

Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia

MEGATRENDS AND MEDIA

*Media Farm -
totems and taboo*



Dana Petranová
Slavomír Magál (eds.)

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MEDIA AS THE INTERSPHERE OF HUMAN LIFE: ANOTHER VIEW ON THE MEDIATIZATION OF COMMUNICATION THEORY

Andrzej Adamski

ABSTRACT:

In the present article, the author attempts to illustrate phenomena occurring in the sphere of human communication and integrate them into the specific model. It would not be an overall description of the complex ecosystem of interpersonal communication, but rather the next brick added to the continuously expanding edifice of scientific reflection on communicating and the media. Thus, for the purposes of this study the author suggests the use of a term 'intersphere', derived from geometry. The author is convinced that the situation, in which the media are prevalent in every area of human life, is properly described. As for the linguistic analysis of the word 'intersphere', the author examines its possible references to the mediasphere theory, formulated by the Polish media researcher, Bp. Adam Lepa, and divided into logosphere, iconosphere, galenosphere and sonosphere. In the further study, he endeavors to investigate the extent, to which the perception of the media as the intersphere of human existence cooperates with – recently extremely popular and gaining more supporters – the theory of mediatization of various areas of life. It seems that (despite lexical similarities between the concepts of 'mediosphere' and 'intersphere') the comprehension of the media in terms of the intersphere of human life is much closer to the theory of mediatization; it constitutes as if the other side of this theory and hence, can perfectly complement it.

KEY WORDS:

intersphere, mass media, mediatization, mediasphere, logosphere, galenosphere, sonosphere, iconosphere

1 Introduction

The sphere of interpersonal communication is one of these areas of life wherein the influence of new technologies is easily noticeable. At this point, communication is understood as the exchange of thoughts and information – since modifications are not so drastic as for moving from one place to another. Indeed, the air transportation is developing and cars are getting more and more modern, ecological and safe, yet tourist flights to the Moon have not become the universal standard, which seemed nearly within reach of a man after the first landing on the

Silver Globe. Nevertheless, if we make a reference to the very reality of the exchange of ideas and information – then the changes that we are witnessing, are certainly of a cosmic nature. Ease of contacting anyone in almost any place on Earth is currently so obvious that we feel frustrated and annoyed if we have to wait more than several hours (minutes?) to receive a response to our e-mail and we do not get the immediate reply to a text message, not to mention the repeatedly missed phone calls.

The answer to this reality is the reflection of scientists, who seek to describe and understand the mechanisms of the ongoing transformations and also predict their future directions and consequences. As observed by the researches from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, namely prof. H. Seweryniak and K. Sitkowska, numerous attempts to illustrate this reality resulted in equally numerous theories. And so, there are: 'revolutions (a technical-scientific, industrial, computer, information, digital revolution), eras (the era of machines, a computer and digital era), epochs (the epoch of image), centuries. They were to effect: 'lonely crowd' (D. Riesman), 'post-historic man' (R. Seidenberg), 'industrial society' (R. Dahrendorf), 'global village' (M. McLuhan), 'one-dimensional man' (H. Marcuse), 'information society' (T. Umesao), 'postmodernist society' (A. Etzioni), 'world without borders' (H. Brown)' – critically noting, however, that 'none of these concepts, excessively concentrated on one field or issue only, does not fully reflect the nature of the changes occurring in the world'.¹

Therefore, I would endeavor to describe the phenomena taking place in the area of communication and incorporate them into a certain model. Obviously, it would not be the overall presentation of the complex ecosystem of human communication since it would be impossible to achieve – and definitely not in one scientific article. It would rather be the next brick added to the constantly growing edifice of scientific reflection on communication and the media. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I suggest the use of a term derived from geometry, i.e., 'intersphere'. In my opinion, it properly describes the situation, in which the media are prevalent in every field of human existence. Analyzing the word 'intersphere' on a linguistic level, I would examine its potential references to the mediasphere theory, formulated by the Polish media researcher, Adam Lepa, and divided into logosphere, iconosphere,

1 SEWERYNIAK, H., SITKOWSKA, K.: Współczesne konteksty kultury medialnej. In PRZYBYSZ, M., WIELEBSKI, T. (eds.): *Media w duszpasterstwie*. Warszawa : Elipsa, 2014, p. 23.

galenosphere and sonosphere. In the further study, I would investigate the extent, to which the perception of the media as the intersphere of human life cooperates with – recently extremely popular and gaining more supporters – the theory of mediatization of various areas of our existence. As it seems, (despite lexical similarities between the concepts of ‘mediasphere’ and ‘intersphere’), the comprehension of the media in terms of the intersphere of human life is much closer to the theory of mediatization; it constitutes as if the other side of this theory and hence, can perfectly complement it.

In my study, I would apply the method of critical analysis of available sources and reviews, especially encyclopedias and foreign language dictionaries (in order to examine the current understanding and occurrence of a term ‘intersphere’). Next, I would focus on the works by A. Lepa and his followers. In the further part of the article, I would refer to publications of the authors, who are frequently associated with the theory of mediatization nowadays, i.e., S. Hjarvard, F. Krotz, K. Lundby.

