

The Polish Media System 1989–2011

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Introduction

For over two decades, the media in Poland have operated according to rules typical for democratic media systems. Poland has legal guarantees for media freedom, a watchdog institution monitoring democratic order on the air, namely the National Broadcasting Council (Polish acronym: KRRiT), and finally there is the dynamically developing and changing market of the media with a wealth of newspapers and magazines, radio and television broadcasting stations, and online portals. A new generation of media creators and consumers is developing in Poland who do not remember the period of systemic transformation, of key importance to the history of Poland, the ensuing redevelopment of the media system, fears and dilemmas accompanying the process, and problems that journalists and media owners faced nearly from day to day learning to operate in the new political and market reality. It is with them in mind that this publication originated. The objective is to bring back the memory of the changes that took place in the Polish media system in the last two decades, and to evaluate their impact – already through the lens of time. Undertaking the difficult attempt at assessing this extremely interesting period is the intention of the authors of the individual chapters. We want to show the evolution that individual media and whole sectors of the media market have gone through, and the new phenomena that emerged parallel to them and significantly influenced the structure and nature of the contemporary Polish media system, at the same time paying attention to the specific elements of the system that hardly ever become the subject of media expert publications.

The publication consists of 12 articles. It opens with an essay by Katarzyna Pokorna-Ignatowicz devoted to the work of media experts during the Round Table talks in the spring of 1989, whose result was working out a concept of “the new information order”, i.e. a draft of changes required to build a democratic media system in Poland. Her text provides an introduction to further chapters, whose authors review and recapitulate the two decades of making that system reality. Zbigniew Bajka devoted his

text to Polish journalists. He presents the results of the latest and earlier research of public opinions about journalists and the opinions of the journalists themselves about their work. He also points to the most significant problems of Polish journalists, including ones resulting from the lack of modern legal regulations and low activity of the environment. An analysis of the processes and events that proved of key importance to the current Polish media system is complemented by Dariusz Baran, whose article is devoted to the development of the Internet in Poland. Its author investigates the beginnings, successive stages of development, and the status quo of the Polish Internet market together with the results of studies on the ways of using the network and its users.

Transformations in the market of the dailies in the first and second decades of the transformation are described by Joanna Konopka, who presents the history of individual titles and their publishers, enriching her analysis with abundant numerical data portraying the market position of individual newspapers in the successive periods of the last two decades. Jarosław Grzybczak tackles the changes in the magazines market. His article presents the histories of the magazines most popular at the beginning of the transformation and of later publication initiatives. Moreover, he has analysed the changes in the market of glossy magazines, which he complemented with a presentation of the currently largest and most powerful publishers on the magazines market.

The following three articles in this section are devoted to radio and television in Poland. Kinga Zdrojewska presents a history of the development of the commercial sector of Polish radio broadcasting, beginning with the first radio start-ups in 1990, and finishing with the situation at the end of the first decade of the 21st century. She discusses the stages of development of the sector, the phenomena of consolidation, networking and formatting, and the positions of individual broadcasters, radio groups and their owners in the market. Katarzyna Vanevska deals with commercial television in Poland. Her text describes its origin after the systemic changes, emergence of successive players in the market, the stages of development, and the contemporary state of this sector of the media market. A complementation for the above two texts is the third one in the section, which Magdalena Oleszkowicz devoted to the Polish public media. It discusses the status, characteristics, structure, market position, and problems of the public media that result partly from increasing competition in the media market, partly from political entanglements, and partly from the technological revolution that contemporary electronic media are experiencing.

The following articles are devoted to media lying beyond the mainstream, frequently of niche nature, that are not generally known, which does not mean that they should be less important. Tadeusz Gałka summarises the two decades of development of local and regional media in Poland, presenting the stages of their development, sectorial divisions (press, radio, television, the Internet), and also the transformations taking place in them as a result of market and technology development impacts. The article by Paweł Jezierski is devoted to the Catholic media in Poland, their development in the last 20 years, nature, current condition, and position the market; all this against a more extensive context of historical and contemporary problems of the Catholic Church in Poland. Anna Frątczak investigates the transformations that the Polish feminist and LGBT press has been going through in the past 20 years. Presenting the history of the most popular feminist press and periodicals related to sexual minorities, the author pays attention primarily to the civic determinants of their operation and the role they play in the shaping of civil society in Poland. The publication closes with an article by Marta Majorek and Justyna Wojniak devoted to the Public Information Bulletin (Polish acronym: BIP): a specific, although very significant, element of the contemporary Polish media system. Presented in it are the normative acts that regulate the Bulletin's status, form, functions, and problems related to access to public information resulting from digital exclusion.

Katarzyna Pokorna-Ignatowicz

Katarzyna Pokorna-Ignatowicz

From the communist doctrine of media to free media. The concept of a new information order in the Round Table Agreements

As a result of the decisions made by the great powers after the second world war, Poland found itself a part of the Eastern Bloc, within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence and became the People's Republic of Poland (PRL) – one of the communist bloc countries, modelled on the USSR's communist political system and media doctrine, known as the “Leninist concept of the press”. This provided a complete subordination of mass media to political power, which in the People's Republic of Poland was given to the Polish United Workers' Party (the Polish communist party). The media became a tool of the communist party, which held the actual, absolute power and used it to force an ideological impact on society, hoping that it could use the media to shape the beliefs, attitudes, and even behaviour of the people in accordance with their expectations. The PRL media system was characterised by features typical to all totalitarian systems, such as the basic control of power over the media market through the control of licensing within the publishing business (publishing any press title required permission from the authorities), and enacting censorship. The initial control of media content was supervised by a specially appointed body, the Central Office for the Control of the Press, Publications and Performances (*Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk*).¹

In the PRL, the press was only open to “collective” publishers (there was no private press, so only institutions and organisations could engage in press publishing). Market mechanisms did not function, because

¹See: T. Goban-Klas, *Niepokorna orkiestra medialna: dyrygenci i wykonawcy polityki informacyjnej w Polsce po 1944 roku*, Warszawa 2004.

the press market, like the entire economy, was centrally planned and controlled. It was the party that determined the number of press titles published (by giving permission or refusing) and their market position (deciding how much paper will be allocated to the printing). Press development was limited by paper shortages, which meant that throughout the time of the PRL, there were not enough publications compared to the demand, and in addition their nature and contents reflected not so much the interests and expectations of the readers but rather the current information policy of the party. This press deficit was mainly related to magazines (colour press) in the entertainment or even non-political spheres: women's magazines, newspapers for children, hobby, travel, etc. The daily newspapers were not lacking, especially those published by the structure of the communist party of a clear political and propagandistic nature, as the party's power considered it as the most important and primary segment of the press market.

The monopolistic position in the press market was held by one publishing company – the Press-Book-Movement Workers' Publishing Cooperative (*Robotnicza Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Prasa-Książka-Ruch* or RSW), owned by the Central Committee of the communist party (*Komitet Centralny PZPR*). It was established in 1947 (then called RSW "Prasa") and took over other, often larger, publishers and titles issued by them (in 1948, the publishing house Wiedza (Knowledge) and in 1951 the publisher Czytelnik (Reader), the biggest publisher of the post-war period in the popular press) and quickly gained the position of the largest press publisher in Poland. RSW established a monopoly in 1972, when it included in its structure the only press distribution company in Poland, Ruch (Movement). After the merger, during the two last decades of the PRL, RSW was publishing approximately 85 per cent of the press titles in Poland (more accurately: 92 per cent of newspapers and over 70 per cent of magazines). RSW was the exclusive distributor of the press, owned the majority of printing companies and printing houses in the country, and even its own research institution of high international standing, the Press Research Centre (*Ośrodek Badań Prasoznawczych*), which cooperated with media studies institutions around the world.

On the other hand, since 1960 radio and television functioned under the supervision of Radiokomitet (Radio Committee), an institution subjected to the supervision of the government and party. By the end of the PRL only the national Polish Radio (broadcasting four nationwide programmes and with 17 regional branches) and Polish Television (two nationwide programmes) were in operation. From the 70s, party authorities

considered television to be the main medium in fulfilling a political role and they fully controlled it, using it for the propaganda purposes.²

It was within this media system that the opposition found itself when it became active in the late 1970s. The democratisation of the media system was also one of the main demands of the Solidarity movement (*NSZZ Solidarność*) in 1980-81, with journalists active in the Association of Polish Journalists (*Stowarzyszenie Dziennikarzy Polskich*), which was fighting for change. By the end of the 1980s this was not yet possible, because the rulers believed that control of the media was essential for effective governance. The deep political, economic and social crisis in the late 1980s made them aware of the inevitability of change, which led to the decision of beginning talks with the opposition on the democratisation of the existing system.³

Work on the concept of a new information order

After several months of preparation and on-going exploratory talks between the years 1988–1989 the Round Table Talks began – the negotiations for the changes that were about to take place in the Polish political system, economy, society and media system. The Round Table Talks were held from 6 February to 5 April 1989 with the participation of representatives of the authorities forming the party coalition and representatives of the main opposition groups, concentrated around the management of Solidarity (*Solidarność*), also known as the civic side. The negotiations took place in the presence of observers appointed by the authorities of the Catholic Church in Poland. The result of more than two months of work was the signing of the Round Table Agreements (*Porozumienia Okrągłego Stołu*) on 5 April 1989 – a political contract under which Poland would begin the transition from the People's Republic's "real socialism" to democracy and a market economy.⁴

One of the points of the Round Table Agreements was a "Report on the work of the Sub-Committee on the Media"⁵ containing a description of the changes to the media system agreed on by the committee appointed

² See: K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *Telewizja w systemie politycznym i medialnym PRL. Między polityką a widzem*, Kraków 2003.

³ More about media's activities in PRL in: R. Habielski, *Polityczna historia mediów w Polsce w XX wieku*, Warszawa 2009 oraz D. Grzelewska, R. Habielski, A. Koziół, J. Osica, L. Piwońska-Pomykała, *Prasa, radio i telewizja w Polsce. Zarys dziejów*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 143–210.

⁴ See: A. Dudek, *Pierwsze lata III Rzeczypospolitej 1989 – 2001*, Kraków 2004, pp. 32–42.

⁵ *Sprawozdanie z prac Podzespołu ds. Środków Masowego Przekazu*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, ed. W. Borodziej and A. Garlicki, Warszawa 2004, Vol. 4, pp. 31–37.

specifically for this purpose, provisionally called the media sub-committee or *podstolik medialny* (literally, a media sub-table), which consisted of negotiators and experts representing both contracting parties, the ruling and the opposition. The media sub-committee was deliberating from the first meeting on 17 February to the last one – the sixth – on 22 March. The work of the team was led by two co-chairmen: representing the government side was Bogdan Jachacz (PAP editor) and representing the civic side was Krzysztof Kozłowski (editor of *Tygodnik Powszechny*).

Both negotiating sides “shared a belief in the need to build a new information order,” but “it was probably the only point upon which there was a consensus”.⁶ Rulers feared the consequences of introducing market principles in the media, and especially the loss of control over the media. They were also afraid of the consequences of breaking existing monopolies that were subordinated to them (the RSW publishing company and Radiokomitet), and above all, they were afraid of freedom of the media, as they were “brought up” on the communist doctrine of the media and were convicted that it is a necessary “tool” for those in power to have the media and journalists subordinated to their directives. The opposition demanded pluralism in the media market and ensured freedom of speech as well as the introduction of rules under which the media operates in Western democracies. Agreeing to specific solutions preceded by long and stormy discussions took several weeks, but because both parties wanted to reach a compromise and both sides emphasised their sincere intentions and respect for the opponents, from week to week their positions became closer.

“Report from the work of the mass media committee”

On 5 April 1989 the final version of the Round Table Agreements (*Porozumienia Okrągłego Stołu*) was formally signed, which included the “Report on the work of the committee for mass media” (*Sprawozdanie z prac zespołu do spraw środków społecznego przekazu*)⁷. Thus the concept “of a new information order” developed by the media sub-committee became part of the political contract signed between the then government and the opposition forces gathered around Solidarity.

⁶ J. Galewski, P. Osęka, J. Urbański, Z. Wóycicka, *Okrągły Stół: główne obszary sporów*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁷ *Sprawozdanie z prac Podzespołu ds. Środków Masowego Przekazu*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, Vol. 4, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–37.

The document opens with the statement that “the communication system existing in Poland is out-dated and inadequate for the changes taking place, and the condition of the material bases of the press, radio, TV and IT are desperate”.⁸ This diagnosis of the status quo was correct on both counts. The media system of the People’s Republic of Poland valid at that time was not only out-dated, but also incompatible with the principles of democracy and a market economy, which had to be implemented in the country. The statement about the “desperate” condition of the infrastructure suited reality. The printing infrastructure and television and radio’s technical base were in a disastrous condition; old technology was being used, the equipment was depleted, and the mentioned “IT” hardware simply wasn’t there. Our civilizational backwardness in this area meant that in international statistics we were one of the last in Europe.⁹

After diagnosing the existing situation, the next step was to formulate a prescription for it, concluded in the following statement: “We acknowledge the need for the rapid construction of a new information order, which must reflect the pluralism that exists in society, responding to processes of democratisation and rejecting any monopoly in this field. The aim of the new order should be the possibility of free participation of political parties, groups and individuals in all forms of communication, a result to be achieved only if censorship is abolished.”¹⁰

The rest of the report contained a description of the principles of the “new information order” and the specific changes to be made in the short and long term, for the existing PRL media system to turn into a typical democratic system. It began by defining the functions that the media should fulfil, by saying that regardless of political orientation, they should be “fair and present complete and objective information, expressing the opinions of society (...) control of power in a wide range of concepts and defend civil liberties and the interests of the individual (...) to cooperate in the work of democratic reforms,”¹¹ describing the future functions of the media in the way they are defined in democratic systems, and stating that the “new order” should be based on freedom of speech and pluralism clearly set the goal and direction of the change that happened in Poland to build a democratic media system.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

⁹ See: *Komunikowanie masowe w Polsce: lata osiemdziesiąte*, ed. W. Pisarek, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 1–2.

¹⁰ *Sprawozdanie z prac Podzespołu ds. Środków Masowego Przekazu*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, Vol. 4, *op. cit.*, p. 31

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

Successive subsections of the document contain a description of the specific actions that needed to be taken in order to achieve this goal. Most of them concerned the press market. It stated that it is necessary to ensure new entrants on the political and social stages the possibility of issuing their own publications. The press published by Solidarity, liquidated under martial law (1982), would be revived and illegal publications would not be repressed, and they would be legalised as soon as possible. Therefore, after the 4 June 1989 elections, the opposition gained the right to immediately create its own nationwide newspaper – *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

For a free and pluralistic press market to develop as soon as possible (as stated even in this term of the Parliament), changes needed to be made in the existing laws for the press (the press law and the law on the control of publications and performances) consisting in a change in the system of approving newspapers, by replacing the current licensing system with an application system (instead of having to be granted authorization from GUKPPiW [Office of the Censor], it was enough just to register the title). Ultimately, the abolition of censorship was planned, and by this time it was to be a significant liberalisation and reduction of the powers of the censorship office. Until the new regulations entered into force, the government agreed to conduct a liberal policy toward illegal publications (to not repress these publications, their authors and publishers) and the opposition committed to the fastest possible regulation of its publishing activities in accordance with the applicable legal order, that is to legalise independent publishing houses as soon as it was legally possible.

Much more difficult was finding a solution to the problem of paper assignment for new publishing initiatives. Eventually – from the beginning of 1990 – the commercialisation of its turnover was planned, but by that time the assurance of a fair division between existing and new titles was decided. In the final part dedicated to the press market, the opposition also expressed its position that “the predicted free paper market, as well as the postulated pluralistic democratised new information order, is not compatible with the current monopoly structure of the RSW Prasa-Książka-Ruch”.¹²

The arrangements for the press (especially the decision to change the licensing system for registration and the decision for free circulation of paper) ensured a basis for the creation of a fully free and democratic press market in the future. They were realised relatively quickly by making changes in the law; in the last days of May 1989, the press law and the law

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

on the control of publications and performances (*Prawo prasowe, Ustawa o kontroli publikacji i widowisk*) was amended; on 22 March 1990 RSW "Prasa-Książka-Ruch" was liquidated; on 11 April 1990 censorship was abolished by abolishing the Central Office of the Control of Publications and Performances.¹³

The price for these far-reaching concessions to the government concerning the press was leaving the audio-visual media system in an almost unchanged form, especially television. The authorities believed in fact that the control of TV was a priority for them, and the opposition, aware of the adamant position of the authorities in the matter of giving them power over television, decided to "earn as much as possible" on the press market. Therefore, decisions on the radio and television media were not as dramatic as in the case of the press and concerned more the programme of TVP and Polish Radio than the structure and legal framework of the future "new order in the ether". Airtime was provided for the opposition, in which programmes presenting candidates were shown as well as opposition programmes, and in the future similar programming windows would also receive different, newly legally acting entities of public life, and after the appropriate agreement between the episcopate and the radio committee was signed, this also included the Catholic Church. Radio committee management was required to ensure a greater plurality of views on radio and television programmes and the posting of corrections if the need arose. The inclusion of the representatives of various communities into the management of the radio and TV (radio committee and Programme Council) and the beginning of work on the act for future regulations was announced – a more democratic "new order in the ether". A small number of specific assignments in relation to radio and television were complemented by an extensive "catalogue of discrepancies" containing different positions of the negotiating parties on various issues related to the functioning of electronic media and the very concept of a legal and organisational future "new order in the ether". The ruling party consistently insisted on leaving radio and television in an unchanged structure and under its direct control, while the opposition insisted on bringing in solutions that would ensure democratic principles of pluralism and freedom in radio and television as well. Despite different ideas about the future of radio and television, however, they agreed to set up a "proxy for the opposition's programmes", extending access for the new political entities to antennas, TV programmes

¹³ See: T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007 and W. Sonczyk, *Media w Polsce: zarys problematyki*, Warszawa 1999.

and Polish Radio; starting work on “a more pluralistic model of managing radio and television” (without specifying what it would consist of), and presenting their own visions of the future third television programme and fifth national radio programme (the opposition believed that “these programmes should be made available to the opposition of social forces, trade unions, the Catholic Church and other religions and ethnic minorities”).¹⁴ It can therefore be concluded that the arrangements of the Round Table fully changed the functioning of the press market, while for radio and TV they only pointed the way towards future changes, leaving the media in the current system for now.

Discussions on the future, democratic “order in the ether” lasted for three years after the end of the Round Table, and ended with the passing of the Radio and Television Act on 29 December 1992, which established a free and pluralistic system of electronic media, created the typical European model of dual public and commercial sections, and called into being the National Committee of Radio and Television Broadcasting (*Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji*), which was to ensure freedom of speech on radio and television, to defend the independence of broadcasters and the interests of consumers and to ensure the “open and pluralistic nature of radio and television”.¹⁵ The building of the radio and television markets in the coming years is presented in further chapters devoted to commercial broadcasting and public media in Poland.

At the end of the report, reference is made to the verification journalists conducted under martial law,¹⁶ to assess where the parties have not agreed on a common position (the opposition believed it to be unjust and immoral, the government believed it to be necessary in those conditions), but it managed to reach an agreement on the future of journalists, which was reflected in the statement: “the parties consider it necessary to

¹⁴ *Sprawozdanie z prac Podzespołu ds. Środków Masowego Przekazu*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, Vol. 4, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁵ Act on radio and television of 29 December 1992, Art. 6.

¹⁶ After the introduction of martial law in Poland on 13 December 1981, in winter 1982, the journalist's verification action was held. Each journalist had to appear in front of the verification commission, composed of high officials of the party, and make a declaration of loyalty to the government. In order to obtain the right to return to work, they had to receive a positive decision of verification. As a result, the journalism environment of Poland permanently split into those who were deprived of the right to practise the profession and those who were in the official editorial offices, because the party considered them to be loyal. However the entire journalistic environment was deeply humiliated. See: W. Pisarek, *Polityka informacyjna*, [in:] *Komunikowanie masowe w Polsce: lata osiemdziesiąte*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 1–2, p. 40, K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *Telewizja w systemie politycznym i medialnym PRL...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 191–193.

make a clear, unambiguous and meaningful public statement by meaningful, official factors, that all media personnel persecution for their political views will never and under no circumstances in the future occur.”¹⁷ The opposition also appealed to guarantee journalists access to information and to respect the right to make corrections. The document concluded by saying that “the parties are convinced that having created a new multi-stakeholder communication system, the principle of mutual respect must be adhered to even more firmly, striving for a high level of political culture free from hostility, hatred, or prejudice towards ethnic or religious groups while preserving their own outlook, political and social identity, by the various forces of pluralistic society”.¹⁸

The media section of the Round Table contract, developed by the media sub-committee in the form of the “new information order”, became the basis for the changes in the media system. Almost all of the arrangements contained in the report were implemented, which resulted in the creation of a democratic media system in Poland within a few years, based on freedom of speech and pluralism. Changes in the press market occurred relatively quickly – within the first few months. Two factors had a fundamental value in this process: political – including the changes in legal regulations (changes in the press law that released publishers from the obligation to obtain permits for issuing newspapers and magazines and the abolition of censorship); and economic – the introduction of market principles in the economy, and therefore also the on the press market.

The hardest operation was the privatisation of the press and elimination of the RSW “Prasa-Książka-Ruch” monopoly (it was one of the key conditions of the “new information order”). On 22 March 1990 the Parliament passed a law to liquidate the concern.¹⁹ By virtue of the law the Liquidation Committee was established, whose task was to carry out the liquidation process, the valuation of the assets of RSW and transfer it into the hands of new owners. Plenty of excitement was especially felt in the journalistic environment because of the way newspaper titles belonging to the liquidated concern were to be privatised. The provisions of the Act gave the Liquidation Committee the right to sell by tender or free transfer of the title to journalists if they established journalist cooperatives (*spółdzielnia dziennikarska*).

¹⁷ *Sprawozdanie z prac Podzespołu ds. Środków Masowego Przekazu*, [in:] *Okrągły Stół dokumenty i materiały*, Vol. 4, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

¹⁹ Ustawa z dnia 22 marca 1990 r. o likwidacji Robotniczej Spółdzielni Wydawniczej „Prasa-Książka-Ruch”, Dz. U. 1990, No. 21, item 125.

The commission deciding the fate of the privatised titles had to include conflicting expectations: the journalists, who were interested in taking over titles created by them and those who believed that the incomes from the sale of party concerns should be credited to the state budget. To be able to satisfy these contradictory expectations, the commission decided that a little more than half of the titles would be given to newly formed journalist cooperatives, and a little less than half would be sold. It is worth noting one particular title, because it did not have to be guided by the criterion of the highest price.²⁰ Many of its decisions aroused controversy, which ended with a public accusation of secrecy and bias, and even lawsuits that stretched for several years, but as a result of its activities in the first half of the decade, RSW's press titles passed into the hands of new owners. The fate of the biggest one was described in the following sections of the book devoted to daily newspapers and magazines and their publishers.

Today, more than 20 years after these events, only a handful of people remember the heated debates of 1989 and some of the concerns and concepts seem to be naive and ridiculous (like fierce disputes about an equitable system of paper distribution). They are worth remembering, as thanks to them the participants of the media sub-committee, representing the authorities and the opposition, developed the concept of a "new information order" and thanks to the good will of both negotiating parties at the Round Table, it was possible to bring that order into life, creating the basis for building the current Polish media system.

