DOSSIER

MEDIA, STATE AND SOCIETY IN BAHIA, BRAZIL[1]

JULIÁN DURAZO HERRMANN
Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada

ABSTRACT - In this paper, I seek to assess the role of the media in ongoing subnational democratization processes from a State-in-society perspective. I use the case of Bahia, a state in North-Eastern Brazil, to assess ownership and social access to the media, the media's autonomy from both the State and social actors as well as how conflicts between public interest and private profit are solved. We will thus understand the role of subnational media in sustaining pluralism and in providing independent sources of information, two critical dimensions of democracy.
Keywords: Bahia, media, State-in-society perspective, pluralism, access to independent sources of information.

MÍDIA, ESTADO E SOCIEDADE NA BAHIA, BRASIL

RESUMO - Neste artigo utilizo a perspectiva Estado-sociedade para estudar o papel da mídia nos processos subnacionais de democratização. Lanço mão do caso da Bahia, um estado do Nordeste do Brasil, para estudar a propriedade e o acesso social à mídia, a autonomia política da mídia perante o Estado e outros atores sociais assim como o solução dos conflitos entre o mandato público e o interesse privado da mídia. Poderemos assim entender o papel da mídia subnacional na consolidação do pluralismo e na provisão de fontes independentes de informação, duas dimensões críticas da democracia.
Palavras chave: Bahia, mídia, perspectiva Estado-sociedade, pluralismo, acesso a fontes independentes de informação.

MEDIOS, ESTADO Y SOCIEDAD EN BAHÍA, BRASIL

RESUMEN - En este artículo utilizo la perspectiva Estado-sociedad para estudiar el papel de los medios en los procesos subnacionales de democratización. Recurro al caso de Bahía, un estado en el Noreste de Brasil, para estudiar la propiedad y el acceso social a los medios, la autonomía de los medios frente al Estado y otros actores sociales así como las soluciones encontradas a los conflictos entre el mandato público y el interés privado de los medios. Así podremos entender el papel de los medios subnacionales en la consolidación del pluralismo y en la provisión de fuentes independientes de información, dos dimensiones críticas de la democracia.
Palabras clave: Bahía, medios, perspectiva Estado-sociedad, pluralismo, acceso a fuentes independientes de información.

In this article, I seek to assess the role of the media in ongoing subnational democratization processes. I do so from a State-in-society perspective (MIGDAL, 1994, 2001), which posits that while States are critical elements of the political system, they cannot be understood outside their social environment. Neither States nor societies are homogeneous, rational entities; rather, they are fragmented, deeply embedded in one another and need to forge complex alliances and engage in significant compromises to advance their projects.

Federalism provides yet another cleavage in State-society interaction. The reduced territorial and demographic dimensions of subnational States may enhance unity and coherence, but, just as for any other State, they do not necessarily possess focus and clarity of purpose, while In media terms, the State-in-society perspective tests Schudson's hypothesis (SCHUDSON, 2002) that forms of ownership are less important than regime type in determining the type of interaction between media and political actors.

Media systems are the set of actors and relations providing communication and information services to a given polity. creating multiple, potentially contradictory points of social engagement with the political system. Through political symmetry, subnational media systems establish social relations that lead to the emergence of distinct, albeit not entirely independent dynamics (HALLIN, MANCIN, 2004; ARAUJO PINTO, 2014).

In order to analyze the role of the media in subnational democratization (advancing pluralism and fostering access to varied and independent sources of information), I study their interaction with the State and with other social actors. Beyond their size, weight and number, I assess the legitimacy the media elicit and their role in the political decision-making processes and in other local forms of social control. I seek to identify how this interaction produces conflicts and how they are solved (MIGDAL, 2001).

In Brazil, the concentration of political and economic power gave rise to *coronelismo eletrônico* (broadcasting bossism), in which subnational media conglomerates use monopolistic business practices to secure and maintain power at the subnational level. Subnational media owners thus act as political intermediaries between the federation and their state and attempt to subordinate or conceal all other voices. Consequently, *coronelismo eletrônico* represents a significant barrier to subnational democratization (DOS SANTOS, 2008; DE LIMA, 2015).

My case study is the state of Bahia in North-Eastern Brazil. Until 2006, Bahia was a classic example of a subnational authoritarian enclave and of *coronelismo eletrônico*, where the largest media group was owned by the incumbent elite (DANTAS NETO, 2003; JONAS, ALMEIDA, 2004). That year, however, a, opposition coalition consisting of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT), several other centrist and left-wing parties and numerous social organizations managed to defeat the authoritarian elite and elect a new governor, Jaques Wagner, who made political communication a central element of the democratization process (DURAZO HERRMANN, 2014).

Subnational media and democratic politics

Following Dahl's classic definition of democracy (DAHL, 1971), I address two critical roles of the media: pluralism and access to diverse and independent sources of information. More than the simple expression of social diversity, pluralism empowers citizens to participate effectively in politics. Pluralism is directly linked with diversity of opinion and other dimensions of democracy, since freedom of expression gives it a concrete, demonstrable existence. Beyond simple freedom of expression, increasingly (but not unproblematically) enforced in most Latin American polities, access to alternative sources of information is a critical dimension of a consolidated democracy, allowing individuals and groups to identify their interests, evaluate their environment and weight the chances of effectively pressing their issues (DAHL, 1971; WOLTON, 1998).