2 Media as the intersphere of human life

In the monograph ‘Media in the Analogue and Digital World’, published in 2012, while searching for an expression that would most accurately reflect the growing role (or even hegemony) of the media in every area of life, I suggested the term ‘intersphere’.² This word is derived from geometry. It exists in Italian language and is translated into Polish as ‘sfera półwypisana (w wielościan)’ (a midsphere of a polyhedron) – it is a sphere, which is tangent to every edge of this polyhedron. As for the term ‘intersphere’ itself, it has no equivalent in Polish. In other languages, besides the aforementioned Italian, it does not function as well, except for the Belgian company, involved in wood flooring manufacture (<http://www.intersferaprojects.be/>). If we look for a possible English equivalent and application of this term (‘intersphere’), we will find a name of the musical band (<http://www.theintersphere.com/>) or the international business translation company (<http://www.intersphere.com>). Merriam-Webster dictionary defines ‘intersphere’ as ‘to fall or come within the spheres or influences of one another’.³

2 ADAMSKI, A.: *Media w analogowym i cyfrowym świecie. Wpływ cyfrowej rewolucji na rekonfigurację komunikacji społecznej*. Warszawa : Elipsa, 2012, p. 183-184.

3 *Intersphere*. [online]. [2014-11-13]. Available at: <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intersphere/>>.

Nonetheless, what does the expression, taken from geometry, have in common with the mass media, their role and influence on human existence? Before we consider the meaning of the assumption that today the media are the intersphere of human life, let us explore the broader context of this statement. The very term 'intersphere' is composed of two words: a prefix of Latin origin 'inter-' (Latin: 'between, among, inside') and the word 'sphere', which stems from Greek. Thus, 'intersphere' denotes something that is 'between environments', it unites them, as if constitutes a common element – and in such context it functions in geometry. How to apply this to the world of mass media? Digressing a bit, it might be worth to examine various concepts and terms, which contain the word 'sphere', and simultaneously remain in the field of the media studies.

3 Intersphere vs. mediasphere

To begin with, I would like to mention ideas of Adam Lepa, the Polish media researcher and a distinguished expert on the media education. For a long time, in his scientific studies, he has dealt with human mediasphere, which he defines as something more than just a part of human environment – as the separate environment of the media – becoming – due to the increasing media impact on a human being and his lifestyle – more and more significant, or even one of the most important human environments.⁴ According to this scientist, mediasphere is not simply the sum of media effects on man, nor a random set of their influence. It constitutes the environment and hence, it is created by the media for the purpose of a specific human being and in relation to him. A man is the major component of mediasphere that establishes relations with other components. Thus, he not only receives stimuli from his own media environment, but also to a certain extent affects it. Every mediasphere is therefore different and unique. The shape of mediasphere, i.e., its actual impact on a man and its effectiveness are determined primarily by the number and type of the media forming mediasphere, the level of its activity and the reception of the media by an individual, which depends on his attitude, preferences, habits and also so called mediatory factors (eg. personal features of a recipient, attitudes toward the media, a reference group, interactions, culture, education, the impact of opinion

4 LEPA, A.: Mediosfera człowieka. In *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 2010, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 159-169. [online]. [2014-11-13]. Available at: < http://archidiecezja.lodz.pl/lst/wordpress/?p=336#_ftn2/>.

leaders). Accordingly, mediasphere is a joint product of the media that interact with a man.⁵

A. Lepa distinguishes specific layers in mediasphere. There are: iconosphere (an image layer), logosphere (a word layer), sonosphere (a sound layer) and galenosphere (silence layer). They represent the elementary consequences of the interacting media, namely an image, a word, a sound and the silence, considered together with the noise.⁶

The thought of A. Lepa was developed by the media researches, inter alia, coming from Warsaw environment, specifically the Institute of the Media Education and Journalism in Theological Faculty of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. We should mention particularly M. Laskowska (dealing with galenosphere) and P. Drzewiecki, who is involved in scientific reflection on the modern appreciation of logosphere, especially in the face of the dominating audiovisual culture, mainly identified with iconosphere. P. Drzewiecki associates these terms with the broad concept of the media education, noting that ‘the theory of logosphere seems to be a fresh approach to the media education. This is a general notion of teaching the culture of expression, thought and meaning, creating the new social environment for discussion and mental development. Furthermore, creating in harmony with audiovisual culture, with the use and appreciation of iconosphere’.⁷

What is the correlation between the media perceived as the intersphere of human life and the suggested by A. Lepa concept of mediasphere with all its components? We can probably talk about a conceptual extension: behold mediosfera began to dominate and permeate all other existent

5 LEPA, A.: Mediosfera człowieka. In *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 2010, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 159-169. [online]. [2014-11-13]. Available at: < http://archidiecezja.lodz.pl/lst/wordpress/?p=336#_ftn2/>.

6 LEPA, A.: Mediosfera człowieka. In *Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 2010, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 159-169. [online]. [2014-11-13]. Available at: < http://archidiecezja.lodz.pl/lst/wordpress/?p=336#_ftn2/>.