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²⁰ See: L. Strzyczkowski, *Likwidacja RSW „Prasa-Książka-Ruch”*, [in:] *Polskie media w okresie przemian*, ed. J. Olędzki, Warszawa 1991, pp. 112–118, K. Schliep, *Prywatyzacja prasy*, [in:] *Media i dziennikarstwo w Polsce 1989–1995*, ed. G.G. Kopper, I. Rutkiewicz, K. Schliep, Kraków 1996, pp. 129–138.

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Zbigniew Bajka

Journalists in Poland at the turn of the century (the fourth estate or the estate of bound men)

*Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, and they are
more important far than them all*
Edmund Burke

Introduction

Although many people believe that journalism as a profession was born in the early nineteenth century, it is nevertheless a profession that has its roots in antiquity. The origins of the press are associated with the “Acta diurnal”, created by Caesar in 59 BC. This is because the first reporters (*operarii*) were born in the capital of the Roman Empire. From the Latin word *diurnalis* (journaling) and *diurnus* (daily), came the word *dies* (day); later came the Italian term *giornale* (log) and *giornalisti* (journalists). Again in Latin, from the word *reporto* (referring, to inform) comes a report (and reporter).

Even in ancient times journalists were not seen as people without blemish, as evidenced by the saying *sunt aliqui diurnari probi ut sunt aliqui homines an in re publica exercitati. Postquam empti sunt, empti manent* (There are honest journalists like there are honest politicians. Once bribed, they remain bribeable).¹

Anyone can be a journalist?

At the beginning of the written press journalists, publishers and booksellers were often also writers. In Poland, more clearly than in other European

¹ Z. Bajka, *Historia mediów*, Kraków 2008.

countries, publishers and journalists were seen as sacred persons. As a distinct group of professionals, journalists appeared from the 1930s with the rise and development of the press and mass media. With time, the profession underwent a significant evolution; however, people of diverse backgrounds (writers, scholars, professionals from different fields) still join its ranks, moving from their original purpose (collecting and publishing information) to a higher one: to educate, to explain different phenomena, and (differently in different countries) to present the voice of the public.

Extending the tasks of journalism, the emergence of new media and its growing impact caused a sharp growth in this professional group. Today, many believe that this is a profession for freelancers and entry should not be restricted by any official barriers, but there are people and countries where adherence to the profession of journalism and the journalist's professional status is regulated by law.

In Poland there are plenty of people who perceive themselves as journalists, though they do not necessarily even perform the work of journalists; however, they would not be considered as such if one were to apply the standards used in different countries, even throughout the European Union. In Italy, the journalist is the one whose main salary comes from working in the profession, and the Chamber of Journalism keeps a record of professional journalists. In France, a journalist is someone who has the “*La carte d'identité journalistes des professionnels*” (press card, renewed annually). In Spain (although there is no legal definition of journalist) the Federation of the Press (under contract with the journalist syndicate) also issues a professional press card. In Switzerland, journalism is an open profession, but someone registered in “*Le Professionel Registre*” (Register of Journalists' Unions) has a much greater chance of finding a better job and salary in this profession than someone who is not registered. Finally, in Germany to have the status of professional journalist is to have a press card issued by one of the associations of journalists, among which the most powerful (with over 38,000 members) is the *Verband Deutscher Journalisten*.²

The legal document that defines who is a journalist in Poland is the Press Law of 1984 (as amended), according to which, “a journalist is a person engaged in editing, creating or preparing press materials, employed by an editor or engaged in such activities on the power of editorial authorization,”³ while an editor was “a journalist making or participating in making publishing decisions.” This definition was constructed in a dif-

² Z. Bajka, *Status dziennikarzy w Polsce. Relacje właściciel–dziennikarz*. The report of the Senate Committee for Culture and Media, June 1999.

³ Act „Prawo Prasowe” 1984, with modification to 2011.

ferent political and media era (before the advent of the Internet and the start of the process of the digitization of media). There have been several attempts – unfortunately unsuccessful – in both the adoption of a new press law, as well as to regulate the journalism profession. Writing these words, the President of the Republic of Poland was one of the initiators of the work on a draft law on the profession of journalist in Poland. At the beginning of 2002 the Senate bill on the profession of journalism was finally drafted.⁴ One of the most important legacies of the project was the creation of the Supreme Chamber of Journalism, which would be require the compulsory membership of journalists. The project involved the creation of local journalism similar to the existing chambers of government (e.g. the Chamber of Medicine). From the beginning it was criticized by some professional journalists (especially the SDP) and editors (such as those of *Gazeta Wyborcza*), and never implemented, neither then nor in subsequent terms of the Parliament. Another draft of a new press law, drawn up within the Polish Journalists Association, was not brought before the Parliament.

So in the end, the old laws remained in place and now the definition of journalist in Poland can encompass any number of occupations: a full-time journalist for *Rzeczpospolita*, as well as a teacher who once issued a quarterly magazine with a circulation of several hundred, a university teacher who writes essays, a spokesman for the mayor, and, in the last several years, apparently, a person who creates a website and puts any amount of information on it.

The training of journalists in Poland

The Polish tradition of journalist education is over a century old. The first journalism school was created by Stefan Góra (in 1903), but only in 1911 did a journalism faculty open in the School of Political Sciences in Kraków. Six years later, the Warsaw School of Political Science created a similar faculty, though for program and financial reasons it was dissolved after five years. Afterwards, the School of Journalism at the Faculty of Humanities was formed at the Free Polish University in Warsaw, and from 1927 it has existed as an independent, private Higher School of Journalism. After World War II, the Journalism Faculty of the Academy of Political Science was based on it, and during the subsequent transformation it became part of the structure of the University of Warsaw; in 1953 the Department of

⁴ The authors of the draft law: prof. Jacek Sobczak and dr Jędrzej Skrzypczak (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań).

Journalism at the University of Warsaw was created. Its activities were suspended in 1960, after which the inter-UW Journalism School was formed, which educated graduates from different degree programmes. A new history of journalism in Warsaw begins in 1975, when the Faculty of Journalism and Political Science was formed.

In Kraków, after the Second World War, the School of Social Sciences formed in the late 40s, which then became a part of the Jagiellonian University, and then was renamed the Study of Journalism, which after a few years ceased to exist. It was not until 1971 at the Faculty of Philology at the Jagiellonian University that the Postgraduate School of Journalism was formed, led by Dr Jacek Kajtoch. In 1976, he created the political science journalism specialty at the Institute of Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University. After the change of regime the International School of Journalism (under the direction of Teresa Sasińska-Klas) was created, followed by the Institute of Journalism and Communication at the Jagiellonian University in 1998.

After 1990, more public and private universities began training future journalists. Currently, we have more than 90 institutions of higher education in Poland, both public and private, educating potential journalists. In Kraków, there are two programs at the Jagiellonian University, and a program at the University of Education, the Pontifical University of John Paul II, the Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski Kraków University, the Małopolska Higher Vocational School, the Bogdan Jański Academy in Kraków, the Tischner European University, the Kraków University of Economics (postgraduate studies in the field of economic journalism), and the University School of Physical Education (postgraduate studies in sports journalism and advocacy).

Some institutions of higher education in Poland offer two or even three journalism degrees (University of Wrocław – in political science and in philology, and the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin – at the Faculty of Humanities, in Political Studies, and at the University's Bachelor College in Biała Podlaska), so there are at least 117 journalism specialisations in Poland.⁵ Mainly private schools, but not only, show their resourcefulness when it comes to the creation of new specialties, especially since the standard offer of journalism (or journalism and communication studies) is not as strong a magnet for potential candidates. So today journalism programmes have to include studies for information technologists, media managers, specialists in the organisation of work in film and television, digital media specialists, computer graphic designers, editors of special-

⁵ Information about studying journalism in Poland please visit: http://kierunkistudiow.pl/dziennikarstwo_i_komunikacja_spoleczna.

ised newsletters or local newspapers, as well as a variety of professionals working on the Internet.

Such an extensive range of courses in journalism shows how attractive work in the mass media is today. However, the growing numbers of journalism graduates have not been accompanied by an increase in jobs in this profession; on the contrary, they have been shrinking, especially in traditional media. It is estimated that in the first decade of this century the number of jobs in the press, radio and television fell by over 32 per cent. Some journalism graduates go on to work for websites, advertising agencies and PR-legislative instruments, as spokespersons for corporate magazines, local government, etc. Many of them, however, end up working in jobs that are in no way related to their field of study.

A free press, not-so-free journalists

Various publications claim that without a free press there would be no free Poland. After all, journalists supported and continue to support the transformation process. Less frequently is the public reminded of the high price they paid for their support. In the early years of the 1990s, it is estimated that some 1,500 journalists lost their jobs. The early retirement of some journalists or the forced exit from their chosen profession was primarily due to political, job profile, and/or editorial changes as well as the liquidation of some publications.

Many “old school” journalists, including those with extensive experience, were unable to find a place in the new, more “technical” media reality or they were unable to adapt to a new journalistic style, especially centred on informing the public. Ironically, the abolition of censorship was a hindering factor in these new conditions for established journalists. In light of no formal censorship, an experienced journalist sitting side-by-side with a younger colleague, whose professional experience was limited to writing for the opposition, was often troubled concerning what could or could not be written. At the same time, new forms of “censorship” began to form (i.e., owners of a given publication, political forces, the Church, etc.), neither of which fully lent themselves to freedom of expression. Soon enough, editors began to voice a clear commitment to a particular political party and journalists not suited to a specific program had to resign their position or were relieved of duty. In the opinion of quite a large group of journalists, objectivity increasingly became only a theoretical construct.

In 2000, only seven per cent of journalists believed that “present-day journalists always write and say what they think”. The remainder – 93 per

cent! – believed that they “usually express their own views, but with the need to promote the ideas of others, against all or part of their own”.⁶ This raises the question of who or what restricts the freedom of the press? Most often cited are pressure by owners, editors-in-chief, or station or line managers (42 per cent), internal censorship (19 per cent), self-censorship (11 per cent), and external pressures (eight per cent). In a study conducted 10 years later, almost all those surveyed pointed to similar sources of pressure and attempts to influence journalists, especially coming from advertisers (businesses) and politicians.⁷

Next, journalist salaries became a serious problem. When the Collective Agreement of Journalists expired – negotiated during communist times – a free market saw unscrupulous owners phasing out older senior journalists and exchanging them for novices, particularly because they worked at significantly lower wages. While in 2000 slightly more than half of all journalists assessed their financial situation as good or very good, 10 years later, especially in areas outside of Warsaw, journalists were complaining about their lower salaries.

Print journalists have the lowest earnings, especially in regional and local newspapers.

The highest salaries are paid to TV stars, where their contracts prove that, outside of a narrow group of highly paid celebrities, the overwhelming majority of journalists have a hard time making ends meet. Paradoxically – according to opinion polls – journalist salaries are considered to be much higher than average.

In 2000, when only about half of all journalists were journalism graduates, they had a much better chance of being employed by a media company than today. Today there is an overproduction of journalists. Media outlets hire only the best and/or the most assertive who look to establish contact already at the start of their studies. In 2000, over 42 per cent of journalists evaluated the usefulness of studying journalism as either useful or very useful,⁸ while just over 20 per cent considered it of low utility. Surveys conducted 10 years later find the most common opinion to be that very few are able to work in their profession, even after university studies.⁹

⁶ Z. Bajka, *Dziennikarze lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2000, No. 3–4.

⁷ The study was carried out in May 2010 by the Institute of Public Affairs in cooperation with Millward Brown SMG / KRC, as part of the project „Responsible journalism”. See: *Kto pilnuje strażników? Odpowiedzialne dziennikarstwo w demokratycznej Polsce*, ed. J. Kucharczyk, Warsaw 2011.

⁸ Z. Bajka, *Dziennikarze lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, *op. cit.*

⁹ A. Niżyńska, J. Osiecki, *Sami o sobie: kondycja i zagrożenia odpowiedzialnego dziennikarstwa*, [in:] *Kto pilnuje strażników?...*, *op. cit.*

Journalism – a profession in the public trust

Despite shortcomings in professionalism and staff turnover, Poles judge journalists quite positively in terms of reliably performing their profession. In a study conducted by CBOS in March 2006, in a ranking of professional honesty and integrity, journalists were ranked fourth based on combined “very high” and “rather high” scores (49 per cent). They were preceded by scientists (68 per cent), nurses (60 per cent), and teachers (50 per cent). Lowest on this list were politicians (7 per cent). Doctors and priests were ranked below journalists.

The European Trusted Brands Survey (2007),¹⁰ initiated and organised by *Reader's Digest* and carried out across 15 European countries, measured European confidence in 20 selected professional groups, such as civil aircraft pilots, police officers, politicians, teachers and journalists. This survey found that Poles – more than in any other nation surveyed – trust journalists. This group of professional is trusted by 52 per cent of Poles, while the European average was only 29 per cent.

Also, a comparison study of journalists in Poland and the United States falls clearly in favour of the former, where 49 per cent of Poles rate the reliability and integrity of their own journalists as “very high” or “high”, compared to only 28 per cent of US population.¹¹

Finally, in an earlier cited piece of research carried out in cooperation between the Institute of Public Affairs and Millward Brown SMG/KRC in May 2010, up to 74 per cent of Poles considered journalists to be trustworthy. Highest ranked (91 per cent) were scientists, followed by teachers and doctors; lawyers were ranked similarly to journalists, while clergy, businessmen, and, most especially, politicians were ranked lowest.

The latter study also very clearly shows that **the majority of Poles evaluated journalists through the prism of radio and television**. Only 35 per cent of respondents considered someone who writes for a newspaper, magazine, or Internet site to be a journalist, while the vast majority (55 per cent) perceive a journalist to be someone who conducts interviews and discussions on the television or radio, a TV or radio reporter (50 per cent), or a TV or radio presenter (47 per cent). Someone who publishes only online was considered a journalist by only three per cent of respondents.¹²

¹⁰ See: media2.pl/media/21979-Polacy-ufaja-dziennikarzom.htm.

¹¹ Research on „public confidence competition” (March to May 2007, with the participation of 16,481 respondents in 17 countries in Europe and the U.S.; the information on the website: <http://www.mypolacy.de/aktualnosci/niemcy/wysokie-zaufanie-do-lekarzy-niskie-do-politykow.html>.

¹² *Kto pilnuje strażników?..., op. cit.*

Journalists about themselves – why they chose this profession

1. Reasons for choosing the journalism profession

Over the past 30 years, the reasons for joining this profession have changed considerably. A clear difference can be observed in journalist attitudes during communist times, at the beginning of the transition period, and 10 years later.

Reasons for choosing the journalism profession¹³ (per cent of responses), for the years 1979, 1990, and 2000, respectively.

1. The opportunity to get to know interesting people, new places and events: 17%, 43%, 56%.
2. This is a profession in which one learns all the time: 36%, 33%, 43%.
3. It is a concrete, dynamic profession, producing tangible results: 25%, 36%, 33%.
4. Ability to influence awareness, attitudes, and opinions: 26%, 25%, 29%.
5. Being aware of current events (in my city, the country, the world) 21%, 19%, 27%.
6. Opportunity to tell others about interesting events and people: 16%, 9%, 25%.
7. The chance to level criticism against different shortcomings: 31%, 15%, 23%.
8. The opportunity to help others: 33%, 26%, 21%.
9. The opportunity to express one's opinion: 21%, 12%, 21%.
10. High social prestige: 9%, 10%, 16%.
11. The opportunity to speak on their own behalf to the general public: 17%, 18%, 11%.
12. The ability to pass on their knowledge to others: 8%, 6%, 7%.
13. Other reasons (vocation, work in an honest profession, the ability to access otherwise inaccessible areas), as of 2000: 14%.

Reasons more often named in 2000 than 10 or 20 years ago:

- The possibility to get to know interesting people, new places, and things,
- Educational value of the profession,
- Being aware of what is going on in the world, at a national and local level,

¹³ Z. Bajka, *Dziennikarze lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, op. cit.; Z. Bajka, *Dziennikarze (1981–1990)*, [in:] *Komunikowanie masowe w Polsce: lata osiemdziesiąte*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 1–2.

- The opportunity to tell others about interesting people and events,
- The social prestige of the profession.

Less often cited expectations:

- Seeing the results of journalistic work (more so than in 1979),
- Ability to influence awareness, attitudes, and opinions,
- Ability to educate others.

Cited significantly less often than 10 and 20 years ago:

- The possibility of helping others in specific cases.
- Able to speak in their own name to a wider audience.

Much less than in 1979, but more often than in 1990, was the perceived opportunity in 2000 to combat public shortcomings. These latter observations at the turn of the century indicate a greater reality-oriented focus in journalists, less of a sense of mission, striving for higher ideals, more pragmatism and reckoning with the realities of working in this profession. It is also a more critical look at the current environment and its ethical standards. The idealists – then and now – are mainly the youngest members of this profession. The older generation – as it seems – is often deprived of idealistic illusions.

These studies by the Institute of Public Affairs, conducted in 2010, were based solely on in-depth interviews with journalists working for leading Polish media. They showed a significant reorientation of attitudes at the turn of the century.¹⁴ On the one hand, the study organisers surveyed a fairly large group of young journalists, seriously involved in their profession, with a desire to be good, to further their education, to go abroad with the aim of learning something new, and still believing in the ethos of their profession. In the middle were those who substituted the term “media worker” for their profession, claiming that there is no individual journalist ethos, replaced by that of a normal employee. At the other extreme are those who argue that the “missionary period” has ended, especially the ideological mission of some journalists (i.e., not in relation to politics), and we now have the era of journalism, *imagologia* (as defined prof. Kazimierz Krzysztofek), where media have been taken over by market forces. Now industries are the norm, including the culture industry, of which media is a part. One of the engines of the widespread commercialisation of media is “infotainment”.

“Infotainment” (Information + entertainment), also known as the tabloidisation of media, is very clearly perceived as a problem. One of the

¹⁴ A. Nizyńska, J. Osiecki, *op. cit.*

journalists surveyed by ISP stated: “the process results in an incompetent person, someone whose thinking is from another world, becoming an authority on public matters, where some otherwise unimportant topics become the focus of serious attention”.

Journalists, among others, explain that “entertain-ising” information results from human weakness: people enjoy gossip, sensationalism, and scandals. The four main causes of this phenomenon:

1. a focus on increased viewership, attracting a broader audience,
2. lack of time to deal with in-depth, reliable information. Journalists prepare a variety of material daily, focusing on form, not content,
3. adjusting to the intellectual level of one’s audience,
4. believing that man’s defining characteristic is the desire for sensationalism and gossip, while media cater to those needs.

Past and present studies have found that journalists believe curiosity to be the most prominent character trait of this profession. Kisch, Wańkiewicz, Kapuściński and other prominent journalists, including reporters, all agree. “You have to constantly put a big question mark over everything. As you look, find the question mark and try to look for an answer” is one of the statements that characterises journalistic curiosity.¹⁵

Less often does one encounter journalists with a sense of mission: the ability to influence the awareness, attitudes and opinions of the public, including the desire to inform their audience. It would seem that less than a dozen years ago journalists began to see themselves as the fourth branch of government. Such opinions are frequently voiced by young journalists, while older journalists more often believe that – due to declining public trust in journalists and frequent unethical conduct – the “power” to control the other three branches should itself be controlled.¹⁶ While journalists are mainly kept in check by their customers and the market (including the competition) as well as judicial institutions (when in violation of the law), they also dream of a self-controlled environment (as seen in other countries), but without the participation of such associations as SDP, which is generally criticised by journalists.¹⁷ It appears that journalists dream of creating a strong professional organisation, though most concede that “it is impractical due to huge media divisions,” but also because owners exercise the real control over media in Poland, impeding the emergence of a strong team of journalists in this country.

¹⁵ A. Niżyńska, J. Osiecki, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ Research commissioned by the SDP (Association of Polish Journalists), 2011.

¹⁷ A. Niżyńska, J. Osiecki, *op. cit.*

Public discourse, including online, criticises fellow journalists for being too willing to take jobs with zero reflection, failing to implement their own ideas and topics. This is confirmed by the results of the 2011 SDP study. More than 72 per cent of journalists feel that their colleagues are guided above all by orders given by their superiors and less than 0.5 per cent of journalists act according to the Code of Journalistic Conduct. Most journalists (60.3 per cent) agree that one's own conscience should dictate one's actions. However, what do we understand by "conscience"?

Upon finishing my term as President of the Board of the Association of Journalists of the Republic of Poland in 2000, I presented a concrete plan for the creation of a Trade Union of Polish Journalists, calling to mind a tradition established in the period between WWI and WWII. Although the Association did not support this initiative, over time, there has been mention of drafting legislation (by the Polish Senate) to govern the journalistic profession (modelled on pre-war statutes as well as similar legislation passed in several Western European countries, including the regulation of other professional groups). This project – as mentioned earlier – did not pass through the Polish Legislature. This law was to be the basis for the creation of a professional category of journalists in Poland, composed of all journalists as well as journalism trainees.

Media owners and other opponents of the Act did not like the wording of Article 3 p. 5 of the draft: "Employers cannot hire non-professional journalists, as defined by this law, for a period longer than three months." Art. 7 paragraph 1 of the draft stated: "Employers are obligated to execute all resolutions of the journalist trade union." Above all, Art. 8, 9 and 10 clearly stated the rights and obligations of employers in relation to journalists placed under the care and protection of the trade union. A certain publisher/owner commented bluntly: "You've lost your minds; you want unions to dictate terms of employment, salaries (most often a contract of employment), and decide who will be the editor in chief." He failed to notice that the union took upon itself the responsibility for ensuring journalistic integrity, ethical behaviour, and continued training – journalists themselves assumed the responsibility for regulating "the fourth branch of government".

Do responsible journalists still exist?

In a study conducted by CBOS in 2002, Poles cited the most desirable traits in journalists as impartiality and objectivity (62 per cent of responses), while 55 per cent found it to be "the same as any other job" and

40 per cent believed that it is a “job associated with the performance of some kind of social service.”¹⁸ In a study by SMG/KRC in 2010, 60 per cent felt that “journalism is just another way to make money, like any other” and 32 per cent considered that it involves “performing some kind of social service”.¹⁹

In a study conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs in 2010, fairness and independence – bound by a sense of responsibility – were cited by only 63 per cent of Poles as a trait of journalists. Almost three-quarters of respondents thought Polish journalists to possess such features as curiosity, competence, and experience. However, the data are surprising, as in 2010 only one third of respondents considered that Polish journalists were “absolute persons”. Eight years ago (2002), as many as 65 per cent of respondents felt that “unscrupulous journalists meddle in other people’s personal affairs,” and 54 per cent of respondents felt that journalists “do not take into account the consequences published materials may have for other people”. After eight years, this difference acts to the benefit of journalists. However, these differences may result from the way questions were posed, the sample selection, and the fact that the research was carried out by two competing companies (2002 – CBOS, a randomised sample of adult Poles, 2010 – Millward Brown SMG/KRC, random sample of Polish citizens; both tests consisted of just over 1,000 people).

Drawing a picture of journalists based on the ISP/SMG/KRC research of 2010 is quite intriguing. Journalists are valued for being able to quickly provide information (**in 65 per cent of the responses, the authors write that respondents identified the rapid transmission of information as responsible journalism!**). Then, however, things are not so rosy. As little as – or, depending on your point of view, as much as – 46 per cent of respondents feel that journalists objectively represent the views of all political parties, while half believe that journalists are too quick to judge others. Almost one third of respondents believe that journalists provide subjective information and 27 per cent believe they chase sensationalism.

A common complaint in relation to some journalists – not necessarily the only investigators acting for the public good – **is the habit of judging their subjects, only to correct their mistake in court.** While these journalists may feel justified, a study by CBOS **revealed that those surveyed felt that even when corruption, scandals, and previous cooperation of some public figures with communist services are revealed, these issues**

¹⁸ *Jacy są, a jacy powinni być dziennikarze?*, Raporty CBOS, marzec 2002.

