

veraz posible mientras que el control estatal, de manera más o menos explícita, intentaba evitarlo.

La muerte del dictador, en noviembre de 1975, supuso toda una explosión mediática previa, incluso, a la derogación del artículo segundo de la Ley de Fraga por medio del Decreto-Ley de abril de 1977. Muchos de estos nuevos medios no gozaron de una vida muy larga y murieron junto con algunos de los que habían contado con una gran pujanza durante el franquismo. A su vez, otros como *El País* o *Diario 16* se convirtieron en verdaderos iconos de la Transición. A pesar del entusiasmo con el que afrontaron esta nueva etapa muchos medios, la censura aún contó con varios años de vida y continuó poniendo límites a la información, como refleja Martín de la Guardia en “Libertad con cierta ira: la censura entre 1975 y 1978”. Hubo que esperar a 1978 para que el texto constitucional, al que dedica el autor el último capítulo de la obra, garantizara el final de la censura y el pleno derecho de la libertad de expresión y de información.

*Cuestión de tijeras* es una obra escrita con claridad, equilibrio y rigurosidad gracias a los conocimientos del autor en la materia de la que trata, a su trabajo de investigación en archivos y hemerotecas y a una amplia y actualizada bibliografía seleccionada con un estudiado criterio científico. Martín de la Guardia logra con su trabajo dar una visión general del papel que la censura jugó en la historia más reciente de España sin caer en banalidades, maniqueísmo o en anécdotas archiconocidas que tan sólo trivializarían lo que realmente supuso la existencia de censura y de unos medios de comunicación faltos de libertades.

**Ramos Melero, Rodolfo, *Liberalizing policies and reforms in the railway industry: a new scenario for the European Union*. Madrid, Spanish Railways Foundation, 2004, 358 pp.**

Por Daniel Alcalde Güelfo  
(Universidad of Cádiz)

In the last two centuries, the history of mankind has been linked, in one way or another, with the development of railways. We could even say that it was the “locomotive” which pulled the wagons of history. It would not be possible to reach the

current level of development if it was not for the access to mass transportation, communication and travelling facilitated by railways. Colonisations (as well as decolonisations), revolutions and genocides, they all have taken place with the use of railways as the favourite way to arrive to one place, come back from another or transport goods and people to various locations. This is why the study of the history of railways can be seen as a study of how and why the mankind used to travel.

The book gives a detailed description of the evolution of the railway management (and in a way of mankind itself) in the recent past: the crisis, the reforms and the privatization process. The author points out that in this case privatisation turns out to be a consequence of the theory of the “questionability of the markets” and the recent “natural monopolization” theory, applied in public transport for the first time since the 1980s.

The book presents a very precise analysis of the decline of different public railway transport companies and its relation with the introduction of a new framework in the European Union. It is interesting to notice that even if all the issues have been perfectly described, we might have come across another problem: in a book consisting such descriptions it is very easy to get trapped in vague repetitions of analytical schemes. However, the author knows how to keep it interesting at all stages of the analysis. This is because his main interest is to compare the problems, causes, prospects and results of different privatization processes of public enterprises.

The author also reminds us that it would be a mistake to blame the “public character” of the railway companies for all the problems. However, it is clear that this might have been one of the reasons of some negligence regarding the complications which appeared as the said companies developed. This lack of criticism is accompanied by an array of difficulties which have been affecting, and consequently destroying, the public transport, as well as other public services, in recent years.

When it comes to the problems faced by the railways, it is crucial to notice that those companies did not know how to “compete under the same conditions” with other means of transport. They suffered from a great deficit and consequently invested most of the subsidies to pay it off, instead of creating modern infrastructure, crucial for the improvement of the system. This fact cannot be

overlooked: the increase in investments is more than necessary. From our point of view, these subsidies would make more sense and would be better received by the society if we focused on environmental benefits of the use of railways when compared to other means of mass transport (be it cars or planes).

As we have already observed, there is no doubt that the liberalization of public transport services is only one of the numerous actions taken recently in order to liberalize the economy. In other words, it is not the only privatization that has been or is being carried out. However, in this case, interestingly, Prof. Ramos is talking about the difficulty of the full execution of the “free provision of railway services” (i.e. the liberalization of these services), which is caused by a number of factors: brand image, experience, customer loyalty, and, above all, infrastructure, rolling stock (such as trains, passenger carriages, cargo wagons, etc.), as well as cross-compatibility of tickets.

To separate the infrastructure from its utilisation is a policy option for railways which would allow to level the competition between different means of transport and allow for the liberalization of railways, be it beneficial or not.

In this “privatization ecstasy” in which we find ourselves immersed, the role of the State seems clear. Until recently, the State has been the body supposed to be responsible for the supply of the basic services for the citizens. Now, this role has been slightly changed: the State does not have to take care of the supply of these services, but only makes sure that they are provided.

When it comes to rail transport, if we really want the abovementioned liberalization to be effective, we need to introduce a regulatory body: the State, responsible for the provision of the services. Its three main objectives should be: firstly, to make sure that these services meet social needs at acceptable prices, then, to ensure both the viability and continuous development of the system and finally, to overcome the internal conflicts between the State, the companies involved and the management organizations. However, it is impossible to treat the current development of different stages of railway privatization as an example, because at the moment most of the processes that we have mentioned have finished only recently or are still in progress.

The already introduced structural changes have been very helpful in paying off the debts accumulated by public carriers. However, while on the one hand an increase in productivity has been achieved, on the other hand, surprisingly, the financial functioning of many companies is far from successful: some of them suffer losses (Germany), others go bankrupt (Sweden, USA). According to the author, these precedents show that it is important not only to eliminate the debt of rail companies but above all to promote, encourage and strengthen the relations between those companies and the public administration organs in order to avoid the situation of debt in the future.

The work by Professor Ramos provides the reader with a valuable and extensive outlook on the dynamics of the railway companies in the recent years, the response to these dynamics and the predictable consequences of the actions taken. The vision presented by the author makes it clear how necessary it is to create a new scenario for the European Union and at the same time helps the reader to understand in what direction our economy is going, where the market “locomotive” is leading us, and finally, towards where the mankind is heading.

Talbot, David, *La conspiración. La historia secreta de John y Robert Kennedy*. Barcelona, Crítica, 2007, 668 pp.

Por David Molina Rabadán  
(Universidad de Cádiz)

Una obra como ésta no se puede encuadrar dentro de las monografías al uso sobre la administración Kennedy y en concreto, de las circunstancias que rodearon al asesinato de JFK. No es sólo de que se trate de una investigación sólida y rigurosa, que revisa el estado actual de los principales debates acerca de la materia, sin perderse en laberínticas consideraciones de conspiraciones y verdades ocultas por poderes tenebrosos.

El autor contrasta sus afirmaciones de una manera creíble y disecciona todo argumento que pudiera estar a favor o en contra de los suyos. Aunque es innegable su procedencia periodística, así como su especial cariño por la figura y persona de