7 Cf. DRZEWIECKI, P.: *Renesans słowa. Wychowanie do logosfery w kulturze audiowizualnej*. Toruń : Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2010, p. 10; LEPA, A.: *Pedagogika mass mediów*. Łódź : Archidiecezjalne Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1998, p. 174-192; LEPA, A.: *Mity i obrazy*. Łódź : Archidiecezjalne Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1999; LEPA, A.: *Etyka galenosfery*. In *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, 2011, Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 193-204; LASKOWSKA, M.: *Teologiczne podstawy wychowania do galenosfery*. In *Paedagogia Christiana*, 2009, Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 139-150.

human environments, changing into the intersphere of human life. The media are becoming prevalent in every area of life. They are entering and penetrating the sphere of our communication and also politics, religion, sport, economy, culture, security...⁸

At this point, there arises a reference to another concept, describing this state of affairs: mediatization. Therefore, in the further part of the article I would present the current state of scientific reflection on mediatization. Next, I would examine the areas that are subject to the process of mediatization. I assume that this analysis would result in a confirmation of the thesis that the vast majority of spheres of human life (if not all of them) is prone to the considerable media influence, which in turn, would be a continuation of the statement that the media are becoming the intersphere of human existence.

4 Intersphere vs. mediatization

Nowadays mediatization is a quite common concept; it can be stated that this term is very popular in science. John B. Thompson is regarded as one of the pioneers of this notion. In 1995 he used it to describe processes, currently defined by the English word 'mediatization'. The works of

8 As if on the margin of these considerations it is worth to mention a quite interesting reference to the theory of noosphere (V. Vernadsky's and T. de Chardin's term), made by T. Goban-Klas (although the term itself does not relate directly to media studies). This prominent Polish media researcher writes: 'A rapid change of humanity from the state of global isolation to the state of global unity, which took place in the twentieth century, arouses countless problems. In particular, the concept of a global network, i.e., the biggest 'machine' (device), constructed by a man, which complexity, availability and reliability are astonishing, constitutes the intellectual challenge. (...) The idea of a global network shows analogy to the modern road network, so called information highways, presenting them in the image and likeness of the existing road network and contrasting the old country roads with collision-free highways, that is roads with great widths. Such network forms noosphere, (...) spreading the information web around the world (an idea currently implemented in the form of web servers). As every metaphor has drawbacks, so does this one, but – as Nicholas Negroponte says, (...) – in fact, we move from the atom transfer (transport) to the bit transfer (communication)'. GOBAN-KLAS, T.: *Media i komunikowanie masowe. Teorie i analizy prasy, radia, telewizji i Internetu*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002, p. 293-294.

J. Habermas, R. Silverstone and J. Martin-Barbero were significant for the development of this idea. Nowadays, this theory is expanded by, inter alia, S. Hjarvard, F. Krotz, W. Schulz, A. Hepp, K. Lundby. It is also worth to refer to the existence of the temporary working group 'Mediatization', operating by ECREA – European Communication Research and Education Association. The website of this group is <http://www.mediatization.eu/> and it is led by the already mentioned A. Hepp and S. Hjarvard.

The members of this working group notice that we live in times when the media are present in almost all areas of our lives. More and more aspects of our lives: our work, leisure, politics, organizations, economy, and many other parts of culture and society use and rely on the media communication to a greater extent. It is a characteristic 'media saturation' of our reality. They propose the concept of mediatization in order to grasp the full meaning and importance of this phenomenon. It does not apply to the closed theory of the media change, but rather encourages a careful investigation – on the one hand, mutual interaction of the media and modifications occurring in the way of communication, on the other hand – different processes of social and cultural changes. In this way, the theory of mediatization seeks to understand and explain the importance of the multimedia development in relation to other modern processes, especially globalization, individualization and commercialization.⁹ Additionally, the reference of mediatization to the media convergence should not be ignored as well. Currently, the media (especially the 'new media') provide a multifaceted, global, interactive and spatially and temporally compressed transfer of any content, targeted at the global audience. It is so because the new media diversify and reconfigure the whole process of information flow from the sender to the receiver and change the key characteristics of the media texts.¹⁰ In case of the old media (analogue) information must have had its physical medium. As for the new media, information that is subject to digitalization, is recorded in the form of a stream of bits, unified, standardized – which causes that it can be freely copied and transferred between different types of receivers.¹¹

9 *European Communication Research and Education Association*. [online]. [2013-11-24]. Available at: <<http://mediatization.eu/>>.

10 *The Mediatization of Culture: The Challenge of New Media*. [online]. [2014-02-10]. Available at: <<http://mediatization.ku.dk/about/>>.