Paradoxically, the media are a significant source of power that can constrain both pluralism and the diversity of information channels (MILLS, 2000 [1956]; SAVOIE 2010). These features point out to the double nature of the media as a public arena and a political actor, a dimension that needs to be further explored in assessing the political role of the media.

The complex nature of the State plays into its relationship with society. On the one hand, States are the broadest public sphere at a society's disposal, and the one that potentially commands the most important resources. As such, the State is an arena in which social struggles for domination play out (SKOCPOL, 1979). On the other, States, embodied by their leadership, wield the monopoly of legitimate violence and may thus engage in social extraction and

transformation processes. If their leadership is cogent and coherent and sufficient resources are available, States may be able to profoundly influence their societies (WEBER 1971 [1922]; EVANS 1995).

Furthermore, the permanent presence of federal actors in subnational politics increases the heterogeneity of State action at the subnational level. Since media dynamics mirror political systems, subnational media have and develop strong links with national actors, thus creating multilevel systems and complex interaction patterns (HALLIN, MANCINI, 2004; CHAKRAVARTY, ROY, 2013; ARAUJO PINTO, 2014).

Beyond their capacity to pursue their own agenda —albeit as a fragmented sector—, the media parallels the State insofar it is also a public arena, a channel of expression for numerous and diverse social actors, and a political actor on its own right (HABERMAS 1978; GINGRAS 2009). Different media outlets speak with different voices and pursue different, potentially contradictory goals. Social actors —whether economic elites, labour unions or territorial organizations— may use, bypass or even confront the media to further their own agendas.

In a critical difference, while all aspects of the State belong to the public sphere, the media is divided between public, private and community dimensions. The question of the relationship between ownership and political orientation thus arises sharply. The media are thus simultaneously powerful, but equivocal channels in State-society relations

To evaluate the role of different media outlets in subnational democratization, I assess ownership and social access to the media, the media's autonomy from both the State and social actors as well as how conflicts between public interest and private profit are solved. I also assess the role of subnational media in sustaining pluralism and in providing varied and independent sources of information (DAHL, 1971; GINGRAS 2009).

After a brief overview of the Bahian media system, I analyze three case studies, each embodying a different media type: *Rede Bahia* represents the big private media conglomerate; the *Jornal da Chapada* represents a small, regional paper; and the *Boletim do Grupo Gay da Bahia* represents alternative, community-based media. I make no claim to present a representative sample, but these case studies allow us to explore the different dynamics related with media location, size and ownership.

The role of the media in State-society relations in Bahia

Bahia is an ideal arena to study the role of the media in democratizing State-society relations. With 14 million inhabitants, 565,000km^2 and 417 municipalities, it is one of Brazil's most heterogeneous states, home both to Brazil's third largest metropolitan area (Salvador, with over 3 million inhabitants) and to one of the highest ratios of rural-to-urban population (38%). Bahia also has Brazil's second highest proportion (76%) of population of African descent. In economic terms, Bahia has Brazil's eighth largest state GDP, but one of the most unequal patterns of wealth distribution (CENSO, 2010).

At one point, this structural heterogeneity allowed for the consolidation of *coronelismo eletrônico* and of a subnational authoritarian enclave[2] in Bahia, both of which survived federal regime change. In terms of the media, large media conglomerates, small commercial media and interest-based media all coexist in Bahia. Political dynamics are complex and reinforce, rather than reduce social heterogeneity (DURAZO HERRMANN, 2014). An analysis of the role of the media in State-society relations thus reveals the deep currents at work in the struggle for subnational social domination in the context of democratization.

In Brazil, the federal framework places important constraints on subnational media systems. Communication is federal jurisdiction (arts. 8 and 220-222 of the Brazilian Constitution) and the telecommunications code currently in force was initially adopted in 1962 and thoroughly reformed in 1967 under the military regime. Thereafter, legislative change has been haphazard and tended to favour incumbent actors over innovation (AMARAL, GUIMARÃES, 1994; WHITTEN-WOODRING, JAMES 2012; DE LIMA, 2015).

Throughout the 20th century, media concentration has been important in Bahia, with a few newspapers from Salvador (such as *A Tarde* and *Correio*) dominating the landscape. The current media system emerged in the 1970s and 1980s with the rise of Antônio Carlos Magalhães (popularly known as ACM), Bahia's authoritarian boss between 1970 and 2006. ACM invested heavily in the media as a way of extending his influence, creating the *Rede Bahia* conglomerate (DANTAS NETO, 2006).

While limited at first, ACM's nomination at the federal Ministry of Communications —in return for his support of President José

Sarney's government (1985-1990, Brazil's first civilian government after the military regime)— allowed him to control broadcasting licensing, which became explicitly political and aimed at building a substantial support base, both in Bahia and elsewhere (MAGALHÃES ET AL., 1995; TEIXEIRA GOMES, 2001). Despite the dubious legal base for these licenses, they were never questioned or revoked. The democratic access-to-information provisos of the 1988 federal Constitution have never been regulated.

