whether they are opposed by influential political players.

"Inspiration," not a critical assessment of government policy, is not a sign of bias, but it derives from the fact that journalists rely on professional standards of objectivity as well as that some political "players" are unable to impose their views on the media (Bennet et al., 2007, p. 28 - 30). However, such "indexing" of the relationship of power opens up the issue of political responsibility and manipulation, as well as the sustainability of the normative view of independence and media influence in Western democracies.

REFERENCES

- McAdam, D., Tarrow, S. & Tilly, C. (2001). *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bennett, W. L., Lawrence, R. G. & Livingston, S. (2007). None Dare Call It Torture: Indexing and the limits of Press Independence in the Abu Ghraib Scandal. *Journal of Communication*, 56 (3): 467 - 485.
- Entman, P. M. (2004). *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Carruthers, S. L. (2011). *The Media at War*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carruthers, S. L. (2004). Tribalism and Tribulation: Media Constructions of "African Savagery" and "Western Humanitarianism" in the 1990s. In Allan, S. & Zelizer, B. (eds.), *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime* (p. 155 - 173). London: Routledge.
- Seib, P. (ed.) (2005). *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ruigrok, N., de Ridder, J. A. & Scholten, O. (2005). News Coverage of the Bosnian War in Dutch Newspapers: Impact and Implications. In Seib, P. (ed.), *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- D'Alessio, D. & Allen, M. (2000). Media Bias in Presidential Elections: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Communication*, 50 (4): 133 - 157.

- Howarth, A. (2010). Contested Processes, Contested Influence: A Case Study of Genetically Modified Food in Britain. In Koch-Baumgarten, S. (ed.), *Public Policy and Mass Media: The Interplay of Mass Communication and Political Decision Making* (p. 143 - 161). London: Routledge.
- Koopmans, R. (2004). Movements and Media: Selection Processes and Evolutionary Dynamics in the Public Sphere. *Theory and Society*, 33 (3 - 4): 367 - 391.
- Cottle, S. (2006). *Mediatized Conflict: Developments in Media and Conflict Studies*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Cottle, S. (2008). Reporting Demonstrations: The Changing Media Politics of Dissent. *Media, Culture, Society*, 30 (6): 853 - 872.
- Voltmer, K. (2013). *The Media in Transitional Democracies*. Kindle ed. Cambridge: Polity press.
- Lynch, M. (2012). *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*. New York: PublicAffairs
- Jebri, N., Stetka, V. & Loveless, M. (2013). *Media and Democratisation: What is Known about the Role of Mass Media*. In *Transitions to Democracy* report. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.
- Wolfsfeld, G. (2004). *Media and the Path to Peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gilboa, E. (2009). Media and Conflict Resolution: A Framework for Analysis. *Marquette Law Review*, 93 (1): 87 - 110.