11 SUWARA, B.: Na ceste k hypermediálnemu artefaktu. In *Kultura-Media-Teologia*, 2012, Vol. 9, No. 3, p. 25.

The process of convergence also changes the sphere of human life. The media are becoming the channel of the presence of man in the world. All social processes are conditioned or at least partially determined by the media communication. A human being more frequently experiences the world and himself and shapes the world and himself through the media, in the context of the media in the media sphere of life. Every area of human life is, to a greater or lesser extent, formed by the processes present and generated in the media. We can risk the statement that the media are becoming necessary determinants for the vast part of human life.¹²

F. Krotz draws attention to the difference between the English words “mediated” and “mediatized” (a wordplay not entirely possible to translate into Polish, where the word “mediated” is translated as “zapośredniczony”, and “mediatized” as “zmediatyzowany”. According to Krotz, the mediated communication has three main variants, dependent on a person, who we communicate with: the mediated interpersonal communication, interactive communication and mass communication understood as sending and receiving messages of a unified content. However, in the case of the mediatized forms of social and cultural life we primarily deal with the importance of the media in everyday life, work and entertainment, social relations, politics, economics, etc.¹³

Z. Oniszczyk notices that in the German science on communication, mediatization is considered from two major research perspectives: sociological and communicological. The former one views mediatization as the process of social and cultural modification, in which culture, daily life and human identity are transformed under the media influence. In this sense, mediatization leads to changes in communicative human environment. Nevertheless, from a communicological standpoint, mediatization is primarily associated with social effects of public communication, which is becoming more and more dominated by the media. Thus, mediatization causes that all participants of this

12 DROŻDŹ, M.: Mediatyzacja życia – media masowe wobec procesów konwergencji. In NIEZGODA, M., ŚWIĄTKIEWICZ-MOŚNA, M., WAGNER, A. (eds.): *Com.unikowanie się w zmieniającym się społeczeństwie*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Naukowe Nomos, 2010, p. 32-33.

13 KROTZ, F.: Mediatization: A Concept With Which to Grasp media and Societal Change. In LUNDBY K. (ed.): *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences*. New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Wien : Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, 2009, p. 24.

communication more frequently are forced to take into account logic and specificity of the media.¹⁴

For the purposes of this article, I focused on a definition of mediatization proposed by S. Hjarvard, who claims that mediatization is 'two-side process of a highly advanced modernity, where the media – on the one hand, emerge as an independent institution, with its own logic, to which other social institutions must adapt. On the other hand, the media simultaneously become an integral part of different institutions, such as: politics, work, family and religion, because more and more actions are performed through the interactive mass media.'¹⁵

The concept of mediatization is hardly new – it has developed for a long time and has evolved in the minds of researchers. Many of them undertook the reflection on the growing media influence on religion, culture, politics, sport, science, economy, education, everyday life and even issues connected with the national safety and the threat of terrorism. Let us consider briefly the infiltration of the media into the aforementioned areas of human life.

5 Public life: celebritization, tabloidisation, infotainment

Mediatization causes that the role of opinion leaders, that is mainly experts in various fields and disciplines – intellectuals and scientists – is taken over by celebrities. Nowadays, we observe the process of celebritization of ordinary people – according to O. Driessens, it is related to the change of perception and understanding of the 'celebritism' and who can be regarded as a celebrity. In the opinion of this author, we should consider this phenomenon through the prism of democratization, diversification and migration. However, its present shape is affected by three complementary factors: mediatization, personalization and commodification ('everything is a commodity').¹⁶ It is also closely linked

14 ONISZCZUK, Z.: Mediatyzacja polityki i polityzacja mediów. Dwa wymiary wzajemnych relacji. In *Studia Medioznawcze*, 2011, Vol. 47, No. 4, p. 13-14.

15 HJARVARD, S.: The mediatization of religion. A theory of the media as agents of religious change. In *Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook*, 2008, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 105.

16 DRIESSENS, O.: The celebritization of society and culture: Understanding the structural dynamics of celebrity culture. In *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2013, Vol.16, No. 6, p. 641.

with tabloidisation, based on the acquisition of features characteristic of tabloids by the 'serious', opinion-forming media and with the development of infotainment, that is a combination of information and entertainment (although nowadays it is not so much informative-entertaining genre, but rather more and more dominant method of spreading information: colloquial style, light content, avoidance of difficult words, short sentences, ready interpretation of events that is brought even to a slogan).¹⁷ The media can make both, a celebrity out of an ordinary man and use people popular in other media or in the spheres of social life, who seek to catch attention of journalists and the audience.¹⁸

A journalist, who talks with experts, also frequently becomes a celebrity – he very often applies the partner-expert strategy during conversations. He not only mediates, by allowing an expert to express his opinion, but also debates, argues, reveals his convictions and comments (not always favorably) expert's beliefs. Such attitude helps him to demonstrate his knowledge and skills, and also, in the viewer's eyes, puts him on a par with the invited expert.¹⁹

6 Politics

Already in the eighties, the Swedish researcher K. Asp drew attention to the impact of the media on politics, declaring directly the mediatization of political life (although Asp referred to the even earlier, since formulated in 1978, expression of the Norwegian sociologist G. Hernes, 'mediatized society').²⁰ In literature, mediatization of politics is frequently and willingly analysed aspect of this phenomenon.