The media weight of *Rede Bahia* continued to grow with the acquisition of new radio and television stations, internet services and general printing concerns. ACM thus became one of the clearest examples of *coronelismo eletrônico*. (DOS SANTOS 2008; DE LIMA 2015). After his death in 2007, the group remained in his family's hands under the direction of his eldest son, ACM Jr.

Bahia is now home to one of Brazil's largest regional media conglomerates: *Rede Bahia* controls *Correio* —the state's largest newspaper—, numerous radio and TV stations throughout the state and, most significantly, has exclusive repetitor rights for *Rede Globo* —Brazil's largest broadcasting empire, but whom the 1962 Telecommunications Code prevents from having direct presence in Bahia (WHITTEN-WOODRING, JAMES, 2012; REDE BAHIA 2014). Out-of-state groups control the remaining media conglomerates, including the *Sistema Brasileiro de Televisão* (SBT) and *Rede Record*, associated with the Brazilian Evangelical movement and owner of Bahia's oldest TV station, TV Itapoan —now known as TV Record (MOREIRA AND HELAL,2009; REDE RECORD, 2015). In the print media, *A Tarde*, now associated with *Folha de São Paulo* (Brazil's largest daily), competes with *Correio*.

Besides the large, commercial media, a myriad small for-profit, community and alternative media exist. In the absence of national newspaper, many Brazilian cities have their own local papers and many —but not all— of them have remained autonomous in local hands. However, their circulation and social penetration are small. This is also true for broadcasting and internet-based media: while growth has been exponential, its clout is limited as only 40% of Bahian residences have access to internet (IBGE, 2013). A distinct feature of the Bahian media system is the almost total absence of publicly owned media (ZANCHETTA, 2004; ARAUJO PINTO, 2014).

Rede Bahia

ACM never hid the political logic behind the construction a powerful private subnational media conglomerate under his private ownership, going so far as to affirm that controlling the message of the media was one of his top concerns. Moreover, ACM had no qualms about using the subnational government's financial discretion to strangle opposition media through selective advertising purchases —their main source of income (MAGALHÃES ET AL., 1995; DOS SANTOS, 2008).

Rede Bahia and its related media constantly underscored ACM's successes and presented all his actions in a positive light. On the other hand, oppositionists were either ignored or fiercely attacked. When the opposition managed to win an important municipality, a common tactic was the *cerco midiático* (the media siege), in which the state government retained most budgetary funds and initiated aggressive audit processes against the municipality while *Rede Bahia* relentlessly decried its incompetence and corruption through substantive adversarial coverage. As a result of this persecution, the opposition usually lost the municipality to ACM's supporters (known as *carlistas*) in the following election (JONAS, ALMEIDA 2004; DA MATA, 2012). In so doing, *Rede Bahia* constrained, rather than promoted pluralism in Bahia.

After ACM's death, *Rede Bahia* continued to openly support the *Democratas* (DEM, formerly *Partido da Frente Liberal*, a political party created in 1984 as an alliance of conservative North-Eastern governors) and other *carlistas*, most notably ACM's grandson's —ACM Neto— successful bid for mayor of Salvador in 2012 (VASCONCELOS, 2012a; cf. CORREIO, 2013). *Rede Bahia* also supports the Instituto ACM, created in 2010 to pursue ACM's social and cultural values (VAZ, 2011; INSTITUTO ACM, 2014; REDE BAHIA, 2014). However, *Rede Bahia*'s link to the DEM is contingent, based on the personal links of its owners to the party. If ACM Neto were to shift parties, *Rede Bahia* would follow suit (cf. LEMOS, 2015).

Elected in 2006, Wagner immediately sought to establish a new relationship with *Rede Bahia*, severing the group's excessive closeness to the subnational government while avoiding direct confrontation and a repetition of the *cerco midiático*. As a result, a *modus vivendi* emerged, in which the subnational government continued to give substantial advertising contracts to *Rede Bahia*

in exchange for its giving the governor a more positive treatment. Nevertheless, *Rede Bahia* always distinguished between the governor and his party, the PT, which continues to be the focus of substantial adversarial coverage (CABRAL, 2008; VASCONCELOS 2012a).

Since 2007, *Rede Bahia* is more closely concentrated in its business interests and its priorities are visibility and circulation, rather than public debate. Under the cover of modernization, begun shortly after Wagner's arrival to power, its TV stations have adopted *Rede Globo*'s media-as-entertainment model, offering little in-depth discussion or follow-up of local issues. *Correio*'s move to a low-cost tabloid format reflects an attempt to increase circulation and advertising sales, but moves away from the model of professional, watch-dog journalism (MOREIRA, HELLAL, 2009; COSTA, 2015). As a result, a clear division of labor emerged, with television simply reproducing *Rede Globo*'s content, while *Correio* and the radio stations closely follow the Magalhães' family editorial line. Consequently, *Rede Bahia* has not increased information diversity in Bahia.