¹⁹ *Kto pilnuje strażników?...*, *op. cit.*

are not always fully understood. As the authors of the report highlight, Poles want to know as much as possible, no matter whether it be proven facts or gossip or just press speculation.

The question is whether, in the model of today's aggressive journalism, Polish journalist can function in a world of politics, scandals, and corruption, or are they limited to electronic media? This question is not unreasonable if we compare two surveys from 2010.

First, Poles consider journalists to be predominantly individuals interested in conducting interviews or discussions on radio and television or as radio or TV reporters.

Second, journalists mostly deal with such topics as politics (76 per cent of responses), scandal (56 per cent), moral scandals (29 per cent), or the public lives of famous people (28 per cent). Other subjects, such as unemployment and poverty (16 per cent) and economic issues (15 per cent), receive less attention.²⁰

This table shows quite clearly which subjects dominate the work of typical journalists. It also shows – however indirectly – which topics occupy the attention of most Poles.

Citing the results of 2010, one can see what are the traits of journalists in the Third Polish Republic as well as “what we value the most”. An experienced public opinion researcher may, however, also observe the inconsistencies in such declarations (not the first such instance) as well as other rather inconsistent assessments. It could also be that the researcher is wrong. It is one thing to assess Polish journalism based on the opinion of its citizens – even if from the perspective of radio and television journalists – and another to use theoretical modelling. What then should be the “pattern of responsible journalism”? The answers are very elementary: **objectivity, experience, honesty** (indicated by 32 per cent of those surveyed), consistency, competence, independence (29–26 per cent), **followed by calm, inquisitiveness, honesty, and, finally, patriotism and sensitivity.**

The authors of the cited studies did not, however, finish their work with essentially empty declarations by study participants. For this alone they deserve our respect and gratitude. They went ahead and presented four scenarios, asking respondents how – in their view – a responsible journalist should behave. One would expect responses to mirror those in the report. However, **despite declarations of “model” behaviour, a large group of Poles wanted “responsible” journalists to act rather irresponsibly, with speed of communication being more important than truth,**

²⁰ *Kto pilnuje strażników?... , op. cit.*

the best business interests of the medium, or even important national interest. Details can be found in these very interesting reports, authored by Kuba Antoszewski (SMG / KRC) and Jacek Kucharczyk (Institute of Public Affairs).²¹

New censorship, crypto-disinterested, etc.

More than ten years ago, as many as 93 per cent of journalists said that “journalists usually express their own views, but it occasionally happens that they need to promote the ideas of others, which are completely or partially inconsistent with their own views”. Restricted journalistic freedom, according to respondents, came from pressure by media owners, editors in chief, and station and line managers (42 per cent), “internal” censorship (19 per cent), politics and other relationships with advertisers (13 per cent), self-censorship (11 per cent), and pressure from politicians and authorities at various levels (8 per cent).²²

Today, it is a phenomenon more clearly associated with the progressive instrumentalisation of media – politics and marketing, or attempting to influence the media and journalists that cover politics and business. Both of these effects are well known to journalists. Unfortunately, they have not been studied scientifically.

First, the censoring of journalistic materials. Granted, this is too broad a problem to fit in this paper. Still, there are formal and (often) informal ways to influence what journalists write and say. There are plenty of publications and essays (using pseudonyms or simply left anonymous) on how to further the management of public media. Polish Television (TVP) especially indicates who and how to display on screen, when, and at whose expense. There are, among others, also station commercials, journalist sympathies, and politicians looking for publicity. The 20 years of the Third Republic have been widely politicized (through editorial and journalists sympathies) by newspapers and magazines, excluding titles supportive of one political option as a matter of internal policy. Media bias is quite clearly noticeable: one can easily assign titles arrange the press by assigning them political preferences: some “go the whole hog”, others become involved only in certain programmes or publications. Such an exercise has been performed numerous times with students.

²¹ K. Antoszewski, J. Kucharczyk, *Społeczny wizerunek odpowiedzialnego dziennikarstwa*, [in:] *Kto pilnuje strażników?...*, *op. cit.*

²² Z. Bajka, *Dziennikarze lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, *op. cit.*

In Poland, a great career path is “PR”. The success of political parties or companies, for many, is the effect of a smoothly run public relations campaign, a little-known activity several years ago. In 2009, researchers at a German media studies institute came to the conclusion that more than 52 per cent of publications in German newspapers are the result of PR, and more than 94 per cent of US journalists admitted to the use of PR materials in their work.²³ In Poland, such studies have not yet taken place, but one can safely assume that they are effectively on par with German results.

PR is the science of working for both politics and business, sometimes at the intersection of these two fields. It is, when it comes to politics, “covering up” information – news unfavourable “for us”; when it comes to business, it is the ability to use virtually any – seemingly objective – information, to build or improve one’s image. But it also involves considerable amounts of censorship, whether directly or indirectly (selective information, cutting-out uncomplimentary information, sometimes deliberate forgery, presenting something in an overly good light, “attaching” other information with our product/person, etc.). But it has also – sometimes on a large-scale – involved measures aimed at gaining the sympathy of journalists, in some cases through corruption.

Let’s leave the dark side of politics and the efforts of various parties and politicians, who quite often are not acting in the interests of constituents. Let’s look at the relationship between journalists and business. In the journalistic community, there are well-known cases of media outlets reaping profits through business cooperation, such as automotive journalists, if only those who passionately “test new models of cars”, or those involved in tourism, traveling to nice countries for all-expenses-paid press conferences (we use these specialisations as examples only). In mentioning “business” one must remember the advertisers, which can make or break smaller editors. Any criticism of local magazine advertisers may initiate a “descent” from the press market, while favour may ensure calm and profits. Smaller publications especially utilise advertisements that are supposedly written by journalists (the so-called “advertorial”). According to the law, they should be marked as a text ad/promo, but sometimes publishers “forget” to highlight this fact.

The advertorial has long been a commonly used method, known in journalistic lingo as a “crypto-commercial”. They are used in all media; for example, a given television journalist may show a long shot of a politician

²³ Research George Washington University, March 2009, information on the website: <http://annamiothk.pl/94-dziennikarzy-w-usa-korzysta-z-informacji-pr/>.

at a rally or businessman with a good heart, hugging babies handing out gifts. Celebrities – which the media is all too happy to deal with – are also displayed wearing X's newest creation or on holiday, sponsored by company Y. This method is commonly used today.

However, the most common practice is to publish materials sent by a company or PR departments “in extenso”. In this way a journalist does his piece and the PR machine has achieved its goal. Many PR companies boast which journalists share their favour and whom to call if help is needed. But that's not all. A number of Polish businessmen reach media outlets through their PR representatives. Therefore, it is not surprising that recently the head of a large Polish company said – with conviction – that his company's success was not the result of their products or good organisation, but thanks to efficient PR. Many opposition politicians have long said that the success of Donald Tusk and PO is mostly due to good PR.

It is obvious that plenty of PR activities are consistent with the law as well as business ethics and journalism. However, there are those that cast a shadow, including overzealous PR representatives as well as rogue journalists and media owners. Influence on the media by powerful advertisers is particularly reprehensible, much like the array of corruptly arranged media sponsorships. Nor is it a secret that various annual awards, trophies and diplomas are awarded to companies that pay handsomely for these awards. There is even editorial coverage given to such awards that companies receive.

Pressure from politics and business has destroyed decency standards in the media and journalism. This is happening in other countries, and some are even worse off in this respect. A fragment of research from the Institute of Public Affairs, conducted by A. Niżyńska and Jan Osiecki on the conditions and risks of responsible journalism, reveals the specific situation of journalists and knowledge about what is happening at the intersection of media, politics and business. In many cases, all standards of decency have been destroyed.

Conclusion

Some of the problems presented here highlight the difficulty of these issues and that some problems have yet to be examined. On the one hand, there is a public evaluation of media and journalism in the Third Republic; on the other hand, there is a self-assessment of the situation in the industry. Future research may address the self-assessment of the situation in the journalistic community, using interviews with journalists from various media.

However, despite whatever conclusions may be reached following the completion of such studies, it must be said that the fall of the ethos of journalism in Poland is already quite visible. And this is not limited only to the suicide attempt case of Colonel Przybyło, when only ONE journalist attempted to help the victim. Others were too busy calling their superiors and/or filming the event. The attempt to organise the Polish Chamber of Journalists in the form of a self-government is just one idea for finding a way out of this difficult stalemate. In the interest of the entire industry, Polish journalists should unite before it is too late.

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Dariusz Baran

Polish Internet at the end of the 20th century

The past 20 years of Polish Internet have been a complex period in which its development and changes coincided with the transformation of the country, including all parts of the media. While we should analyse the first decade as a period in which only the “old media” was used, the second requires a longer reference to new technologies, when the growth of the Internet began to determine most of the changes occurring in this period in the areas of communication, culture and new social habits.

When the World Wide Web protocols were being developed in 1990 in Switzerland's CERN¹ (European Organisation for Nuclear Research), Poland had just become one of Europe's youngest democracies. Still, despite many limitations in the political, economic or social spheres, many operations on the academic level developed much more dynamically, including in the area of new technologies.

17 August 1991 is given as the symbolic beginning of the Polish Internet. That day, the first message data packet using the TCP/IP protocol was sent, between the Faculty of Physics of Warsaw University and the Computer Centre in Copenhagen University. The inclusion of Poland to the global net within EARN occurred 15 December 1991, after American limitations in access to modern computer and telecommunication technologies had been abolished for Poland. This was the reason why the initial growth of the Polish Internet proceeded in several stages.

Until 1994, the Internet in Poland was accessible only by higher education and scientific institutions within the Scientific and Academic Com-

¹ Orig. Organisation Européenne pour la Recherche Nucléaire.

puter Network (NASK, *Naukowa i Akademicka Sieć Komputerowa*). In practice, the first years marked a limited use of services (IRC, email, forums). The real growth came with the development of broadband Internet connections in 1999, but due to various factors (the limitations of the infrastructure, monopoly of connection management, high fees for access,² low GDP) its dissemination was not as dynamic as in many other European countries.

Using the Internet in Poland – the first decade

In addition to the generally accepted date of the first data transmission using the TCP/IP protocol, there are also others that are less well known. These include the launch of the first leased line between CERN and the Kraków Institute of Nuclear Physics (IFJ) on 26 September 1990, the registration of the first IP address in Poland to the IFJ (19 November 1990), sending the first email from the CERN headquarters of the IFJ (20 November 1990) or earlier, on July 17 of that year, from the European Academic and Research Network (EARN) to the administrator of this network in Poland.³

A very important factor for the growth of the Internet in Poland was the rise of the first domestic website operator, which would be responsible for the management of all Polish academic networks. In March 1991 the Warsaw University established the Research and Academic Computer Network (NASK), which would fulfil this role until 1994. Due to the limits in the technical infrastructure, the Internet would only be available within it almost until the launch of the World Wide Web, and only to universities and research institutions.

In January 1993, the first Polish IRC (Internet Relay Chat) server was founded at the AGH–UST University of Science and Technology in Kraków, enabling communication with thematic or private network channels. In June 1993, the State Committee for Scientific Research (*Komitet Badań Naukowych*) decided to build a network of 11 Polish academic centres.

We can assume that the first turning point important for the prevalence of the Internet in Poland was December 1993, when NASK became an

² Just as important was the increase of VAT on Internet services, from 7 to 22 per cent, on 1 March 2005 Telekomunikacja Polska SA (Polish Telecom) was synonymous with the Internet in Poland for quite a long time, with the exception of NASK.

³ Read more in the report: *Internet PL. 20 lat internetu w Polsce. Raport PC World*, No. 1/2011.

independent research and development unit,⁴ reporting to the State Committee for Scientific Research. However, this did not yet open the web to individual customers.

Access to the Internet for individuals became possible in 1995, with the launch of the Maloka BBS (Bulletin Board System).⁵ In January 1995, a service named Public Access to the Internet began in Łódź; at that time, there were about 10 Internet service providers in Poland, mainly in its capitol, Warsaw. They were all still dependent on NASK. The situation changed a bit at the end of 1995, when NASK introduced new pricing for Internet usage according to the number of megabytes sent and received. This action accelerated the emergence of other, fully independent operators.

In December 1996, the Warsaw firm Polbox launched the first server with free email accounts, with a 2 MB capacity. In the same year, Kraków's Commercial Internet began to offer user accounts with a capacity of 3 MB. The market research company Estymator estimates that there were nearly one million Internet users in Poland by mid-1997.⁶ More than 40 per cent of them used a network on a campus or at school and about 38 per cent at the workplace. About 23 per cent of Poles had Internet at home. The launch of an access number by telecom Telekomunikacja Polska SA⁷ (0-202122) in April 1996 was another breakthrough. It opened up the opportunity to access the World Wide Web using a modem to connect with a speed of 56 kb/s.

1999 was another milestone year in the growth of the Polish Internet because of the entry of high-speed Internet, which meant much faster data transfer (sending and receiving at a speed of 115 kb/s), the ability to connect without blocking the phone line and assign a fixed IP address to a user.

In that same year many important, as it turned out later, websites and online shops were launched: Merlin.pl, the first Polish Internet bookshop, on 1 January and Allegro, the biggest auction marketplace, on 13 December (Poland's largest platform for online sales/purchases to this day). The first fully virtual bank, mBank, was founded on 26 November of the next year.

The first decade of the Polish Internet was in practice limited by the use of the services available through it (IRC, email, discussion forums).

⁴ At that time NASK with ATM company offered commercial Internet access, but rates for an account on the server were too high, that the network did not gain popularity.

⁵ BBS is an online service with a shared place for the collection of documents, handling email boxes and file transfers.

⁶ Data: Estymator Institute for the Study of Media and Markets. The survey was conducted in the period of March-May, on a group of 4,494 people aged over 15 years.

⁷ Telekomunikacja Polska SA has been operating since 1 January 1992, after the division of the state-owned Polish Post, Telephone and Telegraph.

For this it was based on (technically) being a global network, although its commercial dimension was much easier to achieve. When the Internet began to function in the public consciousness of Poles for good, the world entered the era of Web 2.0. However, this did not affect the fact that the revolutionary form of communication in virtual reality was already equally developed – worldwide and in Poland. The new services had irreversibly changed habits, revolutionized ways of spending free time, enjoying entertainment, transformed channels of communication, learning, and satisfying information needs. And only the combination of various factors (restrictions in infrastructure, monopoly on the management of Internet connections, restrictive access charges, income levels) caused the speed of the development and dissemination of the World Wide Web in Poland to not be as dynamic as in many other European countries.

From information to social networks

Created in the early 90s, Polish websites mainly functioned for informative, promotional or cataloguing purposes, which the first Polish search engine made possible in 1996, when NEToskop and Sieciowid launched, followed by Infoseek in 1997 and Netsprint in 2001 (supporting only Polish websites). In 1998, Polish Google made its debut. From 1995, the Internet in Poland developed in the direction of general websites. The following portals launched soon after: Wirtualna Polska (1995), Onet (1996), Interia (2000), as well as Hoga, Arena, Ahoj and Poland.com. A year later, the latter three no longer existed.

The Polish version of Wikipedia launched on 26 September 2001, eight months after the world premiere.⁸ But many foreign websites did not do as well – MySpace and Bebo withdrew from the Polish e-market, while eBay and AOL lost the battle for primacy in their respective markets.

Many newspapers started web editions in the mid-1990s. The first Polish newspaper title available on the Internet was *Gazeta Wyborcza* (October 1994) and its Kraków edition insert “Computers and Office”. Next, the *Super Express* (1996) tabloid and *Rzeczpospolita* (1997) opinion daily appeared. Despite its debut in 2003, *Fakt*, the best-selling Polish tabloid, did not have its own website until 2008.

Today, all Polish newspapers have web editions of their titles, but their importance among the most watched sites in Poland is not as significant.

⁸ The service began using the common address (pl.wikipedia.org) in November 2002. Three years later, Polish Internet users had published over 100 thousand entries, with half a million by 2008.

Gazeta.pl was until recently the only significant press service, and ranked fifth of the most often visited Polish websites in 2010. Comparing the popularity of information portals, at the end of 2010 wyborcza.pl had 2.43 million users (13.34 per cent coverage), rp.pl (*Rzeczpospolita* online) a little more than 1.31 million (7.19 per cent), gazetaprawna.pl and dziennik.pl about 1.1 million each. The second most read press web service is se.pl (*Super Express*), ahead of fakt.pl (*Fakt*). Amongst weeklies, newsweek.pl has the largest number of online readers (983,400), followed by telemagazyn.pl (730,600) and wprost.pl (591,400).

It is worth noting the growing popularity of websites belonging to Regional Media (Media Regionalne), a group of regional newspaper websites whose titles are issued within the My City (Moje Miasto, mm.pl) project and municipal services. In January 2008, these sites were visited by a total of 921,000 Internet users, with 200,000 more than a year earlier. Data from January 2012 indicate more than nine million users in all MR services (an increase of 11 per cent).

According to the Polish Readership Survey (PBC, Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa), less than one per cent of the respondents get their news from the Internet today,⁹ although 90 per cent of respondents claimed to read the paper version. One in four read both versions.

After a time of growth for information websites, the evolution of Web 2.0 idea has led to rise the a new trend: social networking sites. As spending time online became a substitute for leisure time, many opportunities were created for people to organise themselves into larger or smaller web communities within the framework of the web, creating some kind of belonging (or just membership), using a new system of codes, standards of behaviour and language. These needs were satisfied by social networks, with 58 per cent of respondents belonging to at least one of them in 2011. Nearly 80 per cent were aged 18-24, while 75 per cent under 34. Interestingly, over a quarter of all Polish Internet users over 65 also have online profiles.

The first social networking portal in Poland, Fotka.pl, was founded in 2001 as a platform to share photos and contacts (1.6 million users today). Grono.net, formed three years later, would provide the second major hub of social networking activity over the next two years, despite its relatively closed formula.¹⁰ The revolution in domestic social media came on 11 No-

⁹ <http://www.pbczyt.pl/news/items/35.html> [online 07.01.2012].

¹⁰ Only a person invited by another user could belong to a "grono" (eng. group, circle), because the structure of the site is based on small groups of people, focused on the consolidation of relationships with friends or the exchange of views on a specific topic.

vember 2006, with the début of *nasza-klasa.pl*¹¹ (*nk.pl* today), which would have nearly three million registered members by the end of the 2007, and more than 13 million two years later. Its domination ended with the Polish version of Facebook (launched in May 2008), which over the year gained 1.5 million users. Currently, Facebook is ahead of *nk* in terms of real users, 12.3 compared to 11.2 million. Additionally, the most popular Polish social networking sites include *Chomikuj.pl*, a file sharing website used as a “virtual hard drive”, with over 4.8 million active users, *Gg.pl*, with 2.2 million users, and *Mojageneracja.pl* (both belonging to the *Gadu-Gadu* group) and also *Goldenline.pl* – strictly pro-business, with less than two million users.

Nor can we fail to mention existing foreign sites, which withdrew from the fight for this part of the e-market after failing to gain wider recognition among Polish users. This includes a conglomerate owned by Rupert Murdoch’s *MySpace*, which closed its Polish branch just half a year after its founding, as well as *AOL Bebo*, operating since July 2007.

Instant messengers have played a significant role in web communication, whose features in many cases are similar to those of social networks. Here we can mention domestic brands such as *WPKontakt* (launched in 2001, later known as *Spik*) and *Tlen* (2001, application on the *o2.pl* portal that allowed for integration with other Internet messengers), and several smaller ones, like *Jabber* or *Konnekt*. The second most prevalent instant messenger in Poland today is global giant *Skype*, present here since November 2005.

58 per cent of Polish Internet users are members of at least one social networking site today,¹² excluding instant messengers.

Social implications of Internet dissemination

The first Internet research, as can be read on *Nasik’s* page, was conducted in 1995 by the company *RUN*. From there emerged the picture of the av-

¹¹ This was surprising, because back in 2002 there was a similar page, *Szkolnelata.pl* (in 2006 it had only 50,000 registered users) and formed an almost equal second social networking site, *Sztambuch.pl*.

¹² Source: *Użytkowanie internetu*. Komunikat z badań CBOS (BS/99/2011), oprac. M. Feliksiak, Warszawa 2011, http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2011/K_099_11.PDF [online 22.01.2012]. In the first quarter of 2010, 62 per cent of Internet users (32 per cent of adult Poles) were registered on at least one of the sites. More: *Spoleczności wirtualne*. Raport CBOS (BS/58/2010), oprac. K. Wądołowska, Warszawa 2010, http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2010/K_058_10.PDF [online 22.01.2012].

verage Polish Internet user – someone within higher education. This was strictly related with the use of computers mainly by academic staff. The company Polish Internet Research (Polskie Badania Internetu, PBI) was formed in August 2000 solely to conduct web research.

Relying on their study from 1995, the number of Internet users in Poland reached half a million that year. OBOP data from 1997 indicates declared access to the web for eight per cent of society; three years later this number was estimated at 5.2 million, equivalent to 17 per cent of the overall population. The most frequent connections to the network were made at home (45.5 per cent) and workplace (37.9 per cent). Over the consecutive years the rate of growth, as well as ways to use the Internet, have changed, but it is still difficult to talk about their unique progress and diversity.

One thing is certain: with the emergence of the Internet, the time spent on the daily consumption of media greatly increased, initially without causing a significant departure from traditional media by audiences, but adding to the fragmentation of the media environment. Further, the supremacy of new communication technologies is growing and has become a substitute for other forms of activity, including leisure.

Analysing the results of CBOS research into forms of leisure preferred by Poles from 1988 we can see two trends: changes in the range of activity until the mid-1990s, reaching the lowest levels in all areas of life in 1993, the relative stability after 1997, and later increasing use of television, finally followed by spending ever more time browsing the Internet.

Only 28 per cent of Poland's Internet population use the web to contact public institutions¹³ (similarly as in 2010), which puts Poland at fourth from the end of the European Union's 27 members. Poland is followed by Italy, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece. Compared with other countries, 81 per cent of Danes, 50 per cent of Germans and 39 per cent of Brits use the networks as a tool to connect with public institutions. The average value for EU countries is 41 per cent, and 44 per cent for Europe (78 per cent for Norway, for example). This result is still much better than in 2006, when 26 per cent of European Internet users used the network to connect with public institutions. It was barely six per cent of the population in the case of Poland. This ratio was the lowest in Europe.¹⁴

21 per cent of Poles receive information from the websites of public authorities, which compared to 2010 is at a relatively stable level (25 per cent in 2010). However, this result puts us at third place from the end, before

¹³ <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tin00012> [online 27.01.2012].

¹⁴ According to Eurostat data.

Romania and Bulgaria. In this case, the average result for the EU is 35 per cent, and 39 per cent for all of Europe.

11 per cent of Polish Internet users (five per cent in 2005) use the Internet to find work. The EU average is 17 per cent (16 per cent for Europe). In the case of such countries as Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Great Britain and Scandinavia, this ratio remains at 20 per cent. Seven per cent of Polish Internet users use websites to create content and share it with other users (data from 2008). Also in this case, other EU countries' ratios are much higher: 21 per cent in Estonia, 19 per cent in Latvia and the United Kingdom and 17 per cent in Hungary.