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- 17 LASKOWSKA, M.: Infotainment – analiza aksjologiczno-etyczna zjawiska. In GOŁDA-SOBCZAK, M., MACHURA, W., SOBCZAK, J. (eds.): *Media – czwarta władza? (Vol. 2)* Poznań, Opole : Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scriptorium, 2011, p. 128-129.
- 18 MIKULÁŠ, P.: Global Patterns for National Stars? Celebriety in Slovakia. In *Kultura-Media-Teologia*, 2012, Vol. 10, No. 3, p. 104.
- 19 SZYLKO-KWAS, J.: Kto tu jest gwiazdą? – rola dziennikarza na przykładzie rozmów telewizyjnych. In FURMAN, W., MARSZAŁEK-KAWA, J., NIERENBERG, B., WOLNY-ZMORZYŃSKI, K. (eds.): *Ludzie polskich mediów. Celebryci a redaktorzy*. Toruń : Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2010, p. 24-25.
- 20 HJARVARD, S.: The mediatization of religion. A theory of the media as agents of religious change. In *Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook*, 2008, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 107.

Mediatization of politics has similar rules as the process of celebrityization, described above. It often leads to the situation, in which a politician becomes a celebrity. Speaking of mediatization of politics, we must pay attention to the changes taking place in a behavior and utterances made by politicians under the influence of the media. In fact, less frequently we deal with a considerable debate on substantive arguments. The aforementioned transformation of participants of political communication, occurring under the media impact, encompasses a wide range of changes in the fields of language (colloquialism), structure of a message (brevity), emphases in public debate (the primacy of emotions) and the image metamorphoses (aesthetics of appearance).²¹ It results in a phenomenon that we can define as 'celebritization of politicians'. As a rule, parties send their more prominent members to the media trainings and employ people, who teach them the appropriate way of dressing, speaking, behavior in front of the camera. Particular politicians more frequently acquire features characteristic of celebrities. The boundaries between politicians and celebrities are becoming dangerously blurry.²²

Another aspect of this phenomenon relates to the media viewed as a competitive center of power, which seeks to dominate the sphere of politics and impose its logic and rules on it. We can investigate reasons and sources of this domineering position of the media toward the political system. First of all, we can distinguish an organization and conduct of the public discourse (the media, in accordance with the agenda setting theory, form a hierarchy of importance of issues and problems); secondly – control of the access to information, matters, opinions and operations (gatekeeping); finally, the significance of the media institutions for business and political authorities (political, economic and social). However, if we consider mediatization of the media through the prism of its functionality, we notice that the media control the government, define critical situations (and hence, manage the actions of the authorities), improve the actions of the government and stimulate personal decisions.²³

21 NAPIERALSKI, J.: Mediatyzacja polityki. Konieczność, zagrożenie czy alternatywa? In *Refleksje*, 2010, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 23.

22 VAN ELTEREN, M.: Celebrity Culture, Performative Politics, and the Spectacle of "Democracy" in America. In *The Journal of American Culture*, 2013, Vol. 36, No. 4, p. 265.

23 ONISZCZUK, Z.: Mediatyzacja polityki i polityzacja mediów. Dwa wymiary wzajemnych relacji. In *Studia Medioznawcze*, 2011, Vol. 47, No. 4, p. 14-16.

7 Religion

According to S. Hjarvard, through mediatization religion is becoming more and more adjusted to the media logic, not only in the fields of institutional regulations, but also symbolic content and individual practices.²⁴ However, the overall result of mediatization of religion is not a new kind of religion as such (although some people talk about the so called media religion, see below – ref. A.A.), but rather a creation of new social conditions, in which the way of defining and practising religion is transformed,²⁵ though it is emphasized that the size and intensity of mediatization of religion varies depending on the country, geographical area, development of the media infrastructure on a particular territory and other related factors.²⁶

Therefore, the understanding of the phenomenon of mediatization is very important and useful for the understanding of the phenomenon of contemporary religiosity. It is the media that became a significant, if not fundamental, source of information on religious events, news and experiences.²⁷ The media also provide all kinds of religious content by adjusting religious symbols and beliefs according to their own purposes and narration.²⁸ Incidentally, it should be noted that the understanding of religion by the researchers of this phenomenon is variable; sometimes it is very broad and encompasses all types of issues related to magic, witchcraft, UFO, etc. The media produce some kind of mix that Hjarvard defines as banal religion. Banal religion contains some elements derived from institutional religions, yet it combines them with the elements of folk religiousness and popular concepts, practices and emotions that relate to the supernatural and spiritual aspects of life.²⁹ This phenomenon could

24 HJARVARD, S.: The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change. In *Nordicom Review*, 2008, Vol. 29, No. 2, p. 11.

25 HJARVARD, S.: *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*. London : Routledge, 2013, p. 10.

26 HJARVARD, S.: The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change. In *Nordicom Review*, 2008, Vol. 29, No.2, p. 9-11.

27 NIEMELÄ, K.: Religion in the Nordic media: introduction. In *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 2013, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 1.

28 LÖVHEIM, M., LUNDBY, K.: Mediated religion across time and space. a case study of Norwegian newspapers. In *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 2013, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 26.