Rede Bahia is marked by a vertical approach, in which it is the only emitter (of an ongoing *carlista* discourse) and dissident opinions are silenced. As *Rede Bahia*'s openly political coverage decreases as a result of "modernization", its inclination to ignore and occult its opponents is offered as proof of its "neutrality" (MAGALHÃES JR., 2011; DIAS BEZERRA, 2008).

During the 2014 gubernatorial elections, *Rede Bahia* suffered a significant setback. Not only did it support the losing candidate (Paulo Souto of the DEM), but its public opinion polls consistently predicted his victory (CORREIO 2014a, 2014b). Its control over subnational information is so strong that even national media close to the PT accepted *Rede Bahia*'s figures (see Martins 2014). In the end, the PT candidate, Rui Costa, won the governorship with 54.5% of the vote, seriously undermining *Rede Bahia*'s credibility.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that *Rede Bahia* remains a prominent subnational political actor that wields substantial authority as well as an open contender in Bahia's struggles for domination. The media conglomerate uses its popularity as sole repetitor of *Rede Globo*'s soap operas and shows together with constant references to free enterprise, freedom of expression and other liberal democratic values to legitimate both its dominance of the subnational media system and its presence in the political arena (MAGALHÃES JR., 2011; REDE BAHIA, 2014).

In terms of State-society relations, *Rede Bahia* is still an instrument for a top-down relationship. The *cerco midiático* of yore and today's "modernization" show how *Rede Bahia* contributes little to either pluralism or information diversity and remains captured by politicians with a clear agenda and little concern for the media's public mandate.

The *Jornal da Chapada*

An example of small, for-profit media outside the state capital, the *Jornal da Chapada* began publishing in 1997 as a family-owned and operated monthly in the Chapada Diamantina region in central Bahia. In order to avoid becoming economically dependent on a single source of income or politically indebted to a single municipality (or mayor), the *Jornal da Chapada* sought to become a regional, rather than a strictly local newspaper. Nevertheless, the *Jornal da Chapada* has faced over 20 libel and defamation lawsuits and even a judicial seizure over corruption coverage (FERNANDES, 2012).

The *Jornal da Chapada* is conscious that it cannot compete with *Rede Bahia* or the other conglomerates; it thus seeks to complement them, by providing otherwise unavailable local and regional content. It thus contributes to diversifying sources of information in Bahia.

As other commercial media, the *Jornal da Chapada* formally adheres to the values of investigative journalism and political neutrality (SCHULTZ, 1998). According to its editorial coordinator, neutrality —and the conspicuous absence of partisan affiliations— is a condition of survival, as the *Jornal da Chapada* must obtain advertising revenue from municipalities with different political colours. Nevertheless, the *Jornal*'s editorial coordinator does consulting work in political communication, including for members of Bahia's Legislative Assembly (JORNAL DA CHAPADA, 2012, 2015; FERNANDES, 2012). The small size and limited resources of the *Jornal da Chapada* are an important obstacle for its professionalization (cf. PEREIRA, MAIA, 2011).

Taking advantage of the internet, the *Jornal da Chapada* developed a differentiated strategy: its paper version (10,000 copies per month) is distributed almost exclusively in the Chapada Diamatina and is concentrated in local news, whereas the web version, in an

effort to attract state-level and even national readers, also features state-level and national news, blogs and political commentary.

After the end of *carlismo*, alternative, web-based media flourished in Bahia. Technological innovations and new social trends — some in imitation of North American developments, such as blogging (cf. GINGRAS, 2009)— were critical in this process. By reaching to a new public and a new set of advertisers, web-based media gained a measure of independence. Yet, the new political climate was also an important factor, as reprisals for unwanted coverage became less immediate and less threatening (FERNANDES, 2012; GOMES, 2012).

While the *Jornal da Chapada*'s combination of web-based and printed version appears unique, other web-based media have emulated the combination of regional base and state-level audience (see, for instance, the *Pimenta da Moqueca* blog in Ilhéus, in Southern Bahia). These blogs offer insider information, critical analysis and the occasional scoop, thereby providing a measure of transparency and accountability to the Bahian political system (GOMES, 2012; POR ESCRITO, 2014).

These innovations, together with the claim to represent and inform heretofore marginalized regional audiences at the subnational level, have boosted the democratic legitimacy these media command. However, internet remains expensive and its limited penetration in Bahia severely constrains their potential, as only 40% of the state's population —11% in rural areas— has access (IBGE, 2013). Web-based media thus have little direct influence in public affairs, especially beyond the urban areas.

Moreover, many of the new blogs simply lift materials from other sources (*i.e.*, the *Jornal da Chapada*), without editing them, thereby producing numerous entries, but relatively little new content (cf. *Jornal Grande Bahia* 2012, *Blog do Louro Magalhães* 2012, *Portal Renato Ribeiro* 2012). Some print media also reproduce content from the blogs (see *Tribuna da Bahia* 2012). These items are often descriptive, with little or no analysis attached. The blogs' contribution to public debate and social pluralism is therefore limited and their increased visibility does not increase their political clout.