According to the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS, *Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej*), in 2006 the average Pole used the computer and the Internet nine hours a week; the average monthly time spent online was 28 hours and 23 minutes.¹⁵ The average Pole spent approx. 12 hours longer watching television, more than seven reading newspapers and books and 10 hours listening to the radio. Quite often, respondents indicated television as their first source of entertainment. In 2011, they declared they used the Internet 12 hours weekly, or about three hour less than a year earlier (the World Internet Project survey gives slightly different numbers: 13 hours and 41 minutes, compared with 14h and 27' in 2010).¹⁶ It is estimated that 34 per cent of 16-74-year-old Poles use the web mainly for communicating; barely eight per cent of users are ready to pay for content, while nearly a quarter play online games or download them, as well as downloading music, videos and photos.

Barely 28 per cent of Polish Internet users use the network to contact public institutions, while the information from their online sites reaches 21 per cent. 11 per cent of Internet users use the web to find work and seven per cent use it for content creation and sharing.

Conclusions

Estymator estimates that in mid-1997 almost a million people in Poland used the Internet.¹⁷ Over 40 per cent used it at a college or school, and

¹⁵ During the year, this time increased from 25 to 30 hours per month.

¹⁶ *World Internet Project - Polska 2011*, Raport Agory SA i Grupy TP. In Polish: <http://bi.gazeta.pl/im/6/10726/m10726616,WORLD-INTERNET-PROJECT-POLSKA-2011-RAPORT-V.pdf>. English version: http://www.worldinternetproject.net/_files/_Published/_oldis/760_world_internet_project_poland_2011.pdf [online 27.01.2012].

¹⁷ Data: Instytut Badań Mediów i Rynku Estymator, a study conducted in March-May, on a group of 4,494 people aged over 15 years.

about 38 per cent at the workplace. At that time, 23 per cent of Poles had an Internet connection at home.

General access to the web in Poland proceeded slowly, although there has been an increase in the number of Internet users (up from 8.4 to 11.5 million in the years 2005–2006), with a five per cent increase already in 2011. Today, about 62 per cent of society uses the Internet in Poland (source: Eurostat),¹⁸ and according to Net Track data the number is 16.7 million. Of the 27 countries of the European Union, only 10 are characterized by a lower level of Internet access (in 2006 the number was eight).

There are still many reasons for low Internet penetration, including gaps in infrastructure and the resistance/opposition of the elderly to any use of new technologies.¹⁹ Opportunity can be seen in the growth of the mobile Internet; its universality here is similar to the global average – 37 per cent of Polish Internet users access the web this way at least once a month. This is due to the high penetration of the mobile telephone market. According to data from GUS (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Central Statistical Office), at the beginning of 2011, 48.5 million cell phones were used in Poland.

It's hard to assess whether the 20 years of Internet in Poland have been used properly. In addition to the higher level of communication coverage in society, its development has brought many new dilemmas that remain unresolved, like social exclusion. We don't know if and which consecutive needs and wants will be satisfied over the coming years – primarily information, culture, entertainment and social – and whether it will continue to increase communication interactions.

The problem of “compatibility” of many websites with the Press Law is still unsolved. Blogging is not currently considered journalist activity. The methods of precise movement and type of website visitor measurement are also uncertain. These figures can reflect actual website attractiveness, and consequently, the future of the business model. Note that 70 per cent of Polish Internet users admit to shopping online, but the e-market is still barely three per cent of total trade.²⁰

¹⁸ 65 per cent used it in the 12 months preceding the survey. Some statistics show penetration at the 67 per cent level. Eurostat data: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tin00028> [online 27.01.2012].

¹⁹ M. Lemańska, *Z sieci korzystają dwa miliardy ludzi*. „Rzeczpospolita”, 28.05.2011 http://www.rp.pl/arttykul/665029_W_Polsce_liczba_internautow_rosnie_wolniej.html [online 02.01.2012].

²⁰ We can choose from nearly 11, 000 online shops (in accordance with TNS OBOP data).

Other problems have been presented as projects for government consultation, like the idea of registering programmes disseminated over the Internet in KRRiT or blocking access to content threatening the physical, mental or moral development of minors by Internet Service Providers. Other law proposals contain include the promotion of “European works”,²¹ with at least 15 per cent of all audio-visual materials.

There were no such problems in the public consciousness in the late 90s, when the Internet did not have such a clear effect on the perception of traditional media. This was, however, mainly due to economic (high fees for access to the web), technical (modems, and therefore slow data transfer rate) and market (almost all calls were made through TP SA connections) restrictions. Among other things, the number of Internet users has been limited for these reasons.

It’s worth remembering that the Polish Internet market is not easy and predictable, as the biggest global players have discovered: the eBay auction site, MySpace, and portals like AOL or Yahoo News. The most important field for Polish Internet users is communication: regular email checking, activity on social networking sites (even though their popularity has decreased), and contact using instant messengers. This may be because in their own opinion, online activity results in increased contacts outside the virtual world.

The average Polish Internet user has had six years of “practice” on the web (data: World Internet Project Polska 2011); uses it two hours per day, over 90 per cent of that time at home. He’s active,²² although the low level of this activity ranks Poles among the most aggressive and verbally vulgar users in the world.

For a number of reasons, a portrait of today’s Polish Internet user is still incomplete and unstable in its “freshness”. On the one hand, Poland is still “chasing” some parts of Europe and other more developed countries in the world; on the other, the habits, standards of behaviour, and lack of fully proven and respected ethical principles cherished in the society, result in plenty of chaos and haphazardness in what the society does.

²¹ Map, mig, *Co czeka polski Internet? Koncesje, cenzura i kary finansowe*, http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114873,9247597,Co_czeka_polski_internet_Koncesje_cenzura_i_kary.html [online 14.03.2011].

²² This activity is expressed by data such as over 100,000 registered .eu domains (December 2007) and two million .com domains registered in January 2011 (tu-tam.pl).

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Joanna Konopka

The national market for daily newspapers after 1989

The subject of this paper is to outline the changes encountered by the daily nationwide newspaper market since 1989.

As the changes discussed below cover a period of over two decades, its periodisation seems essential. Below, it consists of a brief portrait and summary of the 1990s (due to the limited scope of this article, the titles that disappeared from the market after the transformation of 1989 are given only a brief mention) – and an analysis and balance of the period from 2000 to 2011.

The starting point for tracing the transformations that Zbigniew Bajka describes as the largest and most extensive in the entire 20th century¹ would be the second half of 1989, when the Polish press market – so far based on censorship, political control and a monopoly of publishing held by the Press-Book-Movement Workers' Publishing Co-operative – began a significant transformation.²

To stress the importance of these transformations to the reader we must mention that the reform of the press was the result of agreements signed at the Round Table. We should add that while taking part in the Round Table discussions, members of the assembly for the media declared the necessity of creating a new information order based on pluralism and freedom of expression. They postulated the restriction and

¹ Z. Bajka, *Rynek mediów w Polsce*, [in:] *Dziennikarstwo i świat mediów*, ed. Z. Bauer, E. Chudziński, Kraków 2008, p. 183.

² Z. Bajka, *Prasa codzienna w latach 1989-1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, ed. R. Gluza, Poznań 1999, p. 57; K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *Czasopisma w latach 1989-1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, *op. cit.*, p. 75; Z. Bajka, *Rynek mediów w Polsce*, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

eradication of censorship, a change in the system for appointing new titles from concessions on registration and updating the Press Law that had been in existence since 1984. The democratisation of the market was to be spread out over many years, but in reality, the process of changes took place much faster than expected.

In 1989 the Press Law Act was amended so that any company and any citizen of legal age without a criminal record could become a press publisher (after registering under the court). No restrictions on foreign capital were entered at this time.

Editorial computerisation of the transition to offset printing played a major role in the transformation of the Polish press market.

The Act of 11 April 1990 on the liquidation of the Central Office of the Control of the Press, Publications and Performances had a significant influence on accelerating changes in the Polish press. It ended the period of preventive censorship and liquidation of the Prasa-Książka-Ruch Worker Publishing Co-operative on the power of the Act of 22 March 1990, which triggered the privatisation process of its newspapers.

It should be noted that during the People's Republic of Poland a total of 14 newspapers were issued nationwide, of which 10 were general news titles. Three major party journals and several representing various political parties were published: *Trybuna Ludu* (literally: Tribune of the People, published by the Polish United Workers' Party, PZPR), *Dziennik Ludowy* (literally: People's Daily, United Peasant Party) and the *Kurier Polski* (literally: Polish Courier, Democratic Party), and – representing the government authority – *Rzeczpospolita* (literally Commonwealth, yet meaning Poland).³

At the same time four serious journals appeared targeted to narrower audiences: *Sztandar Młodych* (literally: Banner of Youth) for young people, *Gromada – Rolnik Polski* (literally: Cluster – Polish Farmer), addressed to village inhabitants, *Żołnierz Wolności* (literally: Soldier of Freedom) on military issues, and *Słowo Powszechne* (literally: Popular Word), published by the pro-socialist PAX Catholic Association and recognized by the church authorities.

Other titles include *Życie Warszawy* (literally: Life of Warsaw), *Express Wieczorny* (literally: Evening Express), a children's magazine *Świat Młodych* (literally: Youth World) and three sport newspapers: *Sport*, *Przegląd Sportowy* (literally: Sport Review) and *Tempo*.⁴

³ W. Pisarek, *Ogólnoinformacyjna prasa codzienna w Polsce. Zmiany lat 1989–1995*, Warszawa 1995, p. 2.

⁴ R. Filas, *Prasa ogólnokrajowa po 1989 roku*, [in:] *Słownik wiedzy o mediach*, ed. E. Chudziński, Warszawa–Bielsko-Biała 2007, p. 109.

As a result of the liquidation of the Press-Book-Movement Workers' Publishing Co-operative, due to the lack of precise rules for the sale and waiving of the titles belonging to the Cooperative, the activity of the Press-Book-Movement Workers' Publishing Co-operative Liquidation Committee aroused much controversy; however, it led to the de-monopolisation of the market press and limited the influence of the ruling political parties during the People's Republic of Poland.⁵ The titles mentioned above entered onto the path of ownership and organisational transformations, but no adjustment to the rules of the free market meant that most of them fell within the first decade of transition.

Shares in several financially declining titles were bought en masse by large Western media companies, yet many of them found the influx of foreign capital, however useful and allowing computerised edition, modern printing, and extended capacities, proved insufficient.

Some, e.g. *Świat Młodych* (literally: The World of the Young) bi-daily for young people (published in 1991–1994 as weekly) and *Dziennik Ludowy* did not last through the first period transformations.

Exactly in the middle of the decade *Gromada – Rolnik Polski* ceased to be published. Two years later, *Słowo Powszechne*, which had appeared since 1991 as *Słowo – Dziennik Katolicki* (literally: *The Word – Catholic Daily*), shut down. At the same time *Sztandar Młodych* renamed into *SM – Sztandar* disappeared from the market, while *Żołnierz Wolności*, after two title changes, finally ended up as the weekly *Polska Zbrojna* (literally: Poland Armed), still published today.

As the decade closed, so did the *Express Wieczorny*, while the daily *Kurier Polski* was transformed into the weekly *Kurier Sensacji i Rozrywki* (literally: Courier of Sensation and Entertainment) and the nationwide *Życie Warszawy* became a regional newspaper.⁶

Renamed into *Trybuna*, *Trybuna Ludu* lasted very long – from the days of PRL to 2009.

At present, only *Rzeczpospolita* is available today from the 14 post-PRL dailies, and so are the three sport newspapers: *Przegląd Sportowy* (literally: Sport Review), *Sport* and *Tempo*.

Rzeczpospolita stopped being a governmental body very early on, in 1989, but because in 1990 the journal was seen as an official publication, it began searching for a foreign investor who would make the title private. The choice fell on Robert Hersant's group. In February 1991, the company

⁵ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 82.

⁶ R. Filas, *Prasa ogólnokrajowa po 1989 roku*, op. cit., p. 110.

established Presspublica, where 51 per cent of the shares were owned by the National Commonwealth Publishing Company, and the remaining 49 per cent by the French company Socpresse.

In July 1995, the roles were reversed and 51 per cent of the shares were acquired by the Socpresse Company; a year later, a Norwegian company called Orkla Media purchased the shares of the French company.⁷

From the moment in which *Rzeczpospolita* ceased to be a governmental body, the editors' ambition was to create a log of information and apolitical news, but practice has shown that journalists tended to distance themselves from their political views (so there appeared many historical texts and essays mainly associated with the conservative part of the political scene in the newspaper).⁸ Despite this, the title was appreciated for its extensive news, more balanced comments and comprehensive journalism.

Rzeczpospolita consisted of a legal, political, economic, foreign and sports department. There was also a section on culture. A characteristic feature of *Rzeczpospolita* was its multi-coloured columns. The publication was divided into a general section, printed on white paper, an economic section on green pages, a legal section printed on yellow paper, and the Saturday supplement "Plus – Minus", published on salmon-coloured pages. In addition, an integral part of *Rzeczpospolita* was a TV add-on called "Tele".

At the beginning of the first decade, *Rzeczpospolita* had a circulation of about 200,000 copies. Four years later, it reached a record number of 287,000 copies; however, its professionally edited departments and newspaper sales – even though they remained at a high level – gradually decreased.⁹

At the beginning of the second decade, the newspaper joined in the fashionable trend of investigative journalism, which weakened the conservative-liberal position of *Rzeczpospolita* as a serious and objective journal.

In 2006, when, with 51 per cent of shares of *Rzeczpospolita*, the Norwegian company Orkla Media was acquired by British investment fund Mecom, Paweł Lisicki was appointed the new editor and a clear shift towards pro-government was observed, which – as emphasised by Ryszard Filas – accompanied, perhaps not coincidentally, a significant decline in sales,¹⁰

⁷ Z. Bajka, *Kapitał zagraniczny w polskiej prasie*, [in:] *Media i dziennikarstwo w Polsce 1989–1995*, ed. G.G. Kopper, I. Rutkiewicz, K. Schliep, Kraków 1996, p. 147.

⁸ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., pp. 104–105.

⁹ Data are from the Press Distribution Control association of messages on the amount of investment and distribution of controlled ZKDP documents for T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., p. 107.

¹⁰ R. Filas, *Prasa ogólnokrajowa po 1989 roku*, op. cit., p. 113.

and at the same time *Rzeczpospolita* changed its profile from moderate to more conservative.

In the second decade sales continued to fall. While in 2000 they reached a circulation of 263,000 and 203,000 copies sold, four years later the circulation was 244,000, and sales reached just over 180,000 copies.¹¹

In order to add features and thus attract new readers to the title, the newspaper was and still is accompanied by a variety of inserts and thematic supplements such as “Dobra Firma” (Good Company), “Nieruchomości” (Real Estate), “Kariera i Biznes” (Career and Business), “Moje Pieniądze” (My Money), “Prawo co dnia” (Daily Law), and “Prawo i praktyka” (Law and Practice).

In 2011, Gremi media company bought the shares of Mecom and the State Treasury, taking over 100 per cent of Presspublica’s shares, and Tomasz Wróblewski became the new editor-in-chief of *Rzeczpospolita*. At present, the average circulation of *Rzeczpospolita* is about 170,000 copies.

The first decade of changes, on the one hand, involved the process of transforming the PRL-era press; on the other was the creation of many new titles. One of the most important was *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which debuted a month before the June elections in 1989. The publisher became Agora, whose members were Zbigniew Bujak, Alexander Paszyński and Andrzej Wajda. The team consisted of: Piotr Pacewicz, Krzysztof Śliwiński, Jacek Żakowski, Małgorzata Szejnert and Adam Michnik, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper.

The first issue appeared on 8 May 1989, mainly emphasising its close relationship with Solidarity.¹² The editorial team declared that the main task of *Gazeta Wyborcza* would be to provide information. Internal divisions within Solidarity caused some divisions in the paper, and in September 1990, the National Commission deprived *Gazeta Wyborcza* the rights to use the union’s symbol. The division of Solidarity forced *Gazeta Wyborcza* to establish its position as an outlet for relevant social and political issues.

The newspaper’s quickly established and expanded sections appropriate to an informative and journalistic press caused the newspaper to take on the formula of a local and national newspaper at the same time, something that had never been seen before.

In addition to local extras, *Gazeta Wyborcza* published nationwide editions, so that every daily edition consisted of a nationwide section and

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Until September 1990 the first page of the newspaper bore the logotype of Solidarity and included a vertical vignette stating “There is no freedom without Solidarity”. Today’s Thursday, “Large Format”.

two extra supplements: local and thematic. The first theme was added on Friday, published since March 1993, based on newspaper articles and was called “Magazyn”. On Monday there was a supplement on extreme sports, and then first the Saturday, then the Friday issue was complemented with “Gazeta Telewizyjna” (Television Newspaper). On Wednesdays there was a supplement called “Nieruchomości” (Real Estate), and on Thursday the motoring magazine “Wysokie Obrotły” (High Speed). Since April 1999, *Gazeta Wyborcza* has also printed a Saturday supplement for women called *Wysokie Obcasy* (literally: High Heels).¹³

An indisputable advantage of *Gazeta Wyborcza* was its openness to representatives of almost all political, ideological and cultural ideas. You could read articles by Zbigniew Brzeziński, Leszek Balcerowicz, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Jerzy Giedroyc, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and even Aleksander Kwaśniewski.

As time went by the structure of Agora was evolving, which together with the published magazine had transformed into a huge media company, where economic parameters played the major role. At the same time, *Gazeta Wyborcza* had evolved into a powerful press business.¹⁴

Without a doubt, *Gazeta Wyborcza* was a newspaper that skilfully used its much earlier start than other initiatives; by the end of 1989 its circulation was half a million copies. Five years later the average edition of *Gazeta Wyborcza* was 511,000 copies, of which 418,000 were sold. The next two years saw a slight decline in both expenses and newspaper sales, but from 1997 until the end of the 90s circulation and sales were steadily growing, and in 1999 amounted to 569,000 and 443,000 copies.¹⁵ The opposite trend was observed in the second decade. Today, the average print run of *Gazeta Wyborcza* is about 300,000 copies.

Gazeta Wyborcza has launched many national social initiatives, and received the biggest response from *Rodzić po Ludzku* (Give Birth like a Human), *Szkoła z Klasą* (School with Class) and *Grasz o Staż* (Play for Internships).

In the second half of the second decade, declining sales results of national newspapers indicated the deepening crisis in the press market. In order to stop the negative trend, Agora increased its marketing activities at

¹³ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., p. 95.

¹⁴ In April 1999, Agora hit the stock exchange, which resulted in further reorganisation. For more on the transformation of Agora, see: T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., pp. 96–98.

¹⁵ Data are from the Press Distribution Control association of messages on the amount of investment and distribution of controlled documents ZKDP.

that time. Many collections of films, multimedia language courses, books and also music CDs began to appear in *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Similar additions would also support the sale of other newspapers.

In the first decade of changes in the publishing market, the first tabloid newspaper also debuted: *Super Express*. The magazine was a result of the reorganisation of *Express Poranny* (literally: Morning Express), which in 1992 made Greg Lindenberg its editor. Lindenberg's suggested transformations consisted of changing the title and acceptance of the concept of a tabloid magazine.

It should be noted that the contents of the paper gradually evolved. In the early decades, *Super Express* was distinguished by an apolitical character and interest in the sensational and private lives. In mid-1992, *Super Express* began publishing a colour supplement for television called "Super Tydzień" (Super Week). Then, it ran a musical supplement called "Super Rock", a children's magazine called "Super Expressik", and also a supplement for women called "Super Baba" (Super Gal) and an automotive supplement called "Motorynek".¹⁶

Its advantage came from providing readers with entertainment in the form of various games and competitions (esp. scratch cards), so in May 1995, the magazine reported a record circulation figure of two million copies. Of course, the average sales were lower and reached about 400,000 copies.¹⁷

Super Express saw its greatest popularity in 1998. At that time, it exceeded half a million copies, of which 481,000 were sold. The following years brought a drop in readership and paper sales, forcing the publisher to eliminate some branches and supplements of the daily and also to limit the sensational part of the tabloid. The editors tried to do something in order to improve sales (Mariusz Ziomecki and Tomasz Lachowicz). The declining trend, however, failed to stop, and the paper returned to its original tabloid formula.¹⁸ In the middle of the second decade, the print run of *Super Express* was about 359,000 copies, while sales stood at 216,000.

In November 2007 the Supervisory Board of Media Express, which was the current publisher of the tabloid, agreed to sell the paper to Murator, and Sławomir Jastrzębowski became the new editor. At present, the average circulation of the tabloid is about 170,000 copies.

¹⁶ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., p. 124.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 125.

¹⁸ R. Filas, *Rynek Prasy codziennej w Polsce przed „Faktem” i z „Faktem”*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2005, No. 3–4, p. 13.

The tabloid's weak position is mainly affected by its need to cut expenses, and competition in the form of *Fakt*, discussed below. In the 90s, several economic newspapers also tried to find their place in the national daily newspaper market: *Parkiet Gazeta Giełdy* (literally: Trading Floor – Stock Exchange Newspaper), published since the mid-1990s, and *Puls Biznesu* (literally: Business Pulse), published since January 1997.

The publisher of the second one is Bonnier Business Polska, and the average circulation of the publication is about 20,000 copies.

Every day, the newspaper publishes thematic sections including: *lokale i grunty* (space and land), *biznes i technologia* (business and technology), *transport i logistyka* (transport and logistics) and *kariiera i praca* (career and work). In addition, the paper has its own website for stock investors. Since 2002, the editors have published a successful series called “Business Gazelle”, a ranking of rapidly growing small- and medium-sized companies.

The publisher of *Parkiet Gazeta Giełdy* is Presspublica. Its daily editions present expert analysis about stock quotes and quote estimates, and the average circulation of the paper is 15,000 copies. It is worth mentioning that in 2009, to save money, the publisher decided to merge the editing staff of *Parkiet Gazeta Giełdy* with the economic section of its *Rzeczpospolita*.

In January 1998, the press organ of the politically influential media conglomerate, Redemptorist, Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, began publishing *Nasz Dziennik* (literally: Our Daily) daily. The publisher of the Journal is registered in Rembertów, the Spes Company. Initially, *Nasz Dziennik* had a circulation of about 300,000 copies, but the subsequent numbers are not very well known. Moreover, there is a lack of reliable information about the title's sales.

Since the very first issue the newspaper has been controversial, and the contents published in *Nasz Dziennik*, as earlier rightly observed by Tomasz Mielczarek, “do not exactly fit themselves to rational assessments”¹⁹

The first decade of changes on the daily nationwide newspaper market also included many failed initiatives. *Dziennik Krajowy* (literally: National Daily) did not last beyond number zero. For a short time there appeared an illustrated, colourful newspaper called *Glob 24* (literally: Globe 24), published from August 1991 to July 1992, and the apolitical *Obserwator Codzienny* (literally: Daily Observer), which lasted less than three months. The right-wing *Nowy Świat* (literally: New World) lasted a little bit longer in the national market, from December 1991 to July 1993. *Nowa Europa*

¹⁹ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., p. 122.

(literally: *New Europe*) ran for about 10 years, but it did not reach any spectacular successes; in 1997 it was transformed into a newspaper called *Życie* (literally: Life), founded by Tomasz Wołek, turned out to be a failed initiative as well.

To summarise the transformations that took place on the press market in the years 1989–1999, it should be noted that since the second half of 1993 there was a decline in dailies readership, and the readers more frequently reached for the magazines.²⁰ Since 1994, the leading daily national newspapers covering general information have narrowed down to three titles: the opinion forming *Gazeta Wyborcza*, strongly focused on regional issues, the tabloid *Super Express* and the serious *Rzeczpospolita*, focused on economic and legal issues.

Gazeta Wyborcza has spent nearly a whole decade at the top among readership, followed by *Super Express* and *Rzeczpospolita*. At the turn of the decade, due to the increasing dominance of electronic media, stagnation has been reported in the daily nationwide newspaper sector and a deepening of declines in printed sales.