29 HJARVARD, S.: The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as

also be called (in a slightly different sense) sacralisation of the media or – as suggested by B. Wiczorek – the media religion. It is multiform and multifaceted. ‘Starting from the religious implications included in the ads, through visions of human life shown in the feature films, the concept of law and order in the criminal films, shaping our own identity in programs such as talk shows, we finally reach the ecstatic experience of ‘another life’ prevalent in the reality show’,³⁰ Mediatization of religion, viewed in this context, becomes a tool of secularization. From such perspective, the media turn into the cultural and social environment that takes over numerous cultural and social functions of institutionalized religions and ensure a spiritual and moral guidance, the satisfaction of the need of rituals and a sense of community and belonging for their ‘followers’.³¹

However, mediatization of religion does not have to be associated only with the unfavorable and negative phenomena. It may also have positive sides – for the purpose of these considerations, I would like to focus on the experiences, which the community of the Catholic Church has in this regard.

Even a cursory observation convinces us that the media have become an important instrument of transmitting the faith and building a community of believers for the Church. The doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the media, their role and importance in the modern world, strongly emphasizes their integral function in the context of the common good, development and progress, defining the media as ‘the contemporary Areopagus’, stressing, after all, the primacy of the ethical dimension as a basic criterion for the evaluation of all media coverage.³² The initial distrust of the Church toward the media that was present in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century gave way to a kind of encouragement to use the media as a tool of evangelization.

Agents of Social and Cultural Change. In *Nordicom Review*, 2008, Vol. 29, No.2, p. 15-16; LÖVHEIM, M., LUNDBY, K.: Mediated religion across time and space. a case study of Norwegian newspapers. In *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 2013, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 26.

30 WIECZOREK, B.: Wokół religii mediów. In *Kultura-Media-Teologia*, 2012, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 20.

31 HJARVARD, S.: The mediatization of religion: Theorising religion, media and social change. In *Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 2011, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 119.

32 ŁĘCICKI, G.: Integrative and Disintegrative Media Functions in the Information Society. In *Journalism Research*, 2011, Vol. 4, p. 34-35.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the popes publish the annual message for the World Communications Day, celebrated in the Church. Messages of this and the last year contain an unambiguous incentive to the brave proclamation of the Gospel in the world of the new media. 'Believers are increasingly aware that, unless the Good News is made known also in the digital world, it may be absent in the experience of many people for whom this existential space is important. The digital environment is not a parallel or purely virtual world, but is part of the daily experience of many people, especially the young'³³ (Benedict XVI, 2013) – Benedict XVI wrote in the message of 2013, however, his successor, Pope Francis, one year later added: 'Keeping the doors of our churches open also means keeping them open in the digital environment so that people, whatever their situation in life, can enter, and so that the Gospel can go out to reach everyone. (...) Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ'.³⁴

Such approach should not be surprising – since the media civilization constitutes one of those aspects of life that embraces and relates also to the community of the faithful. They do not live outside the information society, yet they are present in it, and even create it.³⁵ Therefore, members of the Church, despite being aware of certain threats linked with the growing importance of the new media in the experience of faith (e.g. shallowness of relationships, information overload, increased narcissism and arrogance, relativism, difficulties in a prayer and contemplation), see also the positive aspects of this phenomenon: the 'spring' of evangelization, associated with the unprecedented possibility to reach such an enormous number of people with the message of the faith, innovative methods of formation in the faith, the increase in a dialogue – held both, inside and outside the Church, the new wave of vocations, building a community.³⁶ It should be remembered, however,

33 Benedict XVI: *Social Networks: portals of truth and faith; new spaces for evangelization - Message of Pope Benedict XVI for the 47th World Communications Day.*

34 Francis: *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter - Message of Pope Francis for the 48th World Communication Day.*

35 ŁĘCICKI, G.: Edukacja medialna w służbie katechezy. In *Kultura-Media-Teologia*, 2011, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 78.

36 VOGT, B.: To Infinity and Beyond: The Future of the Church and New Media. In VOGT, B. (ed.): *The Church and New Media. Blogging Converts, Online*

(and the Church is fully aware of that), that there is some impassable barrier to the entry into the digital world. The media and communication cannot replace a living community and a physical presence, which condition, for example, the administration of sacraments. Nonetheless, the media may be invaluable if they serve as a tool for pre-evangelization, communication and testimony.

8 Daily life

Daily activities of the media users can also become mediatized. In 2012 I put a question: 'Don't we have an impression, when logging into Facebook, that the current of users' private life moved rapidly beyond four walls of the house and is breaking its waves, sometimes strongly foamed, in a public and widely accessible riverbed? Friends of our friends become our friends (at least we have such feeling while observing their discussions and conversations on forum publicum of the social media). We will achieve a similar effect if we install glass walls in the house instead of the traditional ones, or attach wires in our flat, which would be connected to cameras, constantly watching us (although in the era of wireless communications, such cabling would be almost obsolete).³⁷ G. Murdock and P. Golding were right, when they formulated the thesis that the emergence of a computer as a tool of collecting and the rapid processing of huge amounts of data, and then incorporating it into telecommunications systems that provide fast and extensive transmission and data transfer, and furthermore, the convergence of these developments with the broadcasting industry caused fusion, both, technological and organizational, which resulted in a massive transformation in the field of work and leisure.³⁸ Transformation, in which the media play the vital role.

Activists and Bishops Who Tweet. Huntington : Our Sunday Visitor, 2011, p. 190-206.

37 ADAMSKI, A.: *Media w analogowym i cyfrowym świecie. Wpływ cyfrowej rewolucji na rekonfigurację komunikacji społecznej.* Warszawa : Elipsa, 2012, p. 184.