The temporal coincidence of democratization and technological change makes it difficult to establish precise causal relationships, but, together, they clearly produced an opening for new media actors. However, the cost of remaining autonomous — and therefore influencing political dynamics— is very high. Moreover, social violence against journalists is high throughout Brazil and,

while the State does repress it, prosecution and conviction rates are low, thereby discouraging activisim from the more vulnerable media (ANJ, 2014). Small media are therefore circumscribed to the margins —both political and geographical— of State-society relations.

The *Boletim do Grupo Gay da Bahia*

The *Boletim do Grupo Gay da Bahia* was one of Bahia's longest lasting community-based media, produced by the state's oldest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) organisation. Founded in 1980, it appeared continuously as a weekly for more than 25 years. It was not only a showcase for specifically gay issues, but, in its systematic denunciation of discrimination, police violence and other abuses, it was also an important opposition mouthpiece. It had no formal political affiliation, but its sympathies for the PT were clear.

Because circulation and distribution was very restricted, the *Boletim*'s clout was minimal. It nevertheless faced significant government repression, ranging from legal harassment to outright police raids in its offices. The *Boletim* survived mostly because of its staunchly committed leadership and its outstanding, albeit small legal team (MOTT, 2011).

Wagner's arrival to power in January 2007 meant a radical change in subnational policy *vis-à-vis* community-based media. The explicit objective was to improve State-society relations in Bahia by recognizing and empowering pluralism in the state (TALENTO, 2011; WAGNER, 2011; CABRAL, 2013). The new governor placed openness and transparency among his top priorities and established grants to fund small and alternative media. Moreover, small media access to government advertising was substantially broadened (SAMPAIO, 2011; VASCONCELOS, 2012b).

The subsidies policy was successful in stimulating the emergence of new, small and alternative media. Nevertheless, it was also accused of creating new forms of clientelism and of fragmenting social movements (Durazo Herrmann 2012). For instance, a new LGBT group —the *Fórum baiano LGBT*— won such a grant and began competing with the *Grupo Gay da Bahia* (GGB) and its *Boletim*. The new group is vocal on discrimination and social issues, but refrains from open political criticism for fear of alienating its main source of funding (FRANCISCO, 2011; MARSIAJ, 2012; cf. FÓRUM BAIANO LGBT 2014).

The claim to represent a heretofore marginalized community gave the LGBT movement a high degree of legitimacy in the eyes of the new PT government. Nevertheless, its not-for-profit nature and its dependence of public monies allowed for clientelistic practices to resurface and control the inclusion of new political actors, thus guaranteeing support for the incumbent government in exchange for material goods.

As a result of financial pressures, the *Boletim* is no longer published. The GGB's website replaced it, where the traditional denunciations of segregation and violence continue to appear alongside other information, such as tourism, sex health, commercial advertisements, etc. The GGB also largely abandoned its attempts at forming a broad social reform movement (MOTT, 2011; GGB, 2014). If we can generalize from the GGB's experience, advocacy groups failed to promote media-driven reform in Bahia (cf. WAISBORD, 2010). While the LGBT movement's visibility increased, its clout in the ongoing struggle for social domination in Bahia remained stagnant at best. Consequently, the promotion of pluralism has in fact limited the diversity of information in Bahia.

In conclusion, despite democratization, the subnational State continues to play a critical role in fashioning State-society relations through clientelism. The life cycle of the *Boletim* shows how governmental media policies are just another, albeit innovative channel for this process. In the future, clientelistic groups may potentially affirm themselves and become autonomous (HILGERS, 2012), but, for the time being, we witness the reproduction of traditional patterns of State-society relations.

Democratization, media and State-society relations in Bahia

In Bahia's recent past, the media were considered an instrument of political control at the hands of ACM, the subnational boss. However, democratization and the election of an opposition governor severed the organic link between State power and media conglomerate. The reelection of the PT in 2014 —over *Rede Bahia*'s open opposition— further consolidated this state of affairs. Costa, the new governor, is clearly less concerned by media issues than Wagner.

Under Wagner, the role of the media in State-society relations in Bahia changed visibly. On the one hand, *Rede Bahia*'s situation

is ambiguous; it is still a powerful actor, openly tied to a political group —ACM's family and their party, the DEM— and continues to support it unquestioningly. It thus remains an element of continuity in Bahia's democratization. Its primary source of influence is its oligopolistic domination of Bahia's media system, based on a media-as-entertainment model where private profit takes precedence over public affairs —market pressures have obvious deleterious effects on the media, both as a public arena and an independent actor.

On the other, regime change opened political space for smaller and alternative media, such as the *Jornal da Chapada* and some blogs. However, becoming and remaining both a visible political actor and a viable for-profit media requires substantial effort and innovation, which not every media is ready to expend. Those that do have improved government publicity and accountability, thereby contributing to the consolidation of democratic patterns of State-society relations in Bahia. This may evolve in the future, as bloggers evolve and internet further penetrates Bahian society.

Less inspiringly, but not surprisingly, Bahia also shows that those media that put their private interests forward, rather than their public mandate, have a better chance of becoming significant players in the subnational struggle for domination because of a clearer sense of individual agency. In other words, while the media remain both private actors and public arenas, they face strong pressures to conform to a unidimensional, private dimension. This might be the ultimate political meaning of *Rede Bahia*'s "modernization" process and of the end of the *Boletim do Grupo Gay da Bahia*.