There is no doubt that the emergence of the Internet revolutionised both the market and current ideas about the functioning and importance of the media. In the press sector, the “e-edition” came as a response to the technological revolution taking place online and the lifestyle changes of readers associated with it.

The creation of the digital press is the result of the demand of Internet users – many studies have claimed – to read press titles on the computer just like in traditional publications, and not in the form of articles available on the pages of electronic editions, which for a large number of the users were not very clear and also uncomfortable to read.

The growth of e-editions was also in the interest of the press publishers, who saw in them an opportunity to improve the still deteriorating economic situation of the publishing business. In 2005, ZKDP developed rules allowing publishers to attach sales of e-editions to data on the distribution and circulation of traditional publishing, which resulted in the rapid development of the Polish market of digital presses.

The precursor of e-editions on the Polish market was *Gazeta Prawna* (literally: Legal Newspaper), which was made available online in PDF format in 2003. This was followed by launches of digital newspapers by other publishers.

²⁰ R. Filas, *Dziesięć lat przemian mediów masowych w Polsce (1989–1999)*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1999, No. 1–2, p. 45.

The disadvantage of e-releases is that they do not fully utilise the interactive capabilities offered by the Internet, so most publishers are interested in creating multimedia websites on which the e-edition is just an addition to the news, forums, blogs, editorial journalists, audio and video, and any digital archives.

Initially, a large barrier to launching online editions that posed a concern before the mass resignation of readers from the paper edition was that the transfer to the Internet seemed to be a serious threat to press publishers for proceeds from shop sales, newspapers, and the range of its published advertising. But the growing popularity of the Internet and the websites launched by some publishers in the mid-1990s highlighted the communications potential of the Internet and other press publishers could not pass up the opportunity.²¹

The first Polish magazine to launch an electronic version was "Gazeta w Krakowie" (1994), the regional supplement for *Gazeta Wyborcza*. A year later, *Życie Warszawy*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* were available regularly on the Internet. Today, almost all of the national newspapers have their own websites and an increasing number are virtual, with faithful and committed readers, which has also caused more publishers to pursue this option.

It is worth mentioning that the first online newspaper editions were nothing like the multimedia websites that have evolved today. At first, several newspapers stopped at just publishing the printed paper on the Internet, but increasing competition has forced continuous enrichment.

Today, publishers feature blogs by journalists, provide users with chat rooms and discussion forums, and summarise videos, and also provide access to archival editions, so that the new format limits the role of the printed press, but does not eliminate it.

Second decade of changes to the nationwide daily newspaper market brought about a total of 11 titles,²² three of which – *Trybuna* (literally: Tribune), *Życie* (literally: Life), and *Prawo i Gospodarka* (literally: Law and Economy) – did not survive.

The turning point for the press segment was October 2003, when *Fakt* debuted on the national market. The success of new tabloid – sales exceeded half a million copies in December, just a month after entering the market, and reached about 100,000 more copies than sales of the current

²¹ L. Olszański, *Dziennikarstwo internetowe*, Warszawa 2006, p. 14.

²² „Gazeta Wyborcza”, „Super Express”, „Rzeczpospolita”, „Nasz Dziennik”, „Dziennik Sportowy”, „Trybuna”, „Życie”, „Prawo i Gospodarka”, „Puls Biznesu”, „Sport” and „Parkiet – Gazeta Giełdy”.

market leader, *Gazeta Wyborcza* – surprised even the publisher, who estimated that sales would be similar to *Super Express* and would be at the level of 200,000 copies.²³

The début of *Fakt* was accompanied by a considerable investment in a promotional campaign and marketing operations, estimated at around 20 million. In addition to having the lowest price on the national market, the publisher included lotteries like *Faktogra*, *Złotobranie* and *Co za numer* and used celebrities for promotion.²⁴ Thanks to the undertaken efforts, *Fakt* became a market leader in the sales rankings and readership competition.

Since 2003, the chief editor of the tabloid has continuously been Grzegorz Jankowski. *Fakt* is enriched by a variety of guides and accessories. Thursday's edition includes the television supplement "Fakt TV", while every other Wednesday edition carries a financial supplement called "Fakt Pieniądze" (Fact. Money), and on Fridays a weekly supplement called "Gwiazdy" (Stars) is published, which is all about the life of Polish and foreign stars. The newspaper also has seven regional editions reporting on major local events.

The articles that are published in *Fakt* are often based on speculation and untested sensationalism, and there is even an award for this specific misconduct and disregard for the rules of journalistic ethics; the Polish Journalist Association twice awarded the editorial staff of *Fakt* the inglorious title of the Hyena of the Year (Polish: *Hiena Roku*).

While you can find information that the tabloid explains complicated phenomena, reviews politicians, checks party promises, and fights for reader's rights on the Ringier Axel Springer Poland website, even a cursory review of the *Fakt* leads to the conclusion that the paper – as Tomasz Mielczarek rightly noticed – specialises in presenting a simplistic and trivial description of reality.²⁵

In spring 2006, Axel Springer Poland introduced a general information paper with a conservative profile – *Dziennik. Polska Europa Świat* (Literally: Daily. Poland Europe World) which did not help *Rzeczpospolita*, operating since 1982, hold the position it had on the market.²⁶

The début of *Dziennik. Polska Europa Świat* is said to be successful. The average sales of the newspaper were over about 215,000 copies and lasted until the first quarter of 2007, which put *Dziennik* above *Rzeczpospolita*, which sold an average of about 173,000 copies.²⁷

²³ R. Filas, *Rynek Prasy codziennej w Polsce przed „Faktem” i z „Faktem”*, op. cit., p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

²⁵ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol. Pluralizm. Koncentracja*, op. cit., p. 130.

²⁶ R. Filas, *Prasa ogólnokrajowa po 1989 roku*, [in:] *Słownik wiedzy o mediach*, op. cit., p. 114.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

Already at the beginning of the decade there was a new title in daily national economic publications. At that time, *Gazeta Prawna* (literally: Legal Newspaper), which had been published since 1994, was transformed into a newspaper. At first, *Gazeta Prawna* came out twice a week, but since 2002 the title has been published on a daily basis.

The newspaper published articles primarily devoted to law-making and enforcement of the law, under the headings: “Gazeta podatkowa” (Tax Newspaper), “Gazeta gospodarka” (Economy Newspaper), and “Rachunkowość” (Accounting), printed as articles in economics and business, so that *Gazeta Prawna* had the highest sales amongst economic publications, reaching 130,000 copies. Sales ranged from 70–80,000 copies, of which about 60 per cent was distributed by subscription. In 2006, the publisher modernised the title by separating the journal into three sections: “Biznes” (Business), “Podatki” (Taxes), and “Praca i Prawo Gospodarcze” (Work and Business Law), which were printed on distinctive yellow pages.

Gazeta Prawna ran until September 2009. Then it was merged with *Dziennik. Polska Europa Świat*, resulting in *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna* (literally: Daily Legal Newspaper) appearing five times a week on the national market.

By April 2010, *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna* consisted of three parts: “Dziennik” (Daily), printed on white paper and containing general information, “Gazeta Prawna” (Legal Newspaper), with information in law and taxation printed on yellow pages, and the “Forsal” supplement, printed on salmon-coloured paper and containing economic news.

Later, “Forsal” was eliminated and incorporated into the main section.

In the second decade, just as in the first decade of changes, not all initiatives were successful. After nearly four months Agora ceased publishing *Nowy Dzień* (literally: New Day), which had balanced between tabloid and opinion paper.

The first issue of *Nowy Dzień* was published 14 November 2005 with a circulation of 800,000 copies.

Publisher assumed that the sale of the paper would be closer to 250,000 copies, but early results showed that this goal would not be that easy. The average sales of the *Nowy Dzień* in the first two weeks were only 212,000 copies, and in December this even fell to 177,000 copies.

The paper was to attract readers with its low price and “news agent” formula, unprecedented on the Polish market.²⁸ *Nowy Dzień* was to be

²⁸ R. Filas, *Rynek Prasy codziennej w Polsce przed „Faktem” i z „Faktem”*, op. cit., p. 15.

a popular newspaper addressed to the masses, but for more ambitious and demanding customers than readers of *Fakt* and *Super Express*.

The newspaper did not meet the success expected by the publisher, so the management of Agora decided to stop its publication in February 2006.

The beginning of the second decade brought in a new segment in nationwide dailies. The largest, though short-lived, development of free general information newspapers (being that new segment) occurred in 2000–2002. At that time there appeared two competing free local newspapers on the market called *Metropol* and *Metro*.

In 2003, after 4Media collapsed, the *Metro* newspaper also disappeared from the market. *Metropol* had been focused on strengthening its position in the Warsaw market, but it seemed that free daily newspapers were to be only short-lived episodes.

The situation changed two years later when the free dailies became a crucial part of the press market, and *Metropol* and *Metro* were joined by *Echo Miasta* (literally: City Echo) published by Grupa Wydawnicza Polskapresse.

In early 2007, Metro International unexpectedly withdrew *Metropol* from the market, which meant that only two free daily national newspapers remained: *Metro*, which was published by Agora in 19 major Polish cities, and *Echo City*, published since September 2005.

In both titles you can find current cultural, business and sports information. Among the discussed topics there are also issues related to education, learning and entertainment.

At present, *Gazeta Wyborcza* maintains quite a high position in the group of daily national newspapers, whose readership has indeed risen compared to 2000; however, it has a serious competitor in the form of *Fakt*, which leads the readership rankings.

According to recent studies of readership (April – September 2011), the most frequently read paper, with a score of 13.01% is *Gazeta Wyborcza*; in second place was the tabloid *Fakt*, read by 12.45% of respondents. In third place is *Metro*, with a score of 5.71%, passing *Super Express* with a score of 5.55%. These are followed by *Rzeczpospolita* (3.92%), *Przegląd Sportowy* (3.55%), *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna* (2.24%), *Echo Miasta* (2.02%), *Gazeta Podatkowa* (0.70%), *Sport* (0.50%), *Puls Biznesu* (0.35%) and *Parkiet Gazeta Gieldy* (0.22%).²⁹

Time for a summary.

There is no doubt that over the past two decades, the daily nationwide newspaper market sector has changed. In the first decade most titles closed.

²⁹ Polish Readership Survey data for the period between April–September 2011.

Some of the titles did enter on a path of transformation, and although they managed to stay on the market for another decade, only *Rzeczpospolita* plays a significant role of the titles in this group today. In the first decade of transformations, there were many new, different publishing initiatives.

Some of them, like *Gazeta Wyborcza* or *Super Express*, function successfully in the national market sphere, while others were not been able to stay afloat.

The press reading habits have also changed. The readers move away from newspapers in favour of more frequent contacts with magazines.

In addition, a phenomenon that significantly affected the daily nationwide newspaper market sector was the elimination of some branches and the increased usage of online media spaces.

A similar trend could be observed at the turn of the century. The second decade consisted of many transformations, liquidations or combinations of declining publications. On the other hand, new titles also appeared, among which *Fakt* is the main leader. It is a direct competitor for *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

Publishers are also concerned about the decline of the printed press. The main cause is the increasing dominance of visual media and the dissemination of online press publishers.

However, we need to believe that newspapers will have a circle of loyal readers who will not resign from the paper edition for a long time yet.

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Jarosław Grzybaczak

Magazines and their publishers

During the time of the PRL (The People's Republic of Poland), in which the media was supposed to focus on the interests of political administrators, the preferences of readers were far less important. The model of readership was based on the readership of newspapers, and the limited range of magazines was definitely not suited to the expectations of their customers. Titles that were popular with readers achieved huge sales levels (if they had a publishing permit and appropriate allocation of paper), while others languished, relying on party and state grants.

At the end of the existence of the PRL, in the middle of 1989, when the media system began to be liberated, some popular magazines were printed in editions unimaginable today; for example: *Polityka* (general-interest weekly) – almost 430,000 copies, *Panorama* (popular magazine) – over 450,000, *Przekrój* (cultural magazine) – approx. 500,000, *Pani Domu* (literally: Housewife) – nearly 600,000, *Kobieta i Życie* (literally: Woman and Life) – almost 760,000, *Jestem* (literally: I am, magazine for younger women) – over one million copies, and *Przyjaciółka* (literally: Best Friend, for women) – almost two million (sic!).¹ Soon the popularity of these (and other) magazines was revised by actual market mechanisms.

Magazine market (under construction) gets rid of the party tycoons

The changes in the post-communist system of the press in Poland were carried out in accordance with the principle accepted during the Round

¹ S. Dziki, *Uwarunkowania instytucjonalno-organizacyjne*, [in:] *Komunikowanie masowe w Polsce: lata osiemdziesiąte*, ed. W. Pisarek, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 1–2, pp. 60–73.

Table – that changes in the Polish political system must be accompanied by a transformation in the press to reflect the pluralism of the views of society. So the new titles initially appearing in 1989 were mainly press magazines edited by political parties, but representing other political trends (than the former communist party newspapers).

Already in mid-1989 the Polish press system included a Solidarity newspaper, the beginnings of *Gazeta Wyborcza* and then the reactivated (after the suspension of martial law) *Tygodnik Solidarność* (literally: *Solidarity Weekly*).

There was also the official circulation of publications from other underground groups, such as KPN (the weekly *Opinie*), UPR (monthly *Opcja*) and Stronnictwo Narodowe (the weekly *Ojczyzna* [*Homeland*]). The holdings of the opposition groups, however, were modest compared with those of the old centres of power and only the implementation of the law on the liquidation of the RSW cooperative (which the victorious camp in Solidarity pushed through Parliament in March 1990) gave the possibility of the ultimate destruction of the old system.

Appointed by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Commission on the Elimination of RSW first conducted personnel changes in the editorial publications belonging to the former RSW (mainly in positions of editors of primates and their alternates), and then moved towards the de-monopolisation of RSW, giving the titles belonging to cooperatives in journalism or, by tenders, to other bidders, including political parties (not always according to clear criteria and not always without opposition by teams of journalists).²

Political parties' access to newspapers of the liquidated RSW was somewhat limited by a financial barrier. So few went directly into the possession of political parties, but many of them had co-owners coming from Solidarity or other anti-communist groups.

These events resulted significant quantitative and qualitative changes in the Polish press already in the early 1990s. First of all, its countenance changed in outlook. Not only new newspapers, but also those used previously by the old system, became preachers of the national patriotic and Christian exponents of the idea of changing loyalties and an anti-Sovi-

² E. Ciborska, *Transformacja pism b. PZPR (1989–1992)*, pp. 57–68; D. Grzelewska, *Transformacja pism popołudniowych (1989–1992)*, pp. 83–91; D. Gdańska, *Transformacja dzienników postczytnikowskich (1989–1992)*, pp. 121–134; B. Dubicz, *Transformacja prasy młodzieżowej (1989–1992)*, pp. 92–98, [in:] *Transformacja prasy polskiej (1989–1992). Materiały Pomocnicze do Najnowszej Historii Dziennikarstwa*, ed. A. Słomkowska, Vol. 22, Warszawa 1992.

et and pro-European orientation. While the old system quickly became a thing of the past, in the early 90s it seemed that the relationship between the government and media had only slightly changed in Poland, which was not just the case of (explicit) government electronic media, but newspapers and magazines seemed to accept the role of tools of political persuasion. This probably resulted from the conviction of journalists for “equity issues”, the need to support the reforms introduced by the first rule of Solidarity, but also from the political-administrative and ownership relationships. With time, the scale of these relationships began to fall – through the market, which can progress through the abolition of censorship and press law amendment, the facility for free, not licensed publishing.

The development of the press market in Poland, especially for modern magazines, published at a decent level of printing, was difficult because of the serious economic problems associated with the increase of paper price (since 1988) and other production costs of the press. The out-dated printing base and inefficient operating system of distribution were serious problems for publishers.³ To meet the demands of the market, magazines had to allocate a significant portion of funds for investment, change their layouts, become more colourful and be printed on better paper, often abroad.

Inevitably in this situation, the price increases of newspapers and magazines (in terms of impact on society, which was feeling the costs of implementing radical economic “Shock Therapy” reforms) caused the collapse of the readership and declines in sales of many titles. The breakdown of readership of the press in Poland happened, paradoxically, in the rich attractive events (not only at home but also abroad). Typical behaviour of the reading: changes and selection of a set of readings, leading to its limits, which in turn caused a crisis for many newspapers.

Despite these problems in the first period of the transformation of the Polish press (from May 1989 to mid-1991), in addition to the organisational and ownership transformation of the old titles (in connection with the liquidation of RSW), the press market was changed by a number of publishing initiatives, which resulted in an almost spontaneous development of local magazines.

Listing the quantitative characteristics of the magazines available during that period is quite difficult, primarily because of the large number of newspapers that emerged and rapidly declined. Of the approximately 2,000 newspapers available in 1991 (not including scientific and profes-

³ In the second half of the 80s the mail subscription system collapsed in Poland, as well as a lot of retail newspapers. J. Grzybczak, *Kolportaż prasy*, [in:] *Komunikowanie masowe w Polsce: lata osiemdziesiąte*, ed. W. Pisarek, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 1–2, pp. 160–171.

sional journals), 1,300 had emerged in 1989–1991. The record, in terms of new publishing initiatives, was established in 1990 at 636 new titles.⁴ About two-fifths of the magazines that were published in those years had national coverage, but most of the titles that were created during that period were local. Later (from 1991) a downward trend marked this group of titles (represented approximately 40 per cent of the emerging magazines).⁵

These journals were often formed at the initiative of different backgrounds aspiring to play a role on one of the levels of the socio-political scene of the country: the Citizens' Committees, trade unions and political parties, often mainly for election campaigns. Their life was short, because when these titles ceased to be needed, they lost money, and the issuing enthusiasts (often amateurs in the journalistic profession) could not cope with market forces.

From the second half of the 90s the position of political magazines (party, Solidarity, "civic") and all major press reviews and socio-cultural publications declined in Poland. Opinion magazines throughout the period were characterised by three high-volume titles that can be regarded as truly popular: two older general interest magazines, *Polityka* and *Wprost*, and the scandalous, opposition, anti-clerical (and generally tabloid) *Nie* (literally: No).⁶ The weekly *Spotkania* (modelled on the French *l'Express*) enjoyed some (but smaller) popularity.

Both new and older general interest magazines, popular cultural magazines (*Przekrój*) and even high-volume older magazines for women (*Przyjaciółka*, *Kobieta i Życie*) had to give way to a new kind of press (entertainment, sensational or advice). The emerging market of actual readers (in place of the former market producers – political administrators) caused large changes in the hierarchy of the popularity of newspapers and magazines.

Initially (after 1989) the market was dominated by Polish magazine publishers such as Prószyński i S-ka (with very popular *Poradnik Domowy*), Wydawnictwo Prasowe Twój Styl and Phoenix Intermedia, although the latter introduced to the market mainly licensed products such as *Popcorn* and *Dziewczyna* (*Girl*). The first Western release that boldly entered the Polish market was Burda (with the magazine *Burda*). In 1992–1993, Hans Bauer entered our market (with *Bravo* and *Tina*). Bauer was followed by G+J (with *Claudia*).⁷

⁴ S. Dzik, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁵ R. Filas, *Zmiany w czytelnictwie prasy w Polsce na tle przemian oferty prasowej (1989–1992)*, [in:] *Transformacja prasy polskiej...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–41.

⁶ Founded by a former Communist government spokesman, Jerzy Urban, in 1990.

⁷ Z. Bajka, *Kapitał zagraniczny w polskich mediach*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1994, No. 1–2, pp. 5–22.

The balance of power in favour of Western publications changed decisively in the mid-1990s, when new Western entries gained the sympathies of Polish readers, particularly German publishing houses such as: Bauer, Axel Springer and Grüner + Jahr. Most of the initiatives from these publishers have had success. In the mid-1990s, other Western publishers also become active in the Polish magazine market, such as the Swiss group Marquard Media, Edipresse (owned by the Helvetica publishing house, releasing, amongst others, *Przyjaciółka*) and the French Hachette-Filipacchi.

“Invasion” of Western publishers and the new shape of the magazine market

The magazine market has developed by mainly taking into account the preferences of women. First (in the early 90s), the market gained new monthly magazines targeted to women (such as *Poradnik Domowy* and *Twój Styl*, formed in 1990, and *Claudia* three years later). The female press was already a powerful sector of the press market, and was strengthened with the appearance of *Świat Kobiety* and *Bravo Girl* in 1993 (the next after *Tina* of women's titles published by Bauer Publishing). For media experts a symbol of the changes in the market was the stripped leadership of *Przyjaciółka* (at the end of 1993) – for decades the most popular magazine in Poland – by *Tina*, representing a new type of cheap, illustrated women's press, based on German designs. Plenty of the concerns and criticisms especially elicited the fact that in addition to magazines published by Western publishers but edited entirely in Poland, such as *Claudia* (Grüner + Jahr), titles appeared on the Polish market that (at least in part) were formed abroad (like *Tina*, *Bravo*, *Dziewczyna*, *Świat Kobiety*, *Popcorn*, *Playboy* and *Twój Weekend*).

From August 1994 to autumn 1995, Western (German) publishers successfully introduced a large group of “colour-picture” titles onto the Polish market, among them: *Życie na Gorąco*, *Tele Świat*, *Chwila dla Ciebie* (Bauer); *Pani Domu*, *Auto Świat*, *Na Żywo* (Axel Springer), *Naj* and *Halo* (Grüner + Jahr). This resulted in (like at the beginning of the decade) revolutionary changes in the magazine market, manifested in, among others, changes in the hierarchy of reading preferences. All of the new magazines (according to research by OBP UJ in December 1995) were among the most popular titles, including *Pani Domu* at first place with 11.1% coverage, *Naj* in fourth place at 8.5% and *Życie na Gorąco* in sixth place with 7.8%.⁸

⁸ Data from OBP (Press Research Centre), Jagiellonian University, in December 1995, a nationwide sample, N = 4978.

Considerable consternation among media experts was given to the popularity of the cheap “rainbow” press – entertainment and gossip weeklies (German: *Życie na Gorąco*, *Na żywo*, *Chwila dla Ciebie Halo*, and “indigenous”, but soon bought by Bauer: *Twoje Imperium*). In early 1996, almost every seventh inhabitant of Poland read magazines of this type, mostly women – one in five women and one man out of 17.⁹

The strengthening of the new illustrated magazine group occurred with the weakening of indigenous women’s and entertainment-gossip magazines, but did not adversely affect the situation of the general interest weeklies. Some even strengthened their position, thanks to the political events of 1995, especially the two most popular ones (of the three): *Wprost*, tireless in tracking down political and business scandals (with a readership of 7.8%) and newly face-lifted, more attractive (thanks to a new format, new layout and the introduction of colour, but also with a new way of providing content) *Polityka* (6.4%).

The enrichment of the magazine market was not only expressed by an increase in its numbers, but most of all – which was more visible at the kiosks – the emergence of entirely new types of titles, previously unknown in Poland, or marginally occurring in our market. After the fall of the “puritan” lifestyle of the PRL, erotic magazines appeared very quickly (like *Cats*), as well as scandalous, entertainment and gossip (*Życie na Gorąco*, *Halo! Na Żywo*) or esoteric (*Wróżka*) titles, magazines gossiping about celebrities (*Viva!*), and also a variety of true stories-type titles, with stories of “ordinary people” from real life (*Z życia wzięte*, *Cienie i Blaski* and *Sukcesy i Porażki*). Various types of specialised magazines also developed at that time: computer, culinary, interior design, gardening and a fairly large segment of parenting titles. The most popular, however, were advice magazines for women (led by *Poradnik Domowy*) and magazines with similar content to a large extent, but more “exclusive”; that is, women’s lifestyle magazines (*Twój Styl*).