38 MURDOCK, G., GOLDING., P.: Cyfrowe możliwości a realia rynku: sprzeczności konwergencji. In MURDOCK G. (ed.): *Media, kultura i ekonomia. Krytyczne pytania. Antologia tekstów* (ŁUCZAK, M. Trans.), Wrocław : Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, 2010, p. 107.

9 Other areas

Similar reflections on the media penetration into various spheres of human life can be also made in regard to:

9.1 Economy (globalized), where both, the production and consumption became dependent on the media technologies. In developed countries the consumption of goods is increasing in an industrialized, rationalized and computerized manner. The actual trade revolution is achieved due to the Internet and thus, shopping is easier and more popular – also because of the development of electronic banking and other virtual forms of payment. As for the evolution of information technologies, it facilitates personalization of an offer, shaping customers' loyalty through various loyalty programs. Branding, advertising, public relations became an inherent factor of a company's strategy – in all these actions the media are joint elements.³⁹ We should also mention the increasing dependence of the global stock exchanges and transactions on information technologies, susceptibility of market fluctuations to various media reports and the ongoing competition between information agencies for the fastest spread of information that could influence the stock market – currently, even seconds count in this race!

9.2 Culture – wherein the media have the profound impact on the widely understood culture – they are a tool of cultural, or more broadly, socio-cultural changes. The contemporary culture tends to be defined as 'media' or consumer. Mediatization of culture – according to A. Jansson – is the process that enhances and extends the sphere of the media culture.⁴⁰ Mediatization also changes our way of using cultural heritage and the way in which cultural institutions operate. An increasing number of cultural works is subject to the process of digitalization and is becoming widely accessible on the Internet. Additionally, museums often utilize interactive technologies – on the one hand, by allowing a virtual tour of their collections, on the other hand, by using multimedia to intensify the attractiveness of the exhibits presented in the halls. Literature, film, theatre, painting... and also other fields of culture

39 HJARVARD, S.: From Bricks to Bytes: The Mediatization of a Global Toy Industry. In BONDEBJERG, I. GOLDING, P. (eds.): *European Culture and the Media*. Bristol : Intellect Books, 2004, p. 44-47.

40 JANSSON, A.: The Mediatization of Consumption. Towards an analytical framework of image culture. In *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 2002, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 5.

are prone to modifications resulting from the dynamic processes of mediatization – starting with the phase of production, to the phase of a viewer's reception.⁴¹ It happens because 'the mass media are the signum of modern culture and being an instrument for transferring specific content and patterns of behavior, they shape the cultural environment of the individual and collective recipient. It happens since they are tools of communication and, in turn, communication is the action, which most expands human cognition. Any changes in communication, therefore, also changes of tools of communication, cause profound repercussion in culture'.⁴²

9.3 Sport – where contracts for broadcasting sport events become one of the major sources of income for the clubs and individual athletes,⁴³ where television transmissions give a totally new dimension to sport events, making them the actual spectacle. Sport, in its most professional part, was absorbed by the television and is no longer the same without it. Major sporting events lose significance if they are not live broadcast. On the other side, sporting events increase the viewership of particular television stations. The intrusion and omnipresence of cameras make reality show out of transmission, we can even talk about voyeurism here.⁴⁴ It is worth observing that – analog to the previously discussed concept of celebritization of politicians – we also deal with the celebritization of the athletes.⁴⁵

9.4 Science – where the media play ever greater role in enlarging the number of the scientific achievements and their dissemination and

41 HJARVARD, S., PETERSEN, L. N.: Mediatization and Cultural Change. In *MedieKultur*, 2013, Vol. 29, No. 54, p. 59-76.

42 LIGEŻA, K.: „Areopag” środków społecznego przekazu jako wyzwanie dla ewangelizacji współczesnej kultury w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Naukowe Papieskiej Akademii Teologicznej, 2000, 81 p.

43 ZAWADZKI, K.: Sprzedaż praw telewizyjnych jako kluczowe źródło przychodów wielkoformatowych imprez sportowych. In JAROSZ, M., DRZEWIECKI, P., PŁATEK P. (eds.): *Sport w mediach*. Warszawa : Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2013, p. 510-529.

44 OSTROWSKI, A.: Telewizyjna transmisja sportowa, czyli śladami „Wielkiego Brata”. Wojeryzm, ekshibicjonizm, show. In OGONOWSKA, A. (ed.): *Oblicza Nowych Mediów*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Zarządzania i Bankowości, 2011, p. 198-201.