The *Boletim* shows yet another limit to the role of the media in State-society relations. By highlighting the persistence and reproduction of traditional patterns of social exclusion, the failure of the LGBT organizations to make their voice heard —whether through commercial or advocacy media— shows that social structures impose strong constraints on both pluralism and effective political action and that effective democratization requires more than an opening of media channels. The case of the *Boletim* also points out to some of the non-economic dimensions of inequality and discrimination prevalent in Bahia and in Brazil at large. The current evolution towards a media-as-entertainment model, in which only commercially successful programmes and ideas are broadcast, is thus a serious challenge to democratization.

Beyond establishing the scope and limits of the media in

Bahian politics, the study of the role of the media in the struggle for subnational domination allows us to think about the evolution of State-society relations under democratization. We see how transparency in media ownership does exist, as there is no doubt as to who controls either the large conglomerate or the smaller media. The clear political use made of the media makes ownership and allegiances transparent. However, the weight of media concentration in both penetration and audience severely constrain pluralism and information diversity.

Outside the large conglomerate (and this is a big caveat), the media in Bahia have indeed become a platform for democratic debate, improving both pluralism and access to diverse sources of information. However, limited penetration and the dominance of repetitive over innovative content (as seen in the local blogs) restrict its democratic scope. As a result, the media have not been a significant training channel in political communication for social actors.

The subnational dimension allows us to understand the scope and limits of Bahia's media system: communication is federal jurisdiction and Bahia may not legislate on the matter. As a result, the ultimate framework of reference is external to the subnational political system. On this basis, the link between *Rede Globo* and *Rede Bahia* evolved, limiting subnational interference in TV programming (which has by far the largest audience), but giving unfettered autonomy to the subnational group in deciding the editorial line of its other media. The smaller media are too small to attract federal attention of any kind. Again, pluralism and information diversity pay the prize of federal-subnational accommodation.

In conclusion, while it is undoubtedly a critical political actor and arena, the media's contribution to subnational democratization by transforming State-society relations is mitigated. Contrary to Schudson's hypothesis (2002), the media conglomerate, still the property of a *coronel eletrônico*, contributes to the persistence of closed political games, attempting to sustain *coronelismo eletrônico* even after regime change, while the political inclusion of community media is mostly a renewed form of clientelism. In Bahia, the media's contribution to democratization occurs at the margins, in the interior and in the small and alternative media, who, against many odds, became established political actors, speaking with their own voice.

While it is difficult to predict the future, and even more so on the basis of the analysis of such an incomplete sample as this, it appears that democratization in Bahia will continue, albeit in the

same heterogeneous and haphazard fashion as until now. As is well known, Bahia's —and, more broadly, Brazil's— main challenges have to do with social inequality and these must be addressed before more substantive advances can be made on other fronts, including the media and its political role.

NOTES

1   The author wishes to thank Julieta Suárez Cao, Liziane Guazina, Marcus Vinícius Fraga, Tomáš Došek, Zélia Leal Adghirni and the members of the *Núcleo de estudos em mídia e política* of the University of Brasília, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful comments on previous versions of this article.

2   A subnational authoritarian enclave is a subnational regime in which authoritarian practices persist despite the federal transition to democracy. See my previous work on the issue (DURAZO HERRMANN, 2012, 2014).

REFERENCES

AMARAL, Roberto; GUIMARÃES, César. "Media Monopoly in Brazil". **Political Communication**, 44(1): 26-38, 1994.

ARAUJO PINTO, Pâmela. "Mídia regional no Brasil: uma análise dos subsistemas midiáticos das regiões Norte e Sul". **Eptic Online**, 16(3): 59-78, 2014.

ANJ. **Relatório de liberdade imprensa. Agosto de 2012 a julho de 2014.** São Paulo, Associação Nacional de Jornais, 2014.

Blog do Louro Magalhães, "Professor canadense volta à Bahia para pesquisar o papel da mídia na política baiana". 10 August 2012. Available at: <louromagalhaes.spaceblog.com.br/2065505/CHAPADA-Professor-canadense-volta-a-Bahia-para-pesquisar-o-papel-da-midia-na-politica-baiana-8207/>. Access on: 13 May 2014.

CABRAL, Otávio. A herança maldita de ACM. **Veja**, São Paulo, no. 2052, 19 March 2008, pp. 56-60.

CABRAL, Otávio. Entrevista Jaques Wagner — O Brasil não começou com

o PT, **Veja**, São Paulo, no. 2321, 15 May 2013, pp. 15-19.

CENSO **2010.** Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. Available at: www.ibge.gov.br. Access on: 15 June 2015.

Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil (1988), as amended.

CORREIO 2013. Em entrevista, ACM Neto faz balanço do primeiro ano de gestão e diz: 'a casa está arrumada'". **Correio**, Salvador, 19 December 2013. Available at: www.correio24horas.com.br/detalhe/noticia/em-entrevista-acm-neto-faz-balanco-do-primeiro-ano-de-gestao-e-diz-casa-esta-arrumada/. Access on: 23 May 2014.