The development of television (in the mid-1990s) caused a rash of popular TV guide magazines (*To & Owo* and *Tele Tydzień*). There were also (also new in our market) lifestyle magazines for men (*Playboy*, *Gentleman*, and *CKM*).

Magazines for women on the Polish market were known in times of communism, but this segment of the magazine market fundamentally changed at least since the mid-1990s. In order to survive in the market, titles popular in the previous era (like *Przyjaciółka*) also had to change. This meant not only a departure from poor paper and coarse pseudo-colour

⁹ Studies of the Jagiellonian University OBP of December 2005.

artwork, but a major revision of the formula, an evolution towards greater saturation of content, with entertainment, light stories, advice, greater number of short texts and illustrations. The promotion of consumer style (oriented material success) and the Western lifestyle was clearly visible in the women's press, especially that directed at younger readers. The old titles that did not adapt gradually disappeared from the market.

After the changes in the socio-political system, there were initially only two old titles targeted to the younger female audience on the market: *Filipinka* and *Jestem*. Younger readers, however, preferred to buy copies of German magazines, such as *Popcorn*, *Dziewczyna (Girl)*, *Bravo* and *Bravo Girl*.

Until the mid-1990s, the former model of press readership in Poland, based on reading dailies and general interests magazines, gave way to reading magazines, enabling relaxation, entertainment, and devoting a portion to gossip. The evolution of reading preferences followed to a large extent probably due to changes in the media market, not only in newspapers and magazines, but also under the influence of radio and especially television – constructing a recreational and pictorial model of media reception. Undoubtedly changes in the awareness of Polish society also had an influence on it – the re-evaluation of attitudes, due to the changing conditions of life, work and the market, getting richer and increasingly encouragement of spending on much more interesting commodities than social issues or the political scene torn by conflicts.

Magazines during the expansion of television and Internet

At the end of the last decade of the twentieth century, the reception of the printing press began to be clearly threatened by the development of electronic media. In the mid-1990s, the radio and television market was finally deregulated. The Internet began to take on a position as an important means of mass communication. In the second half of the 90s, the first Internet portals were created in Poland: *Wirtualna Polska*, *Onet* and *Interia*. Then, newspaper publishers realised the need for a web presence. The publishers of dailies were the first. In 1995, the electronic version of *Super Express* appeared online, and later *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Soon, there were also electronic versions of magazines (like *Twój Styl*). Under the conditions of still limited access to the Internet, editors did not think that online services could threaten traditional paper editions. At the beginning of the twenty-first century (since 2001), a new telecommunications law came into force, which opened the telecommunications market

for the media and the media for the telecoms market, with opportunities for both television (for now the telecommunications companies could provide cable or satellite TV) and Internet development (including distribution by cable operators).

The beginning of the twenty-first century brought Poland two years of economic crisis, which (as always) had a negative effect on the national media, especially print media. In 2001 the government introduced a 7 per cent VAT for publishing activities, which resulted in price increases of the press and was certainly an additional reason for a decline in the readership of newspapers and magazines. The situation further deteriorated after a decline in advertising revenue.

Looking at the statistical statement of the number of magazines published in Poland, one might get the impression that the early twenty-first century periodicals segment in Poland was in bloom. While 5,792 magazines appeared in our country in 2001, in 2003 there were already 6,261 titles, but in the same period, the total sales of magazines decreased – from 74.6 million copies in 2001 to 70.1 million copies in 2003 (and 69.5 million copies in 2004).¹⁰ So readers had a richer press offer but bought fewer copies of magazines than two years earlier.

The crisis especially hit titles aimed at the poorer and less demanding groups of readers – both entertainment and gossip titles (yellow journalism) and true stories-type publications registered large declines in sales, but also the group of lifestyle magazines (*Maxim*, *Twój Styl*, *Madame Figaro*) and celebrity magazines (*Blask*) reported instances of market failure.

Afterwards, publications that could be described as crisis “pocket” lifestyle magazines for women appeared, featuring a smaller size and lower price (like *Glamour*), cheap (PLN 1) women’s magazines (such as *Dobre Rady* and *Bella*) and even cheaper weekly TV guides (like Bauer’s *Telemax*). These last quite easily found a place in the market, due to the development and popularity of multi-channel TV offerings (cable and satellite).

Smaller and weaker publishers disappeared from the market, including even those such as WPTS, once the example of success of Polish capital. In 2002, titles from this publisher – *Twój Styl* and *Filipinka* – were taken over by Bauer Polska.

Generally one can state that the publishing market became more concentrated.

¹⁰ R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian polskich mediów (1989–2009) w ujęciu periodycznym*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2010, No. 3–4, pp. 39 and 45.

In the early twenty-first century, the Polish press market was also bitten by the “Italian disease” – influencing the decisions of magazine buyers not with the semantic content of the publications, but with the gifts accompanying them. It started with samples of cosmetics in women’s lifestyle magazines, and within a few years it covered almost all segments of the press market, including general interest magazines and daily newspapers. However, while women’s press readers could (and still can) choose cosmetics, watches and beach bags, and children, various masks of ghosts and other funny (sometimes) toys, newspaper and general interest magazine readers usually were offered CDs or DVDs (with music or video) or collections of books (at a lower price). Such gifts, especially the more attractive ones, raised the sale of individual issues of magazines, but did not cause an increase in reader loyalty to these titles; on the contrary, it deepened the unpredictability of the behaviour of readers, who became more and more precarious in the choice of buying a subscription.

Since 2004, when Poland began a period of economic prosperity, some recovery in the magazine market also followed. The number of published titles (in 2005) exceeded 6,500. The total sales of periodicals increased from 69.5 million copies in 2004 to 78.8 million in 2007 (however, this was an increase in the expenditure of mainly monthly magazines and journals with even rarer frequency of appearance).¹¹ After financial conditions improved (at least in part) for Poles, the press market reacted with development of a new category of magazines – shopping-magazines, such as *Avanti* (run by Agora) for women (March 2004) and *Logo* for men (in April 2005, initially as a quarterly).

Generally, however, media experts stated that the magazine market was shrinking (in terms of decline in readership interest, the number of copies purchased), indicating that only magazines for parents exhibited a higher rate of development. Several newspapers for children also developed, but mostly comics and magazines thematically related to television cartoons.

Still, the concentration of publishing was in progress, especially in the largest and most profitable segments of the Polish press market, which were dominated by a few publishers of foreign capital. According to the ZKDP (The Press Circulation Audit Union), in 2005 the clear leader in this market was Bauer, for which the total (over the entire year) exemplar sales accounted for over half (!) – 53.21% – of total sales of all magazines (that were

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 45.

controlled by ZKDP).¹² In second place was Axel Springer Polska (7.74 per cent), with the “Swiss” Edipresse Poland in third (5.35 per cent), followed by another German publisher, Gruner + Jahr Polska (4.89%), belonging to the Bertelsman group, and then the leader in women’s true stories-type magazines (owned by Bauer Media Group), Phoenix Press (2.75%). Domestic publishers reported significantly lower shares of sales: Wydawnictwo Westa Druk had 2.21%, Oficyna Wydawnicza Press had 1.96%, Agora SA had 1.86%, Polityka Spółdzielnia Pracy had 1.63%, AWR Wprost had 1.47% and Wydawnictwo Kurii Metropolitarnej Gość Niedzielny had 1.2%.¹³

Some Polish publishing companies were focused on narrow segments of the market, such as Murator (which had a fairly stable market position thanks of magazines devoted to construction issues – 0.47% in magazine sales in 2005) or Infor PL S.A. (specialising in legal and business issues).¹⁴ A similar strategy was also adopted some foreign publishers, such as Egmont Poland (belonging to the Nordic Media Group, Poland’s largest publisher of books and magazines for children and youth) and Wolters Kluwer Poland, a Dutch company based in Poland with the largest publishers (after Infor) of legal and business magazines.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Polish media market was already decidedly dominated by electronic media. In 2005, viewers watched TV an average of 241 minutes daily.¹⁵ From 2003 to 2007, the number of subscribers to digital platforms tripled (from 950,000 in 2003 to 3.4 million in 2007),¹⁶ cable television increased its selection, and all the major cable networks came out with triple play services for customers (TV, Internet, telephone),¹⁷ contributing to the development of broadband Internet access. In 2003 – 2007 the percentage of Poles who had access to the Internet nearly doubled (from 21.7% to 41.5%),¹⁸ and Internet users

¹² *Ranking wydawców. Największe koncerny prasowe w Polsce*, „Press. Dodatek Specjalny”, September 2006, p. 6.

¹³ It should be noted, however, that Agora is also a publisher of newspapers, especially „Gazeta Wyborcza”, which in terms of the combined effort of all the newspapers in 2005 placed third (after the Bauer Publishing Group and Polskapresse, a regional newspaper publisher) and first place in terms of advertising revenue and total revenue. See: *Ranking of publishers...*, pp. 5 and 7.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

¹⁵ Data TNS/OBOP, [in:] R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian...*, p. 46.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

¹⁷ The development of electronic media was accelerated by the entry (from 1 May 2004) of an EU law abolishing limits on foreign ownership on all forms (including the media) of economic entities registered in the Union and the amendment of the Telecommunications Act (in force since 3 September 2004).

¹⁸ R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian...*, p. 43.

quickly embraced the new features and selection of this medium, such as instant messaging, blogs and social networking sites.

At that time (in the second half of 2007), several new websites of leading Polish weekly general interest magazines were created: *Polityka*, *Wprost* and *Newsweek*, acting on the basis of “traditional” editorial editions and, according to some commentators, cannibalising the printed editions of these titles.

The global economic crisis, which began with the collapse of the banking system in the US in September 2008, and the accompanying economic slowdown in Poland, has resulted in our country cutting advertising budgets (like in the early first decade of the twenty-first century) by an estimated total of about 10% in 2009 (compared to the previous year). In the case of periodicals, the decrease in advertising revenues was estimated at up to 15.6%, but they did not decrease for the Internet, and increased advertising revenues were reported.¹⁹

General statistical data describing the press market in 2008 (reported by GUS, the Central Statistical Office) were optimistic. The number of newspapers and magazines published in Poland exceeded seven thousand and total sales were higher than ever before and amounted to 81.6 million copies. A year later, GUS recorded an even larger increase in the average sales of magazines, to more than 84 million copies. Annual global printing of magazines, however, had fallen from 1,616.3 million copies (in 2008) to 1,504.7 million copies (in 2009).²⁰

Also, a more accurate analysis of the data and events that characterised the market gave a completely different picture; for example, the total weekly expenditure in 2008 (compared to the previous year) fell by two million copies,²¹ so the phenomenon of weakening of contact with the press was expanding.

As usual during a crisis, it was the case that after 2008 a concentration of the press in the hands of the strongest publishers took place. Bauer (the largest publisher in Poland) took over the Phoenix Press publishing house, specialising in magazines, true story-type publications and magazines for children. In June 2009, Axel Springer Poland took over 49 per cent of Infor's shares, and from March 2010 (after the merger with the Swiss publishing house Ringier AG) became Ringier Axel Springer Polska.²²

¹⁹ Starlink's data on the estimated net of rebates, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 12 February 2010, p. 32.

²⁰ *Mały rocznik statystyczny Polski 2010*, Warszawa 2010, p. 270.

²¹ R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian...*, p. 49.

²² Earlier, in 2006, the publishing houses Burda Polska and Hachette Filipacchi Polska joined.

Since 2009, a number of magazines began to decrease their frequency of publication. Weekly magazines began to reduce their frequency to every two weeks, fortnightlies to monthlies. This tendency to improve the economic situation of the magazines by lowering the frequency of printing remains at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century.

The press market in Poland is considered to be generally saturated (especially in the segment of weeklies and fortnightlies), therefore, mainly publications with a lower frequency of printing are being introduced to the market – monthlies or bimonthlies filling market niches (specialty magazines, hobby magazines), satisfying the interests of smaller, well-defined groups of readers.

A group of publications has developed representing diverse industries, as well as a new group of titles – the so-called community magazines, cheap or advice magazines drawn largely on the basis of materials sent in by readers (who do even receive payments), such as *Przyślij Przepis* (Submit a Recipe) by the Burda publisher, which sold an average of over a one million copies in 2009.²³

In the beginning of 2011, the National Readership Survey (PBC) quite eloquently represented the situation of the Polish market and the popularity of magazines (ranges of reception in the seasonal cycle) and different newspapers (highlighted by the frequency of appearance on the market).

Among the 119 most popular magazines that had more than one per cent of the readership were 73 monthlies, 26 weeklies (one of which, *Gala*, became a fortnightly in April 2011), 15 fortnightlies (one of which, *Bravo Girl*, became a monthly magazine in March 2011), and another five bimonthlies. Among the weeklies, readers usually subscribed to *Tele Tydzień* (its readership was up to 34.07% of all respondents), entertainment and gossip titles *Życie na Gorąco* (19.08%) and *Chwila dla Ciebie* (11.6%) and two general-interest magazines, *Angora* (11,6%) and *Newsweek Polska* (8,77%). Among the fortnightlies the most popular were women's advice magazines: *Przyjaciółka* (17.33%), *Pani Domu* (15.88%) and *Tina* (15.47%), celebrity magazine *Viva!* (10.69%) and *true-story* magazine *Z życia wzięte* (literally: Taken from Life, 9.46%).

The top ten most widely read monthly magazines were dominated by advice magazines, especially those targeted at women. For lifestyle, women's *Twój Styl* (literally: Your Style, with 12.79% coverage) and *Claudia* (11.16%) – also directed at women, but usually belonging to the lower end

²³ This new segment of magazines includes titles such as *Mamy radzą mamom* (*Mothers Advise Mothers* – Edipresse), *Przepis na ogród* (*Recipe for a Garden* – Burda) and *Przepisy Czytelników* (*Recipes of Readers* – Phoenix Press). See: *Czytelnicy czytelnikom*, „Press”, December 2010, pp. 68–69.

of advice magazines –, followed by the home improvement and interior design magazine *Cztery Kąty* (literally: Four Corners, 9.17%), and popular science *Fokus* (8.9%), but then again, women's advice publications: *Poradnik Domowy* (literally: Home Guide, 8.82%) and *Kobieta i Życie* (literally: Woman and Life 7.9%), followed by home improvement and interior design *Murator* (7.87%) and women's advice again: *Świat Kobiety* (literally: Woman's World 7.07%), *Olivia* (7%) and *Dobre Rady* (literally: Good Advice 6.77%).²⁴ One can probably say that the Polish magazine market is still dominated by the types of titles that managed to survive to the mid-1990s as well as those issued by large, foreign publishing houses.

The number of web surfers aged over 15 in Poland was estimated at over 15 million already late in 2009, and at 17 million, if children of 7 and over were accounted for.²⁵ In total, more than half of Poles use the Internet, including mobile Internet, accessed from laptops, netbooks, smartphones, and since the end of 2010, tablets. The entry of the press on the online and smartphone markets was followed by the tablet era. But while newspapers such as *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Super Express* and *Poland* have committed to smartphone app editions (mostly for the iPhone) providing truncated, free versions of the paper editions, the iPad (offered by Apple) or Galaxy Tab (Samsung) seem to be ideal for the presentation of periodicals offering not only full issues, but those richer than their paper versions (such as the possibility of including multimedia presentations, such as film or audio snippets, “developing” ads, etc.). Poland's first publisher to make use of the iPad was Agora, which launched a tablet version of *Wysokie Obcasy Extra* already in September 2010. The tablet edition of *Newsweek Poland* appeared in October 2010, followed by its largest competitor, *Policy*, in January 2011. At the end of March 2011, the weekly *Cross* and monthly *Success* launched a common multimedia platform as an application available for the iPad. From April 2011, Axel Springer Ringer has offered a tablet version of a second title (after *Newsweek*), the monthly magazine *Forbes*. Publishers seem to see mobile Internet devices as the future for the press, but for now they see a possibility of extending their readership – and advertisers.

²⁴ In: *Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa*, „Press”, April 2011, p. 99.

²⁵ According to research by PBI Gemius (Megapanel NetTrack).

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Kinga Zdrojewska

The radio market in Poland: from the first commercial stations to formatted radio networks

The year 1989 is a symbolic breakthrough moment in Polish socio-political reality. The end of an old age resulted in systemic changes that helped remove the media from state control and contributed to its independence. Political events¹ that took place after 1989 created the possibility of commercial activities serving an area of the media. This was done through the liquidation of party supervision and censorship. Journalists forced to stay away from the profession, even since the martial law, were begun to be brought back to work. The financial condition of Polish Radio (a state-owned company), the only medium employing journalists, was catastrophic in the early 1990s.² Economic liberalisation opened up opportunities arising from the private sector.

The first commercial broadcasters

The first commercial radio stations on the Polish market appeared in 1990. “When the first sounds of Radio Małopolska Fun rang out from the Kościuszko Mound in Kraków, no one could have thought that 15 January 1990 would be a historic date for commercial radio in Poland. It signalled

¹ J. Adamowski, *Przeobrażenia rynku medialnego w Polsce przelomu tysiąclecia* [in:] *Współczesne media. Status. Aksjologia. Funkcjonowanie*, ed. I. Hofman, D. Kępa-Figura, Vol. 1, Lublin 2009, p. 13.

² P. Zegarłowicz, *Polskie Radio SA 1989–1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, ed. R. Gluza, Poznań 1999, p. 133.

the breakdown of the state monopoly on radio”.³ In the absence of relevant laws, and with the favourable situation following the wave of social and political developments in Poland including the lifting of censorship, first commercial broadcasters applied to the minister for authorisation to broadcast, and began their activity. This was the case for Radio Małopolska Fun and Radio Alex from Zakopane, which was the second commercial station in Poland (airing from Zakopane since March 1990), Radio Kormoran from Giżycko (airing from April 1990), as well as Radio Zet from 28 September 1990, which is currently one of the largest national commercial broadcasters.

On 29 December 1992 the Polish Parliament adopted a law on broadcasting and television. It entered into force three months later. It granted Polish Radio public service broadcaster status, with a the structure covering one national and 17 regional public limited liability companies, continuing to receive subscriptions and advertising.⁴ Nationwide, four Polish Radio programmes were launched and one programme for rest of the world. Under the law there was no longer a monopoly in the media. The National Council on Broadcasting and Television (KRRiT) became the main supervisory body for electronic media.

Commercial religious broadcasters

On the power of the new law, which required broadcasters to obtain concessions on broadcasting, in 1993 KRRiT announced the first licensing process, the result of which two stations that had already been on air received broadcasting licenses: RMF FM (26 May 1994)⁵ and Radio Zet (9 June 1994).⁶ Other commercial stations joined soon thereafter, but first came a religious broadcaster – on 23 June 1994 the Assembly of Redemptorist Fathers received a license and launched the Catholic Radio Maryja. In the first licensing process, a total of 130 stations received authorisation to broadcast. A successive 30 broadcasters joined in 1995.

During the first licensing process it was not possible to gain the status of a public broadcaster, which meant a reduced licence charge but the broadcaster could not have advertising or other sponsored programmes.

³ A. Kowalewska-Onaszkiwicz, *Radio komercyjne 1990–1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku...*, p. 150.

⁴ *Encyklopedia Polska*, ed. B. Kaczorowski, Vol. 9, Warszawa 2008, p. 279.

⁵ KRRiT, Resolution 6/94.

⁶ KRRiT, Resolution 8/94.

Entities other than public ones gained an opportunity to benefit from concessions issued free of charge with the amendment to the Act of Law on Radio and Television Broadcasting. This possibility has benefited Radio Maryja, which has been present on the Polish airwaves from the first licensing process (network transmitters of low power). The slogan of Radio Maryja is “the Catholic voice in your home”, which it still maintains today.

Radio Maryja had already received the first station licences in Toruń and Bydgoszcz in June 1991, but its official inception date can be deemed 8 December 1991, when Redemptorists (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer) invited listeners to the first programme of this station using handwritten inscribed posters.⁷ The concession was issued to the Redemptorist Assembly. The director of the station has been one person from the beginning, Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, who is listed as the single supervisory authority, the single managing authority and single controlling body of the station.

Radio Maryja is not the only Catholic radio in Poland, but because of its popularity among various groups in the society (not only its listeners), its sense of mission, and the controversies surrounding its director, this Toruń-based station is the most frequently quoted example of a catholic radio in Poland, despite (if not rather due to) the fact that it is reluctant to any research, including tests.⁸ Catholic broadcasters differ in scope, means of obtaining funding for activities and the nature of their broadcasts (social, commercial). Some are affiliated with a network (e.g. Vox), others are independent – for example, several churches of other denominations also have their own stations, including (2011):

- Radio Mazury, under the operating permit issued to the Christian Mutual Assistance Foundation, with programmes for Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox;
- Radio Ortodoxia (Białystok), for listeners following Orthodox religions;
- Radio CCC (Silesia) with a programme directed at members of the Evangelical Church.

Independent Catholic concessions are issued in Poland for dioceses, assemblies as well as parishes. At the beginning of 2009 there were just over 20 independent Roman Catholic stations.

⁷ „Nasz Dziennik”, 07.12. 2001, unknown site, material found in an online archive.

⁸ Communication from the CBOS: M. Grabowska, *Listeners of Radio Maryja*, No. BS/131/2008.

The licensing process

The 1990s in Poland was a decade of numerous local stations. Set up under the Law on Radio and Television Broadcasting, the National Council (KRRiT) authority, modelled on the French Supreme Council for Audiovisual Media, was originally to serve an influential and advisory role, but the constitution granted it additional powers to combat illegal broadcasters, and then also to standardise electronic media;⁹ in 1994 it granted nationwide broadcasting permits to radios RMF FM and Zet. Jointly, KRRiT issued 130 local concessions. A successive 30 licences were issued in 1995.¹⁰ 269 tenderers applied for licensing.¹¹

In 1995 KRRiT announced that it would issue successive frequencies on the regional, cross-regional and local levels. The second licensing process did not provide for the subsequent emergence of a broadcaster covering the whole territory of Poland, but it was quite long and lasted more than two years and issued 35 new licences for radio broadcast in segments of Polish territory. 33 stations selected in this process received concessions for local and regional broadcasting, and two concessions were granted for cross-regional stations, including Inforadio (more on this when discussing holding company Agora) and Rozgłośnia Harcerska (Scout radio station) in existence for 50 years, which operated under the auspices of Polish Scouting. Rozgłośnia Harcerska devoted its programming mainly to young people, with new trends in music, promoting niche artists, sought to encourage young talents, but also started trends (not only musical). In November 1998 Rozgłośnia Harcerska changed its name to Radiostacja. Shortly after obtaining a license to transmit a cross-regional programme, the station realised how difficult it was to keep up on the free market of commercial channels. The radio faced financial troubles, and the only way to survive the crisis was to find an investor. This happened in 2000, when Radiostacja became a member of the Eurozet Group, which was responsible for popular Radio Zet in Poland.

The decline of 1990s saw the first consolidation of radio stations on the market. The financial condition of commercial broadcasters wasn't always as their ambitious owners, full of faith in the success of their projects in the early 90s, wished them to be. Competition in the radio market in Poland in the 1990s grew at a very fast pace. The acquisition of Radiostacja by

⁹ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja*, Warszawa 2007, p. 42–43.

¹⁰ More: *Encyklopedia...*, ed. B. Kaczorowski, Vol. 9, p. 277.

¹¹ More: www.krrit.gov.pl, accessed 12.05.2011.