45 MODZELEWSKA, A.: (2013). Sportowiec jako celebryta na tle kultury tabloidów. In JAROSZ, M., DRZEWIECKI, P., PŁATEK P. (eds.): *Sport w mediach*. Warszawa : Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2013, p. 386-393.

interpretation. The media are also the public arena for technological debates and the social authentication of developments of science, which is becoming more and more media oriented.⁴⁶ It is not only about the popularization of science, but the thing is that social discussions on important issues related to science, ever more often move to the media, whereas the achievements of science are no longer assessed by a small group of professionals interested in the topic, yet on the media forum publicum.⁴⁷

M. Mołęda-Zdziech notices that nowadays 'the position of an intellectual in public life is greatly conditioned by the frequency of the media performances'. This author in her monograph 'The times of celebrities. Mediatization of the public life', formulates a thesis that the modern scientists may choose either to disappear from the public sphere and move to their cabinets, and therefore, they will lose the influence on the surrounding world, or to adjust to the rules of the media game and take part in the media spectacle, where competence in a particular field is not so much significant as the ability to articulate brilliant and demagogic statements, yet, at the same time without bearing any responsibility for the expressed comments.⁴⁸ This is a relatively new situation since experts and celebrities were traditionally perceived as two groups, existing in totally distinct spheres of public life and characterized by a completely contrasting set of values and logic. In general, experts – intellectuals (at least in the conventional understanding) were associated with the high culture, the rational approach to reality as well as the techniques of social organization that accompany the functioning of a modern state. In contrast, celebrities were rather assigned to the realm of popular and consumer culture, where the entertainment is privileged over information and emotions over reason.⁴⁹

46 HJARVARD, S.: *The Mediatization of Culture and Society*. London : Routledge, 2013, p. 10; MANCINI, F., CARRERAS, C.: Techno-society at the service of memory institutions: Web 2.0 in museums. In *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, 2010, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 59-76.

47 VÄLIVERRONEN, E.: Popularisers, Interpreters, Advocates, Managers and Critics. Framing Science and Scientists in the Media. In *Nordicom Review*, 2001, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 39.

48 MOŁĘDA-ZDZIECH, M.: *Czas celebrytów. Mediatyzacja życia publicznego*. Warszawa : Wydawnictwo Difin, 2013, p. 155.

49 LEWIS, T.: Branding, celebrityization and the lifestyle expert. In *Cultural Studies*, 2010, Vol. 24, No. 4, p. 581.

9.5 Education – where the media are commonly used in the system of education, e-learning is developing, whereas multimedia and interactive programs, presentations and aids improve the process of teaching. On the other side, the omnipresence of the media generates new challenges – the necessity of the media education,⁵⁰ which ‘appears as the essential need of the modern society that bears a resemblance to communicative democracy, requiring education of critical, selective and active reception of the media coverage in order to recognize their actual content and ideological messages that convey a specific vision of the world and man.’⁵¹

9.6 Safety – where nearly every area of national security is becoming more and more dependent on the free flow of information and informative systems, and mostly the army, economy, energy, media, financial and transportation systems are sensitive in this respect. Furthermore, the media may be used by the enemy as a tool of misinformation or spreading the social unrest (especially if the intelligence of hostile states managed to enlist the cooperation of the prominent people from the media environment and made them their agents of influence).⁵² The issue of mediatization of society is also connected with the threat of terrorism: nowadays terrorists not only destroy material world and kill and harm people, but most importantly, through their actions they affect social awareness and attract public attention. Undoubtedly, it would not be possible if it were not for the mass media. Terrorists divide the media into internal, which are used by them to mutual communication and external, independent yet influencing public opinion.⁵³ Public opinion is indeed their strategic aim. Reports of terrorist attacks are particularly important in evoking a sense of danger. Therefore, we can talk about a strategic connection between terrorism and the media. In fact, terrorists need publicity. Terrorist attacks are not intended for those who die, yet are directed to those who see them and obtain information about them through the media.⁵⁴

50 FRIESEN N., HUG, T.: The Mediatic Turn: Exploring Concepts for Media Pedagogy. In LUNDBY, K. (ed.): *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences*. New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Wien : Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, 2009, p. 68-69.

51 ŁĘCICKI, G.: Edukacja medialna jako istotna cecha nowoczesnego społeczeństwa. In *Kultura-Media-Teologia*, 2010, Vol. 3, No.3, p. 74.

52 ADAMSKI, A.: Mass Media vs. Public and National Safety. In *Ostium*, 2012, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 2-3.

53 GOBAN-KLAS, T.: *Media i terroryści. Czy zastraszą nas na śmierć?*. Kraków : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2009, p. 79-80.

54 ADAMSKI, A.: The Mass Media and National and Public Safety in the Context

Conclusion

The growing impact of the mass media on our life is an indisputable fact. Ever greater number of areas of life is affected by the media. There arises a question, whether or not we can talk about the mediasphere of a human being, about the situation, wherein a man decides which media serve as an intermediary in exploring the world, gaining knowledge, communicating. The media rather occupy more and more areas of our life. We hardly have influence on the ongoing changes and the conscious rejection of communication technologies is often equal to digital exclusion and the threat of the existence on the communication margin, a kind of desert island.

To describe these changes I suggested the assumption that the media are becoming the intersphere of human life. The conducted research demonstrates the link between this proposal and the theory of mediatization, which is currently highly developed and subject to the intensified scientific reflection. The modern media have an enormous influence on various areas of our life: politics, religion, culture, public and private life, sport, education, science, national security, and more. It seems that the proposed concept of the media as the intersphere human life can be regarded as a complement and extension of the theory of mediatization, which, despite being thoroughly examined in science, it is still valid and constitutes the subject of investigation.

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