CORREIO 2014a. Paulo Souto comemora resultado de pesquisa: "reflete o sentimento de mudança do baiano". **Correio**, Salvador, 11 September 2014. Available at: <www.correio24horas.com.br/detalhe/noticia/paulo-souto-comemora-resultado-de-pesquisa-reflete-o-sentimento-de-mudanca-do-baiano/?cHash=9d1f264abf38c76232172688748d9f41>. Access on: 1 December 2014.

CORREIO 2014b. Em entrevista ao Bahia Meio Dia, Rui Costa diz que rejeição tem a ver com desconhecimento. **Correio**, Salvador, 15 September 2014. Available at: <www.correio24horas.com.br/detalhe/noticia/em-entrevista-ao-bahia-meio-dia-rui-costa-diz-que-rejeicao-tem-a-ver-com-desconhecimento/?cHash=da2724c8b01ff5f25f7913eebf9ce243>. Access on: 1 December 2014.

COSTA, Jairo. Editor of politics, **Correio.** Interview with the author, Salvador, 14 November 2015.

DA MATA, Lídice. Former mayor of Salvador. Interview with the author, Salvador, 9 August 2012.

DAHL, Robert. **Polyarchy**, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971.

DANTAS NETO, Paulo Fábio. 'Surf' nas ondas do tempo: do carlismo histórico ao carlismo pós-carlista. **Cadernos CRH**, vol. 39: 213-255, 203.

DANTAS NETO, Paulo Fábio. **Tradição, autocracia e carisma**, Belo Horizonte — Rio de Janeiro, Editora UFMG — IUPERJ, 2006.

DE LIMA, Venício. **Cultura do silêncio e democracia no Brasil**, Brasília, Editora UnB, 2015.

DIAS BEZERRA, Heloísa. Meios de comunicação, política e democracia. **Fragmentos de cultura**, 18(3-4): 329-345, 2008.

DOS SANTOS, SUZY. Os prazos de validade dos coronelismos: transição no coronelismo e no coronelismo eletrônico. In E. SARAVIA et al. **Democracia e regulação dos meios de comunicação de massa**, Rio de Janeiro, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2008, v.1, pp. 223-241.

Julián Durazo Hermmann

DURAZO HERRMANN, Julián. Clientelism and Subnational Politics in Latin America: Reflections on Oaxaca (Mexico) and Bahia (Brazil). In Tina HILGERS (ed.). **Clientelism and Everyday Politics in Latin America**. New York, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2012, pp. 121-136.

DURAZO HERRMANN, Julián, Reflections on Regime Change in Bahia. **Latin American Research Review**, 49(3): 23-44, 2014.

FERNANDES, Vítor. Editorial coordinator of the **Jornal da Chapada**. Interview with the author, Salvador, 6 August 2012.

Fórum baiano LGBT. Available at: <forumbaianolgbt.blogspot.com>. Access on: 23 May 2014.

FRANCISCO, Wellesley. LGBT movement activist. Interview with the author, Salvador, 11 August 2011.

GGB – Grupo Gay da Bahia. Available at: <www.ggb.com.br>. Access on: 13 May 2014.

GINGRAS, Anne-Marie. **Médias et démocratie**, Quebec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2009 (3rd ed.).

GOMES, Luís Augusto. Blogger, **Por escrito**. Interview with the author, Salvador, 6 August 2012.

HABERMAS, Jürgen. **L'espace public**. Paris, Payot, 1978.

HALLIN, Daniel. MANCINI, Paolo. **Comparing Media Systems:** Three Models of Media and Politics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

IBGE. **Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios**. Rio de Janeiro, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estat**ística, 2013.** Available at: <www.ibge.gov.br>. Access on 21 July 2015.

Instituto ACM. Available at: <www.institutoacm.com.br>. Access on: 23 May 2014.

JONAS, Adriano. ALMEIDA Gilberto, "Oligarquia, mídia e dominação política na Bahia", **Organizações e sociedade**, v. 11: 103-115, 2004.

Jornal da Chapada 2012. Chapada: Professor canadense volta à Bahia para pesquisar o papel da mídia na política baiana. **Jornal da Chapada**, Itaberaba, 6 August 2012. Available at: <www.jornaldachapada.com.br>. Access on: 13 May 2014.

Jornal da Chapada. Itaberaba, 2015. Available at: <www.jornaldachapada.com.br>. Access on: 28 July 2015.

Jornal Grande Bahia. Professor canadense volta à Bahia para pesquisar

o papel da mídia na política baiana. **Jornal Grande Bahia**, Salvador, August 2012. Available at: <www.jornalgrandebahia.com.br/2012/08/professor-canadense-volta-a-bahia-para-pesquisar-o-papel-da-midia-na-politica-baiana.html>. Access on: 13 May 2014.

LEMOS, Davi. Presidente do DEM deixa ACM Neto livre para negociar com outra sigla. **A Tarde**, Salvador, 6 June 2015. Available at: <atarde.uol.com.br/politica/noticias/1686621-presidente-do-dem-deixa-acm-neto-livre-para-negociar-com-outra-sigla>. Access on: 24 September 2015.

MAGALHÃES, Antônio Carlos, et al. **Política é paixão**, Rio de Janeiro, Revan, 1995.