Eurozet was the first test in solving the financial problems of commercial stations. It was certainly one of the most spectacular cases, as to survive Radiostacja – known for staying away from any “affair” with mass culture and strong promotion of anti-global behaviours – had to go commercial. A turn that may be considered betrayal of its original ideals.

The second half of the 1990s was the time when commercial radio stations began network collaboration. For example, in 1997 the stations that subsequently became part of the network of Radio ESKA designated a company producer, Super FM, whose task was to produce programmes and the implementation of other recommended tasks relating to the broadcasting facilities. An additional element to the financial one making the situations of the stations more difficult, was the necessity of transferring from the lower FM band to the upper band. This entailed the need to inform listeners about a new frequency, which in turn generated a need to find new financial resources. Finally, on 1 January 2000 the lower FM band has ceased to exist.

In 2000 stations from the first licensing process began to submit applications for new concessions. In its concession proposal, Radio RMF FM requested the possibility of local broadcasting. The main local broadcasters protested against this, as this possibility could contribute to a slow death of their stations, due to a perceived decline in advertising market shares. The application from Radio RMF FM to “split the band”, i.e. to obtain the right to broadcast local news and commercials on the national channel was rejected by the KRRiT.

The consolidation and formatting process

After 2000, the radio market in Poland saw a time of consolidation and building of radio networks. It was also the time when the radio stations began to also broadcast over the Internet. The initial consolidation of radio stations was made to encourage a common advertising policy. Therefore, station owners stressed their financial targets, but it should not be a surprise that the financial condition of many local stations was truly catastrophic at that time. The consolidation process was made to plan the way for the creation of joint projects, and for finding subsequent ways to save. The effect of joining stations in networks was a formatted programme for a specified group of customers and genre of music. The first of the fully formatted commercial radio stations in Poland was Radio Złote Przeboje (Golden

Hits), launched in 1996.¹² Since the beginning this station has played classic hits. The media company Agora created a large and well-known network under the name Golden Hits that was successively based mostly on franchises, but also bought shares from local stations, and which currently (second half of 2011) broadcasts in 24 cities.¹³

What is the essence of the formatted radio? It fulfils “all allocation, programming, marketing and organisational functions focused on a specific market segment, which is usually well defined in socio-demographic terms”.¹⁴ The phenomenon of crosslinking radio stations has been acknowledged by the National Council of Broadcasting and Television (KRRiT) and included in its report in July 2006. Of the 184 stations operating in Poland on local markets, 90 were part of a network (which represents 49 per cent).¹⁵ The development of radio happened very dynamically. In Poland, the independent station market mainly consists of ethnic or religious minority or academic stations. Currently (2011) there are over 30 of these. The group of student or academic stations has now 10 stations in academic centres, including:

1. Kraków (Radiofonia, 100.5 FM),
2. Wrocław (Akademickie Radio Luz, 91.6 FM),
3. Poznań (Studenckie Radio “AFERA” Poznań Technical University, 98.6 FM),
4. Lublin (Studenckie Radio Centrum, 98.2 FM),
5. Zielona Góra (Akademickie Radio INDEX of the University of Zielona Góra, 96 FM),
6. Łódź (Studenckie Radio Żak of the Łódź Technical University, 88.8 FM),
7. Warsaw (Akademickie Radio Kampus 97.1 FM),
8. Rzeszów (Akademickie Radio Centrum 89.0 FM),
9. Białystok (Radio Akadera of the Technical University in Białystok, 87.7 FM),
10. Olsztyn (Radio UWM FM 95.9 FM).

But these are not key players in the commercial media market. The biggest commercial stations in Poland are now RMF FM, Radio Zet, Radio Maryja, the network of Radio ESKA and the network of Radio Golden Hits (Radio Złote Przeboje).

¹² A. Sulek, *Radio*, [in:] *Media a wyzwania XXI wieku*, ed. M. Bonikowska, Warszawa 2009, p. 69.

¹³ Evidence from the site: www.agora.pl, accessed: 05.06.2011.

¹⁴ T. Kowalski, *Przyszłość mediów – media przyszłości*, [in:] *Media, komunikacja, biznes elektroniczny*, ed. B. Jung, Warszawa 2001, p. 248.

¹⁵ R. Kowalczyk, *Media w Polsce*, Poznań 2009, p. 135.

Major commercial broadcasters in Poland

Radio RMF FM is the largest broadcaster in Poland in terms of audience and advertising revenues, but also in brand awareness, or the use of its media by other commercial stations in Poland. The founder and president of the station was Stanisław Tyczyński. He sold his shares in 2006 and the new owner of the Radio RMF FM group became A Bauer Media, a media company from Germany. RMF FM is a leader in audience. In a study conducted by the Radio Auditorium Track SMG/KRC A Millward Brown Company in 2011, each quarter it attracted more than 25 per cent of the audience.

As part of the RMF group, which operates radio RMF FM, there is also **RMF Classic**, which offers listeners a repertoire of classical and film music, and its target group is well-educated listeners with above average incomes, open to the world, both young and mature.

The RMF group also includes 15 local stations managed by **RMF MAXXX**, a part of the multimedia company transmitting music in the CHR format with a focus on genres, such as dance, pop, R&B and hip-hop. RMF MAXXX makes program for people aged 15-29 years, residents of large and medium-sized cities and suburban areas.

Radio Zet is the second largest player on the Polish radio market. The radio began operating on 28 September 1990 under the name “Radio Gazeta” (Radio Newspaper). To maintain its independence and separation from the daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, still in 1990 the station shortened its name to Radio Zet. Radio Zet offers a music and news programme playing adult contemporary music, contemporary hits (CHR) and hits from the nineties. Its program primarily targets an audience from 20 to 39 years of age. Since 26 April 2007, the owner of the station has been Eurozet Company, which also owns the Planeta FM radio stations (formerly Radiostacja), Chilli ZET, Antyradio and Radio Plus (a part of the broadcast).

Chilli Zet is a cross-regional station founded in December 2008, playing jazz and chill out music. It replaced the former Planeta FM stations.

Planeta FM in its present composition is the former Radiostacja. Planeta FM is a network of 13 stations playing dance music.

Antyradio has been in operation since 2005, and plays mainly alternative rock music. The station broadcasts in five cities.

Radio Plus is a network formed from the regional Radio Plus stations, which the company acquired from the previous owner, Ad.Point, or had signed a franchise contract with it. The Radio Plus network brings together

stations broadcasting as part of the company Radio Plus Poland. The station broadcasts a socio-religious programme. Its music format is soft adult contemporary and pop hits (more on Radio Plus in the section on VOX FM radio).

Agora was founded before the elections to the Polish Parliament in June 1989. Since 1999 the company has been listed on the Stock Exchange in Warsaw. Agora is known mainly for its *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily. Agora also currently owns 29 local radio stations and one cross-regional station. The company began building its radio portfolio with the consolidation of the stations under the name Golden Hits (Radio Złote Przeboje).

Radio Złote Przeboje is a multi-regional network, consisting of radio stations (and local programmes) in 18 Polish cities. The broadcasters operating under this name are musical and informative, and their music format is to play the greatest hits of all time. Station listeners are aged 25-50 years.

TOK FM has existed since 1998 and currently (2011) broadcasts in 10 cities in Poland. This is the first Polish station transmitting in the format of "talk radio". Initially the station was called Inforadio, but quickly changed its name to TOK FM, which is in use today. TOK FM has various news and information services from every quarter. The company Agora has a majority stake in the radio, with 66 per cent of its shares, and the rest belong to the Polityka Cooperative, publisher of the influential weekly *Polityka* (*Politics*).

Roxy FM is the radio network of Agora. It airs in the largest seven Polish cities. It offers a program of musical and cultural information for people aged 30-35 years. It plays mainly rock and pop music, and its slogan is "a lot of good music" regardless of what year it came out.

Zjednoczone Przedsiębiorstwa Rozrywkowe (ZPR), or United Enterprises Entertainment S.A., is a group of several financially related companies, whose activities include the press, radio, television, Internet, real estate, finance, and entertainment markets, and more specifically, gambling and casinos. The origins of the current ZPR group date back to the 90s, and its formation was possible thanks to the way the state-owned enterprise called ZPR (United Entertainment Enterprises) was privatised.

Amongst the individual companies within the ZPR group, the best known are those within the media market, namely: the daily *Super Express*, the monthly *Murator* and electronic media: Radio ESKA, ESKA Rock and VOX. The ZPR SA media group also includes a network of casinos and amusement arcades, market operators and real estate financial services, and Internet companies. Operating within the ZPR group, Radio ESKA is part of the Time Radio Group. The Time Group consists of the ESKA radio

network and the Time Company, which sells airtime in the radio stations clustered in this radio group.

Radio ESKA comes from the Warsaw Radio S, which was founded in 1990.¹⁶ In 1998, the ESKA radio network was created based on three stations. Radio ESKA has a suitable program of music and entertainment, supplemented by local information. “The leading music format is new popular music”.¹⁷ ESKA Radio broadcasts programmes in the CHR format, or the current hits. ESKA Radio listeners are “active, satisfied with life, ‘total’ consumers, open to new ideas, young people aged 15-39 years, living in big cities”.¹⁸

ESKA Rock is a station that was established to replace Gold FM, a station playing oldies hits. The decision not to keep this format anymore was made because its radio audience had kept decreasing. The decline of the station playing old hits created an opportunity in 2004 to create a new station, which received the name of ESKA Rock. From the beginning, ESKA Rock was playing music that was quite different from what was offered by its predecessor, Gold FM.

ESKA Rock is formatted for playing active rock (rock music from the old classics to the latest hits in this genre). The target group of the stations are listeners aged 18-34 years old, living in big cities.¹⁹ Currently, the broadcast of ESKA Rock can be heard in 18 cities in Poland. The development of ESKA Rock was made possible by the acquisition of WAWA station receivers.

WAWA Radio was founded in 1992 in Warsaw and initially played rock music. In 1998, KRRiT allowed the station to broadcast its programme in 13 towns in Poland. At its height, WAWA broadcast its programme in 18 Polish cities. Then the format of the station changed to a unique one on the radio market – only Polish music. From the beginning of 2008, when it was already in the hands of the Time Radio Group, WAWA Radio received permission from the National Broadcasting Council to change the name of WAWA Radio to Radio ESKA Rock.²⁰ The name WAWA Radio was only retained in Warsaw and Łódź. Other cities where WAWA Radio had been broadcasting were covered by the program range of ESKA Rock.

VOX Radio / Radio Plus, which a part of the structure of ZPR and partly remains in the sphere of influence of the group Eurozet has a quite

¹⁶ *Encyklopedia Polska PWN*, Warszawa, Vol. 9, p. 280.

¹⁷ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce*, Vol. 2, Poznań 2008, p. 282.

¹⁸ More: www.wirtualnemedial.pl, 16.06.2011.

¹⁹ www.zpr.pl, 20.05.2011.

²⁰ www.krrrit.gov.pl, 27.05.2011.

complicated history – and it is precisely because of its shareholders (Eurozet, ZPR) and the stations' names (Plus and Vox). Radio VOX was founded in October 2005 and consolidated the diocesan radio stations that previously were called Radio Plus. For the second half of 2010, the stations in the VOX FM network covered socio-religious issues and what is important, the manufacturer of the programme was a company named Radio Plus Agreement (formerly Radio Plus Kraków), of which the Time Radio Group had a majority of (Time is a part of ZPR). The owners planned to develop the existing structure and expand it to include additional stations. However, in June 2010 the companies Radio Plus Agreement and Radio Plus Poland signed an agreement stating that radio VOX FM would only maintain stations in Warsaw and Białystok, and the rest of the stations became a part of the Radio Plus network. From September 2010, Radio Plus (ZPR) and the United Eurozet Leisure Companies have been operating in the common space of the program, but also two of the projects independent of the VOX FM stations belong to ZPR.

The future of radio in Poland

The multimedia market, digital technology, the Internet as a broadcasting platform, digitisation – surely these concepts will determine the development of radio stations in Poland in the coming years. Formatting and consolidation – this stage is already largely behind us. What will now happen in this area depends on new technologies that will create and open up new directions of development. Legal regulation of the media must be adapted to the technological possibilities of the market. Media files like podcasts or live streaming should be available on personal computers, which have become the primary medium, especially in the younger and middle-aged generation of customers. This is how these files can still be shared in the sphere of faith in the successful development of the media and their proper use.

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Katarzyna Vanevska

Commercial television

The political changes associated with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, including Poland, were fundamental to the shaping of the television market today. Before the collapse, television in Poland was completely subordinated to the communist government and controlled by the Committee of Radio and Television, which came under the authority of the Council of Ministers. “The first major sign of change was the thesis number 33 of the programme adopted by the First National Congress of the Solidarity Independent Self-governing Labour Union in 1981. The thesis stated that the media is the property of the people and therefore it should serve society and be controlled by it.”¹ However, as Karol Jakubowicz has claimed, until the end of the eighties there was no comprehensive ideology as to what the desired shape of a free and democratic media system would be.² This was just the beginning of a long journey towards the full independence of television from political interference. This independence had its foundations in the Round Table Agreements of 1989, which were formally signed on 5 April 1989 and constituted a political contract outlining the direction of political transformation in Poland.³ During the negotiations, the first decisions were made concerning the establishment of a new democratic media order.⁴ One of the groups involved in the Round Table Talks was a panel of experts nominated by both opposing parties. The panel dealt with mass communications

¹ S. Bezdek, *Transformacja radia i telewizji*, http://polityka-polska.pl/ksiazka/radio_i_telewizja.pdf, p. 3 (12.11.2011).

² K. Jakubowicz, *Media publiczne. Początek końca, czy nowy początek*, Warszawa 2007, p. 220.

³ K. B. Janowski, *Polska rok 1989. W kręgu refleksji nad zmianą polityczną*, Kielce 1998, pp. 21–49.

⁴ J. Zakrzewska, *Spór o konstytucję*, Warszawa 1993, p. 31.

and its task was to negotiate future changes in the Polish media.⁵ One of the main demands was to create three market sectors of radio and television, including a public, commercial and social sector. In this way, there emerged an opportunity for the establishment and development of the first commercial television broadcasters in the history of Polish mass media.

Introducing such significant changes in the market required specific legislative transformations. The first vital sign of progress in this respect was the Communications Act, which entered into force in January 1991 and allowed the Ministry of Communications to allocate frequencies to private television stations. Legally, however, the Radio Committee still remained the superior institution and the allocation of frequencies had to be sanctioned by it. In June 1991, the Parliament deprived the Ministry of Communications of the right to decide upon TV and radio frequency allocation.

In the mid-1990s, a discussion began concerning the new media law. The new Broadcasting Act was adopted on 29 December 1992 and entered into force in March 1993. It allowed the operation of private television stations.⁶ Naturally, a broadcaster seeking to obtain an adequate license had to meet certain formal requirements, including, interestingly, the lack of earlier unlicensed business.⁷ "This Act, as amended, constitutes the basic act of law which regulates the functioning of the radio and television services in Poland. [...] It stipulates that there are two categories of radio and television broadcasters – public entities and entities that were granted a license. The licensed entities may have the status of a public broadcaster or operate entirely commercially."⁸ Preparation of the act was primarily based on the expertise of the national experts, but inspiration also came from the legal models developed abroad (Italy, USA), and particularly from the model outlined by the Supreme Audiovisual Council of France.⁹ The Broadcasting Act also established a specialised media market regulatory body – the National Broadcasting Council, which was officially inaugurated on 28 April 1993.¹⁰

⁵ K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *Telewizja w systemie politycznym i medialnym PRL. Między polityką a widzem*, Kraków 2003, p. 301.

⁶ K. Jakubowicz, *Publiczna i prywatna telewizja w Polsce*, [in:] *Media i dziennikarstwo w Polsce 1989–1995*, ed. G. Kopper, I. Rutkiewicz, K. Schliep, Kraków 1996, pp. 62–64.

⁷ R. Filas, *Dziesięć lat przemian mediów masowych w Polsce (1989–1999)*, Kraków 1999, p. 42.

⁸ A. Zieliński, *O niektórych problemach rozwoju rynku mediów elektronicznych w Polsce*, „Telekomunikacja i Techniki Informacyjne” 2006, No. 3–4, p. 3.

⁹ R. Chruściak, *Konstytucjonalizacja wolności mediów, wolności wypowiedzi oraz Krajowej Rady Radiofonii i Telewizji*, Warszawa 2004, p. 37.

¹⁰ KRRiT, *Sprawozdanie Krajowej Rady Radiofonii i Telewizji z rocznego okresu działalności wraz z informacją o podstawowych problemach radiofonii i telewizji*, Warszawa 1994, p. 23, http://www.krrit.gov.pl/Data/Files/_public/Portals/0/sprawozdania/spr1994/spr1994.pdf (07.11.2011).

“The truth is, however, that private Polish television emerged long before the new law reached the statute book. In the first years of the Third Polish Republic, only the state radio and television could function legally. The state tolerated the operation of pirate radio and television broadcasters.”¹¹ In this field, the real pioneers were the “pirate stations”, i.e. the broadcasters operating without a license. “Among the trailblazing independent television stations, one will find such pirate stations as SKY Orunia Gdańsk (1989), TV Lubań (1990), and TV Morze Szczecin (1991) as well as Echo Private Television from Wrocław (1990), which was the only one with a temporary consent for broadcasting. These were purely local, while a much wider range and publicity belonged to the regional station TV Katowice (Tele-3). At the time, it functioned as the pioneering initiative of the regional branch of Polish Television (OTVP), which soon had its followers.”¹² It is worth noting that “the title of the first private TV station, not only in Poland but in the former Eastern Bloc, was PTV Echo, founded in 1990 in Wrocław.”¹³ The station broadcast from 6 February 1990 to 8 March 1995.

The level and way of operation of many pirate television stations is best illustrated by the history of one of the first non-public Polish TV stations, Top Canal, which broadcast in the years 1992–1994 in Warsaw. Apart from its pirate activities, the station also became famous due to its unusual programme based on a systematic violation of copyright. The owner of the station was Jacek Żeleziński. Top Canal was one of the first to apply for a license, which it did not receive. The most fascinating aspect about the functioning of Top Canal was its idea to make its programming more appealing. It simply broadcast tapes from a video shop, which sometimes included even movie premieres before their official entry onto the Polish market. “Among the institutions which were being systematically robbed, there was ITI (then, the owner of ITI Home Video) and the International Federation of Film Producers Associations, which could not comprehend how a pirate TV station can get away with the illegal broadcasting of *Pretty Woman*.”¹⁴

¹¹ M. Czyrka, *Dziennikarze czy politycy? Związki między dziennikarstwem a polityką w pierwszych latach kształtowania się ładu medialnego w trzeciej Rzeczypospolitej*, [in:] *Współczesne media. Wolne media?*, ed. I. Hofman, D. Kępa-Figura. Lublin 2010, Vol. 1, p. 186.

¹² R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

¹³ M. Skierski, *Historia prywatnej telewizji w Polsce*, <http://one.xthost.info/emsoft/med10.htm> (10.11.2011).

¹⁴ J. Solska, *20 lat prywatnych mediów w Polsce. Wizjonerzy i piraci*, Polityka.pl, <http://www.polityka.pl/rynek/gospodarka/1502439,2,20-lat-prywatnych-mediow-w-polsce.read>, (05.11.2011).

By the end of 1992, out of 12 pirate television stations which started functioning in the early 90s, as many as seven decided to cooperate with the emerging Polonia 1 network, which was launched on 7 March 1993. "Nicola Grauso, Italian businessman and the owner of Polonia 1, had 33 per cent of the shares of each of these stations. It allowed him to introduce uniform day-time programming with premiere programmes, TV shows and feature films broadcast at identical times."¹⁵ The Polonia 1 network's broadcasters included Nowa Telewizja Warsaw, PTV Echo from Wrocław, PTV Rondo Katowice, PTV Krater Kraków, PTV Morze Szczecin, Telopol PTV Opole, Tele-Top (Ptv Neptun) Gdynia, TV ES Poznan, TV Ex Bydgoszcz and Tele 24 Łódź.¹⁶ The network comprised 13 broadcasters in total. In addition to their local schedule, each station broadcast a nationwide programme line-up for several hours a day. Each of Polonia's broadcasts was distributed to particular stations on VHS tapes. An important novelty introduced by Grauso was the inclusion of prime time programming within the line-up, which was done for the first time in Poland. "The network gained an audience share of approximately 20 per cent (eight million viewers)."¹⁷ The next natural move of the network, whose audience was growing steadily, was to apply for a license to become a supra-regional network. However, the application was rejected due to the questionable nature of the network capital share structure. Despite the lack of a nationwide license, both Polonia 1 and its unlicensed local stations did not stop broadcasting. As a result, on 28 August 1994, six Polonia 1 stations were closed down. Since anti-terrorist squads were involved, the event turned out to be quite sensational. In September 1994, Polonia 1 started satellite broadcasting from Rome using Hot Bird analogue satellite transmission. The signal reaching Poland was distributed in an unchanged form terrestrially. From 1994, Polonia 1 has only been available via satellite. In 1998, it moved to digital transmission and today it is still available on cable TV and via Hot Bird satellite.

In the meantime, almost 400 applications were awaiting the licensing decision of the National Broadcasting Council, 89 of which were applying for local television transmitters, 26 to be established as regional or supra-regional stations, and 11 were hoping to obtain the right to broadcast a nationwide programming schedule.¹⁸ The applying stations included Ante-

¹⁵ K. Przygoda, *15 lat Polonii 1, czyli narodziny prywatnej telewizji w Polsce*, <http://media2.pl/media/34060/komentarze/5.html> (05.22.2011).

¹⁶ SAT Kurier, *Historia telewizji w Polsce – wykaz chronologiczny*, <http://forum.satkurier.pl/viewtopic.php?f=33&t=12971>, p. 1. (02.11.2011).

¹⁷ M. Skierski, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ The list of applications for broadcast licence has been published in the Announcement of the Chairman of KRRiT in „Rzeczpospolita” on 16 December 1993, No. 293.

na 1, the Independent Polish TV Plus, Top Canal Media Ltd., Zjednoczone Przedsiębiorstwa Rozrywkowe (United Entertainment Enterprises) and the Franciscan Provincial Curia. Meanwhile, “the historical legacy of the communist period (the 1984 arrangements concerning the allocation of frequencies among countries) led to a shortage of frequencies available to public and commercial broadcasters after the emergence of the Third Polish Republic.”¹⁹ It is estimated that by mid-1993, there were 19 pirate TV stations operating due to the lack of adequate legislation.²⁰

Nevertheless, it should be noted that “before the procedure of granting licenses was even initiated, the number of TV channels in the Polish language had been extended (...) legally, as of 9 December 1992, the private satellite TV Polsat began broadcasting in the Netherlands.”²¹

“In 1994, the first licenses legalising the activities of private television stations were granted. At the same time, the National Broadcasting Council acknowledged that the available range of TV frequencies allowed for the establishment of three nationwide television networks.”²² The license was granted to the five already broadcasting local stations. Sky Orunia and TV Lubań decided to maintain complete independence, while TV Vigor, AVAL, TVL and four newly-licensed broadcasters – TV Bryza Szczecin, TV-51 Zielona Góra, NTL Radomsko and Telewizja Dolnośląska TeDe from Wrocław – created a supra-regional network called Odra. Odra developed its own programming in cooperation with Polsat; namely, the coded night time schedule transmitted by Polsat was recorded by individual stations and rebroadcast the next day.

Among the national licensed broadcasters, there was Polsat, TV Wisła, which used frequencies in the southern regions of the country, and the Canal+ Polska Korporacja Telewizyjna (Canal+ Polish Television Corporation).

