analysis of the degree of activity and the degree of passivity of individuals and the public.

Chapter eight is an academic essay of the media influence on individuals and on society. In the last chapter Michalczyk presents theoretical issues concerning the impact of the media, in the context of historical development. He notices that in the current era of propaganda and manipulation, effectiveness of the media is very important. The author relied heavily on the works of American and German scholars, assuming that the reader has a general idea of the theory of media effectiveness.

In conclusion, The purpose of *The Media Society* is to deepen the theoretical and empirical knowledge of (about) the media, an indication of their growing importance in the lives of individuals and societies. I think that ideas presented in this book are absorbing and complex. Important complements to the book are charts and diagrams. What is also very important *The Media Society* bases on the rich bibliography.

The book is meant for academics, journalists, lecturers, employees of public relations departments and the students of political science, sociology, journalism and social communication.

**Book review: Ludwik Habuda, Decentralization vs. Centralization of Administration in the Structure of the Division of the Country [Decentralizacja vs centralizacja administracji w strukturze zasadniczego terytorialnego podziału kraju], Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2009, pp. 373**

*by Mariusz Popławski*

Professor Ludwik Habuda is a grand specialist in the field of broadly understood research on local and regional self-governments. The value of his studies is even greater as he tackles with issues concerning not the current legal status of such bodies, but he tries to get to the core of the problem by concentrating on a more demanding topic – the key features of a decentralized and a centralized structure.

Perhaps a review is not the best occasion to show such attitude, but I must emphasize that it has been a real pleasure to have him as our guest on the 1st National Scientific Conference titled “Local Self-Government. But what kind of?”, which was held in Toruń in 2009. Ludwik Habuda has contributed a lot the disputes that took place after each presentations and many paper givers were really thankful for his remarks.
Due to that, I have, even with a greater curiosity, reached for his latest book – *Decentralization vs. Centralization of Administration In the Structure of the Division of the Country*, which has been published this year by Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek from Toruń.

First I shall notice, which is not always the most important regarding science books, that the quality of publishing, incl. well done DTP, proof-reading, layout and graphics, is on the best, world level. What else might seem to have an influence on the popularity, rather hardly ever mention, is the low price of a copy.

The book has been divided into five chapters, introduction and a summary. The division is clear and each part is a beginning of a reasonably planed stage of considerations. The first one is on general issues that one may deal with while first – designing an administrative structure and/or later being a part of it. L. Habuda easily explains the most controversial topics concerning the issue. One may say that the presentations placed here seem simple, but it is author’s skills that make even the most troublesome phenomena understandable even for beginner-type readers.

In order to fully get acquainted with the main dichotomy presented in the book (decentralization – centralization) it is crucial to understand entanglement of hierarchies within administrational structures. The author claims that there are two basic hierarchies – of adherence and of power. In this chapter the multi-disciplinary character of the whole study is being revealed.

But the monograph concentrates much on clarifying the distinction between centralism and decentralization, which is the topic of the third chapter. In my opinion it is the most valuable part. Not because others are less developed but for such remarks, I think, many researchers have been really waiting. It is one of few attempts, and this one is really successful, to put some order into vague discussions on decentralization. Many begin their considerations without any reflection whether we certainly know what decentralization is. Ludwik Habuda, as he is a fully-shaped and well-prepared scientist, and isn’t afraid of asking very intricate questions. In my opinion not only political science students but especially lecturers must study this chapter deeply, in order to get into the topic.

Chapter four is “located” somewhere “at” the main monograph’s topic, not directly inside, but, nevertheless it is valuable one. It is on one of the essential questions regarding local power/authority – whether it is local communities, who have the natural right and decide to give some of their freedom to the state, or it is the central power which is
the “key player”, meaning by its resolution some issues are decided on local or regional level. Ludwik Habuda also tackles with one of the most frustrating expressions contained in Polish Constitution – two different meanings of community, for which in Polish we have two separate words (wspólnota & społeczność). First of these expresses some special bonds among people. As the author points out it is being shaped by many factors, incl. time. It cannot be given or imposed by legal documents. The latter one also means in English community, but the bonds are of less importance here.

The last chapter is once again a pioneer (successful) attempt of considering pros and cons as well as necessary conditions for decentralization processes. It is not always appropriate to introduce such structure and scientists as well as politicians must aware of that.

To sum up I must admit that this book by Professor Ludwik Habuda has all the potential to become a classical one in this sense that it incredibly well fills the huge gap in Polish literature and many will refer to it decades. The only condition for this is that it shall be noticed popularized, which, I hope, my review will contribute to.