MAGALHÃES Jr., Antônio Carlos. Inovação está no nosso DNA. Interview with **Correio**, Salvador, 2 August 2011, pp. 12-13.

MARSIAJ, Juan. Federalism, advocacy networks, and sexual diversity politics in Brazil. In Jordi DÍEZ, Susan FRANCESCHET (eds.). **Comparative Public Policy in Latin America**, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2012, pp. 126-149.

MARTINS, Miguel. O carlismo em alta. **Carta Capital**, São Paulo, 6 August 2014, pp. 42-43.

MIGDAL, Joel. The State in Society: Approaches to Struggles for Domination. In Joel MIGDAL et al. **State Power and Social Forces**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 7-34.

MIGDAL, Joel. **State in Society**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

MILLS, C. S. **The Power Elite**, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000 [1956].

MOREIRA, Virg**ínia**. HELAL, Carla. Notes on Media, Journalism Education and News Organization in Brazil. **Journalism**, 10(1): 91-107, 2009.

MOTT, Luiz (ed.). **Boletim do Grupo Gay da Bahia 1981-2005**, Salvador, Editora GGB, 2011.

PEREIRA, Fábio. MAIA, Kênia. Liberdade de imprensa e identidade profissional no jornalismo: mito fundador ou discurso de autolegitimação. In Dione MOURA et al (eds.). **Comunicação e cidadania**: conceitos e processos, Brasília, Francis, 2011, pp. 77-91.

Pimenta da moqueca. Ilhéus, May 2014. Available in: <www.pimenta.blog.br>. Access on 16 May 2014.

Por Escrito. Deputados premiam "Por Escrito". Salvador, 1 December 2010. Available at: <www.porescrito.com.br>. Access on: 16 May 2014.

Portal do Renato Ribeiro. Professor canadense volta à Bahia para pesquisar o papel da mídia. **Portal do Renato Ribeiro**. Salvador, 6 August 2012. Available at: <www.portalrenatoribeiro.com.br/noticia.php?id=2426>. Access on: 13 May 2014.

Rede Bahia. Salvador, May 2014. Available ar: <redebahia.rbt.com.br>. Access on 23 May 2014.

Rede Record. São Paulo, August 2015. Available at: <www.r7.com>. Access on: 19 August 2015.

SAMPAIO, Elias. State Secretary for Equality Promotion of Bahia. Interview with the author, Salvador, 11 August 2011.

SAVOIE, Donald. **Power: Where Is It?**, Montreal-Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.

SCHUDSON, Michael. The News Media as Political Institutions. **Annual Review of Political Science**, v. 5, 2002, pp. 249-269.

SCHULTZ, Julianne. **Reviving the Fourth Estate**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

SKOCPOL, Theda. **States and Social Revolutions**, Cambridge (US), Harvard University Press, 1979.

TALENTO, Biaggio. Wagner promete divulgar decisão sobre modal da Paralela até segunda. **A Tarde**, Salvador, 6 August 2011, p. B1.

TEIXEIRA GOMES, José Carlos. **Memórias das trevas.** Uma devassa na vida de Antônio Carlos Magalhães, São Paulo, Geração, 2001.

Tribuna da Bahia 2012. Papel da mídia. Raio Laser, **Tribuna da Bahia**, Salvador, 7 August, p. 2.

VASCONCELOS, Levy 2012a. Journalist**, A Tarde**. Interview with the author, Salvador, 8 August 2012.

VASCONCELOS, Guilherme 2012b. Bahia: Governo Wagner eleva em 162% gastos com publicidade. **Jornal da Chapada,** Itaberaba, 19 June 2012. Avaliable at: <jornaldachapada.com.br/2012/06/19/bahia-governo-wagner-eleva-em-162-gastos-com-publicidade>. Access on: 5 June 2014.

VAZ, Cláudia. President, Instituto ACM. Letter to the author, Salvador, 9 August 2011.

WAGNER, Jaques. Governor of Bahia. Interview with the author, Salvador, 15 August 2011.

WAISBORD, Silvio. The Pragmatic Politics of Media Reform: Media Movements and Coalition-Building in Latin America. **Global Media and**

Communication, 6(2): 133-153, 2010.

WEBER, Max. **Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft**, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr, 1922 [1971] (5th ed.).

WHITTEN-WOODRING, Jenifer. JAMES, Patrick. Fourth Estate or Mouthpiece? A Formal Model of Media, Protest and Government Repression. **Political Communication**, 29(2): 113-136, 2012.

WOLTON, Dominique. Les contradictions de la communication politique. In Philippe CABIN (ed.). **La communication** — état des savoirs, Paris, Éditions des sciences humaines, 1998, pp. 343-361.

ZANCHETTA, Juvenal. **Imprensa escrita e telejornal**, São Paulo, Editora UNESP, 2004.

Julián Durazo Herrmann is professor of Comparative Politics at the Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada, since 2007. He is a specialist in the problems of democratic transition and consolidation at the subnational level in Latin America. His current research project is on the role of the media in the state-level political systems in Brazil. He is co-director of *Novos questionamentos em mídia e política*, Florianópolis, Insular, 2015.