POLSAT

Interestingly, Polsat was granted a temporary right to use local channels by the National Broadcasting Council, which met with strong opposition from all the entities comprising the Polonia 1 network. They claimed that this decision threatened their existence. Despite this, the

¹⁹ P. Wiśniewski, *Pierwszy proces koncesyjny w zakresie radiofonii i telewizji jako element budowy podstaw ustroju III RP – przebieg, skutki, wnioski w kontekście budowy platform cyfrowych* [in:] *Współczesne Media...*, op. cit., p. 127.

²⁰ MSZ, *Przemiana polskich mediów po 1989 roku*, <http://www.msz.gov.pl/publications/2004/content/poland/www.poland.gov.pl/239.htm>, (05.11.2011).

²¹ R. Filas, op. cit., pp. 42–43.

²² KRRiT, op. cit., p. 23.

Council concluded that giving Polsat permission to use low-power channels could be the station's first step towards nationwide broadcasting. Originally, the station was called Pol-Sat and its unquestionable success was in developing and broadcasting its own news programme titled *Informacje*, established by the then director of the station, Wiesław Walendziak. The programming schedule of the new station was largely based on foreign drama and comedy TV series and on native productions as well. Polsat also risked working with young and inexperienced people, thus creating a team of dynamic and devoted journalists who strongly identified with the station. Thanks to its programmes devoted to the Disco Polo musical genre, which was widely popular in the nineties, Polsat was slowly gaining public recognition, especially among younger viewers. However, the line-up was not very ambitious, and the older audience was mainly attracted by erotic broadcasts such as "Różowa Landrynka" and "Playboy". "Through expanding the network of terrestrial transmitters (which comprised approximately 60 per cent of the country), Polsat joined in the competition for viewers."²³ Already in 1996, the audience of Polsat was bigger than that of the public station TVP2. Interestingly, in 1997, Polsat employed only 200 people, while TVP had nearly 7,000 employees at that time. On 1 March 1997, the second television channel owned by Solorz was launched, Polsat 2, which broadcast via satellite. "Polsat was trying to make up for lost time by introducing other thematic channels such as Polsat Sport, Polsat Sport Extra, Polsat Health and Beauty".²⁴ The most recent Polsat thematic options include Polsat Cafe and Polsat Play. It is also important to note that in November 2006, a new TV station called Superstacja was launched, whose half of the shares was already purchased by a company associated with Polsat in mid-2007. In the same year, Zygmunt Solorz took over TV Business (operating since 2004).

CANAL+

Another entity that was granted a license for a supra-regional network of transmitters was Canal+, which is scrambled and uses frequencies in the largest Polish cities. It was allocated a frequency on 23 November 1994. The channel has been broadcasting since 2 December 1994.²⁵ This is the

²³ R. Filas, *Posiadane udogodnienia a odbiór telewizji w Polsce w połowie lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1996, No. 3–4, pp. 164–174.

²⁴ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 332.

²⁵ *Historia Canal+*, <http://www.canalplus.pl/canal>, (06.11.2011).

first Polish premium television station and a part of the French television network Canal+. Initially, the signal was transmitted from Paris via the Eutelsat satellite. Then, the channel became part of the cable TV offering and also began to be broadcast through the network of terrestrial transmitters.²⁶ For a long time, CANAL+ was available in an analogue form on the Hot Bird satellite and the scrambled pictures looked quite interesting (characteristic mosaic image). Nevertheless, it has offered permanent unencoded broadcasts to this day. Currently, the station is available on cable TV and on the Cyfra+ platform. In addition, since 18 March 2011, platform subscribers have had access to CANAL+ Na Życzenie (CANAL+ On Demand), which is a collection of some of the programmes or movies recently broadcast by the station.²⁷

WISŁA

Another broadcaster that was granted a license to air nationwide during the first concession process was TV Wisła from Kraków. It was allocated frequencies in the southern provinces of the country. The station started broadcasting in 1995, although the license was granted much earlier, on 23 November 1994. Its owners were Wojciech Szczerba, Bogusław Zięba and the Realbud Company. The broadcasts of Wisła TV were available terrestrially, via the Eutelsat II F3 satellite (as an unencoded transmission) and through cable TV networks. “The TV Wisła line-up was universal: 40 per cent of the broadcast time was taken up by movies, seven per cent was for entertainment and music programmes, while news, documentaries and family programmes received five per cent each.”²⁸ The year 1997 brought significant changes to the station, when “in cooperation with the TVN company, it began developing a nationwide television channel called TVN.”²⁹

The second licensing process began in February 1995, but despite the great interest of many entities, final decisions were delayed. In December 1995, seven companies were considered. The leaders included TVN, owned by Mariusz Walter and Nasza Telewizja, owned by Polskie Media S.A.

²⁶ SAT Kurier, *op. cit.*

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

²⁸ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, pp. 339–340.

²⁹ Zgapa.pl, *Telewizja Wisła*, http://www.zgapa.pl/zgapedia/Telewizja_Wis%C5%82a.html, (02.11.2011).

TVN

TVN launched in 1997, which undoubtedly constituted a turning point for the media market. The station received a license in October 1996 and began broadcasting on 3 October 1997. "TVN was the property of two companies: ITI³⁰ owned by Mariusz Walter, Bruno Valsangiacomo and Jan Wejchert (67 per cent of shares) and the American Central European Media Enterprises (CME). Although it has never been openly stated by the station owners, the name can be deciphered as *Telewizja Nowa* (Television New)."³¹ "The owner is the ITI Group, which, in addition to the station, owns the Onet.pl online portal, the Multikino multiplex chain and the 'n digital platform."³² "Obtaining such a wide range was possible due to a merger with *Telewizja Wisła*, which broadcast in southern Poland. TVN itself had a license to broadcast in northern parts of Poland, which together ensured reception in the largest Polish cities."³³

On 3 October 1997, at 7:30 pm sharp, TVN's most important newscast called *Fakty* (*Facts*) was launched. At that time, the station's signal reached about 50 per cent of the television audience in Poland. Another crucial event in the development of commercial media in Poland was the introduction of reality TV by TVN. In December 1998, the first cycle of the *Agent* reality show was aired; it was later awarded the Golden Rose in Montreaux.

NASZA TV

The Nasza TV station was established a few months after TVN, on 17 January 1998, as a general-themed channel. At the beginning, it had 10 stations broadcasting in central Poland and in the first phase of its operation it reached 47 per cent of households. After it had begun cooperating with *Wizja TV* and the PTK network, it launched new transmitters. Viewers complained primarily about the low level of the programmes, of which the only ones considered interesting were those belonging to the RTL7 schedule. Moreover, the station was also criticised for the poor technical quality of its movies.³⁴ In October 1999, one of the creditors filed for the station's bankruptcy. The name Nasza TV was changed to TV4 on 1 April 2000.

³⁰ International Trading and Investments Holdings S.A. Luxemburg was found in 1984 and registered in the Principality of Liechtenstein.

³¹ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

³² D. Waniek, *Dylematy ładu medialnego RP. Standardy europejskie a praktyka polityczna*, Kraków 2007, p. 240.

³³ M. Skierski, *op. cit.*

³⁴ Otopr.pl, *Nasza TV??*, <http://www.grupy.otopr.pl/nasza-tv-,usn,4026225.html>, (03.11.2011).

TV PULS

“TV Puls, originally called Telewizja Familijna S.A., began broadcasting on 18 March 2001, using the frequencies of TV Niepokalanów as well as the Astra satellite. (...) It specialises in religious programmes, current affairs and documentaries.”³⁵ “Its share capital amounted to more than PLN 1.8 million. Shareholders included the Franciscan Order, which owns the license, as well as KGHM Metale, PKN Orlen, Polskie Sieci Elektroenergetyczne (PSE S.A.), PZU Życie and Prokom.”³⁶ After the changes in the license, on 15 January 2008, TV Puls was granted additional terrestrial TV transmitters in Wrocław and Szczecin by the National Broadcasting Council, which, together with the transmitter in Katowice, were launched on 30 April 2008. The station is being systematically developed and is slowly outstripping the competition, including TV4 and TVN7.

CABLE TELEVISION

The real development of cable television networks in Poland began in the late 80s and 90s. It is worth noting that in the initial phase, this domain of the television market was dominated by foreign channels. They were broadcast “not quite legally – without signing agreements with broadcasters and often without their knowledge. It was caused by the lack of an applicable law that would regulate these matters at that time.”³⁷ The first independent entity of this type was Echo in Wrocław. One of the first cable stations was Polska Telewizja Kablowa (PTK, Polish Cable TV), founded in 1989 and transformed into UPC in 2000. Other examples include Vectra, launched in 1991 and operating to this day under the same name, as well as Multimedia and TV TOYA, both inaugurated in 1991. There was also Wielkopolskie Sieci Kablowe Koma (Koma Cable Networks Wielkopolska), TKP and ICP-net, which in 2005 merged to create the INEA network. “At the end of 1992, there were over 130 cable operators, and in 1996, this number rose to about one thousand. They began to be more and more concentrated over time.”³⁸ At present, cable television in Poland comprises 600 operators, the largest of them being UPC, Vectra and Multimedia.³⁹ It is undoubtedly worth mentioning the

³⁵ A. Ogonowska, *Telewizja*, [in:] *Słownik wiedzy o mediach*, ed. E. Chudziński, Warszawa–Bielsko-Biała 2007, p. 180.

³⁶ [wirtualnemedia.pl](http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl), *Historia TV Puls*, <http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykuł/historia-tv-puls#>, (03.11.2011).

³⁷ SAT Kurier, *op. cit.*

³⁸ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

³⁹ D. Waniek, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

fourth vital player in this sector, which is Aster City. According to data from December 2010, cable TV subscribers choose their providers in the following order: UPC Poland (more than one million subscribers in 116 towns, which represents 24.36% of the market); Vectra (773,000 subscribers in 155 towns, representing 17.18% of the market share); Multimedia Poland (696,000 subscribers in 2000 towns, representing 15.47% of the market share) and Aster (380,000 subscribers from three towns, representing a 8.44% market share). TOYA, INEA, Stream Communications, Petrus, Promax and Sat Film rank next.⁴⁰

Digital platforms

On 18 April 1998, “the At Entertainment company launched a test of programmes called *Wizja TV* (the beginning of the future platform), initially available only to subscribers of *Polska Telewizja Kablowa*. Ten new channels in the Polish language began to be aired: *Wizja 1*, *Hallmark*, *Romantica*, *Cartoon Network/TCM*, *Fox Kids*, *National Geographic*, *Travel*, *Quest TV*, and *Twoja Wizja*. *Wizja TV*’s selection was additionally enriched by already existing *HBO*, *Discovery*, *Animal Planet* and the Polish music channel *Atomic TV*.”⁴¹ The entire project cost nearly \$200 million. A special role in developing *Wizja TV* was undoubtedly played by *TVN*, as at the end of the 90s, the station had a very limited terrestrial coverage of about 60 per cent and customers often decided to purchase the *Wizja TV* decoder just to watch *TVN*. This was later confirmed in research concerning the *Wizja TV* platform audience.⁴² During the first stage of *Wizja TV*’s development, there were plans of extensive cooperation with *Canal+*; eventually, however, the latter suddenly withdrew from the cooperation and focused on working on its own project, this time in tandem with *Polsat*. This led to a rapid growth of offers on the digital platform market. *Cyfra+* became the competition for *Wizja TV*, as it offered its customers six new Polish-language channels and many other channels already familiar to Polish viewers.

Although the *Cyfra+* platform had a good start, after only a few months, *Canal+* decided to abandon its cooperation with *Polsat* and concentrated fully on its individual project to develop a third platform. The launch of *Polsat 2 Cyfrowy* (*Polsat 2 Digital*) in April 1999, which was a package of free unencoded thematic channels, was only a taste of what was to come.

⁴⁰ PIKE, <http://www.pike.org.pl/index.php?p=obranzy&sec=ranking>, (05.11.2011).

⁴¹ M. Skierski, *op. cit.*

⁴² A. Zarębski, *Początki telewizji płatnej i cyfrowej*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, ed. R. Gluza, Poznań 1999, p. 208.

In 1999–2001, there were three digital platforms in Poland: Wizja TV, which reportedly sold over 400,000 decoders, Canal+, which declared 330,000 subscribers, and Cyfrowy Polsat, with 220,000 subscribers. Each of these platforms included from 300 to 400 television channels, of which about 30 had Polish language versions.”⁴³

On March 1, 2002, Wizja TV and Canal+ Cyfrowy “merged into Cyfra+, which still operates today and has more than one million subscribers.”⁴⁴ Another important player in the field emerged in 2006. “The ITI Group, which owns TVN, launched a third digital platform called ITI Neovision.”⁴⁵ This network, also referred to as the television of the new “n” generation, has introduced an offer of high-definition thematic channels, an option of ordering movies and recording selected programmes (thanks to hard drives in set-top boxes). ITI sold the TVN digital platform to Marcus Tellenbach.

The most recent platforms operating on the Polish market include Platforma Telekomunikacji Polskiej (Polish Telecom Platform), launched in September 2008, and Platforma TVP (TVP Platform). As for the latter, on 15 September 2009, TVP inaugurated the first unencoded part of the digital platform, at the same time applying to the National Broadcasting Council for a license to broadcast the full package of channels.

Commercial players in the lead

According to data from TVN’s Research and Marketing Department, information about media market shares of the biggest television broadcasters (main channels) in the last week of November 2011 is presented in the chart below.

WHOLE DAY SHARES – 28 November 2011 MAIN CHANNELS:

Channel	Entire population	Target Group 16–49
TVN	15.20%	15.70%
TVP1	17.20%	13.60%
TVP2	12.40%	11.00%
Polsat	15.00%	16.40%

⁴³ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

⁴⁴ P. Gmerek, *Satelitarne platformy cyfrowe HD w Polsce*, Onet.pl <http://technowinki.onet.pl/poradniki/satelitarne-platformy-cyfrowe-hd-w-polsce,1,3050460,artykul.html>, (03.11.2011).

⁴⁵ D. Waniek, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

Channel	Entire population	Target Group 16-49
TV4	2.80%	3.40%
TVN7	1.90%	2.40%
TV Puls	2.00%	2.10%
TVN24	2.70%	1.90%
TVP Info	3.60%	1.80%

Source: TVN Research and Marketing Department (December 2011).

As a comparison, it is worth presenting the results of a whole day share of the main channels (nonthematic) for the equivalent period in the year before. Data from the last week of November 2010 are presented in the chart below.

WHOLE DAY SHARES – 28 November 2010 MAIN CHANNELS:

Channel	Entire population	Target Group 16-49
TVN	18.00%	19.50%
TVP1	20.60%	18.10%
TVP2	15.00%	12.40%
Polsat	12.30%	14.10%
TV4	2.20%	2.50%
TVN7	1.90%	2.50%
TV Puls	1.40%	1.40%
TVN24	2.10%	1.60%
TVP Info	3.60%	2.00%

Source: TVN Research and Marketing Department (December 2011).

A very important factor of the impact of each particular broadcaster is the daily audience report of thematic channels. Results of the report, from 4 December 2011, are presented in the chart below.

THEMATIC CHANNELS – DAILY AUDIENCE VIEWING REPORT (4 December 2011)

Channel	AMR ¹	RCH ²	ATS ³	SHR% ⁴
TVN24	172,678	4,916,256	51	2.09%
TVP Info	264,840	10,387,982	37	3.21%
Super Stacja	13,561	1,200,128	16	0.16%
Polsat News	61,828	4,275,162	21	0.75%
TVN Meteo	9,634	1,433,735	10	0.12%
TVN Turbo	58,801	3,264,972	26	0.71%
Polsat Play	19,682	2,431,433	12	0.24%

Channel	AMR ¹	RCH ²	ATS ³	SHR% ⁴
Discovery Channel	61,220	3,491,738	25	0.74%
TVN Style	40,616	2,956,971	20	0.49%
TLC	27,194	2,221,448	18	0.33%
Polsat Cafe	25,502	2,536,771	14	0.31%
TVN CNBC Biznes	3,181	987,514	5	0.04%
TV Biznes	1,411	299,455	7	0.02%

1 AMR – Adaptive Multi-Rate.

2 RCH – Reach.

3 ATS – Average Time Spent.

4 SHR% – Share.

Source: Research and Marketing Department TVN (December 2011).

In conclusion, ITI Group and Polsat should be considered the most significant market players in the commercial sector, the latter of which was bought on 15 November 2010 by Cyfrowy Polsat S.A., becoming the largest media group in Poland.

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Magdalena Oleszkowicz

Public media in Poland

“If someone were to think that the best way to reform the public media would be by bringing it into a deep crisis, I inform you that this crisis is here.”¹ In his statement for *Newsweek*, Jan Dworak quite clearly explained the current situation of the public media in Poland. Dworak is the Chairman of the National Broadcasting Council of Poland (KRRiT), which is responsible for media organisation in our country and for preparing annual reports on its activities and information about the key problems of radio and television.

Even though this year’s report was adopted by the president as well as the Sejm and the Senate, current research and facts illustrate that the situation of public television and radio has been changing for the worse year after year.

In the previous years, there was a significant fall of income from licencing fees, from which the activities of public media are financed. While Polish Television funds its activities through advertising as well, for some of the regional branches of public radio, the share of licence fees accounts for almost 90 per cent of the budget. The share of nationwide channels of public television and public radio in the media market has also decreased.

If we add to this the report of the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) for May 2012, which revealed an anomaly in the activities of Polish Television from the second half of 2009 through the end of the audit in 2011, the scenario of public media working efficiently becomes unrealistic.

The current situation of public radio and television is the result of 18 years of their activity, and the formation of the public media came as a result of the transformation Poland went through after 1989. The first ideas of the socialisation of public media appeared during the Round Table Talks.

¹ M. Rabij, *TVP. Misja na diecie*, „Newsweek”, 18–24.06.2012.

Until that time there were two state-owned (public) television and four state-owned (public) radio programs in the People's Republic of Poland.²

It took a few years for the media to function within free market conditions. The change of the chairman of the Radio Committee from Jerzy Urban, who was associated with the People's Republic of Poland propaganda to Andrzej Drawicz, appointed by Tadeusz Mazowiecki,³ was so important that the new party appointed the Committee for Radio and Television Reform (Komisja ds. Reformy Radiofonii i Telewizji) (9 October 1989), which engineered the formation of public radio and television in Poland. Karol Jakubowicz became its chairman.

The Committee's work resulted in the creation of the Broadcasting Act (Ustawa o radiofonii i telewizji), which in conjunction with several other acts concerning electronic media became the basis of the Broadcasting Act, enacted on 29 December 1992, valid to this day.⁴

Containing 71 articles, the Broadcasting Act of 29 December 1992 was divided into 10 chapters. Chapter four is wholly dedicated to public television and radio. In article 21, section one, the obligations of public media are specified: "Public radio and television accomplish a public mission, offering all of society and particular parts of it various programs and other services in the field of computer science, socio-political journalism, culture, entertainment and sport, characterised by pluralism, impartiality, balance, independence, innovation, high quality and broadcast integrity."⁵

Before the new act was carried into effect (1 January 1994), radio and television had to face the problem of the institutions that had been public. The problems involved both finances and personnel. Polish Television and Polish Radio possessed huge head offices as well as expanded local centres located all over Poland (mainly concerning Polish Television), which were extremely expensive to maintain. In addition, there was the matter of exchanging staff, because many of the previously working journalists were nominated by the Party.

Public television

During the presidency of Radio Committee Chairman Andrzej Drawicz, the newly-created Publicity Office was supposed to be the solution for tele-

² T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 29.

³ J. Braun, *Telewizja publiczna w czasach transformacji*, Warszawa 2008, p. 54.

⁴ K. Jakubowicz, *Media publiczne. Początek końca czy nowy początek*, Warszawa 2007, p. 9.

⁵ Ustawa z dnia 29 grudnia 1992 r. o radiofonii i telewizji, Dz. U. 2004, No. 253, item 2531.

vision's financial problems. As was established later, the money from advertisements in 1994 constituted 51 per cent of Polish Television's income and in 1998 its share increased to over 61 per cent (while the share of license fees decreased to 32 per cent).⁶

In 1992, local programs began airing from the previously mentioned local branches. On the one hand, this change brought the viewers closer to the regions, but on the other hand it generated costs, it complicated internal organisation and management, and it also raised the number of political circles interested in TVP activity.⁷

In 1992, Polish Television started another, 24-hour program called TV Polonia, which was directed to Polish people living abroad. By means of expensive contracts negotiated by TVP and cable television broadcasters in particular countries, viewers who did not have a satellite dish could watch the Polish program.⁸

In the new media order, in which public broadcasters began to be active after the transformation of the political system, competitive media sprang up. The first satellite channels and new Polish stations began to launch in the early 1990s.⁹

Polish Television also began to produce and broadcast programs. It activated the sale of the rights to the TVP S.A. archives, it introduced game shows and telephone competitions, as well as privatising its own OBOP and developed *Telegazeta*. Since 1995, TVP S.A. has had a presence on the Internet.¹⁰

TVP plunged into digital television between 1997 and 1998. One of the results of this activity was the annexing of TVP S.A. to the Cyfra+ platform, as well as acquiring a license to launch the digital informative program *Aktualności* (News) in September 1999.¹¹

During the first decade of Public Television in Poland, nine presidents managed the company, each of whom had his own new conception of management, staffing and political networks. Endless changes in the conceptions of management incited workers to create trade unions, and in 1999 there were 21 of them. However, the first years of TVP S.A.'s existence

⁶ K. Jakubowicz, *Telewizja Polska 1989–1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, ed. R. Gluza, Poznań 1999, p. 183.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 184.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 185.

⁹ R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian polskich mediów (1989–2009) w ujęciu periodycznym*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2010, No. 3–4, p. 34.

¹⁰ K. Jakubowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 185–186.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 185–186.

as a registered company did not destroy its very good position on the media market. In spite of appearing systematically in competition, TVP1 and TVP2 still held monopolies on the television market.

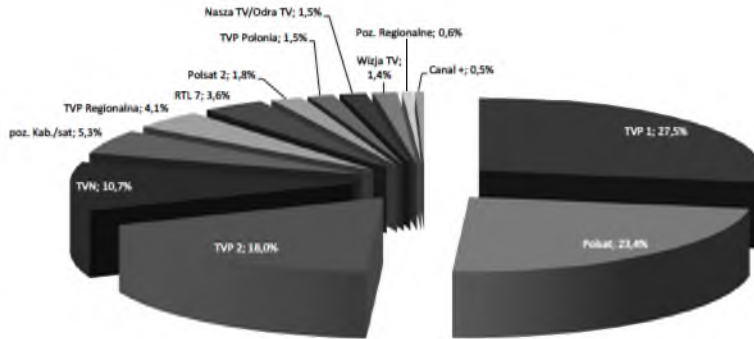


Figure 1. TV market shares in 1999

Source: KRRiT, Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji, Warszawa 2000.

The second decade for Polish Television began with a strengthening in the position of TVP2 on the market. The Second Channel of Polish Television, “Dwójka”, because of its entertainment program, outstripped the second position Polsat TV and became first.¹²

In 2002, TVP made the decision to carry out reforms of 12 local TVP branches, as a result of which a third channel – Regional TVP3 – came into being. Regional TVP branches have been struggling with financial problems to this day. The earlier reforms were supposed to prevent the current situation. What is more, the Third Channel of Polish Television was supposed to cure the chaos in the policy of purchasing, production and accepting authors and political pressures on broadcast programmes. It had to work as a separated network. The local TVP branches broadcast the common TVP3 programme (80 per cent of the broadcast), a local programme (separate frequency band) and local programme broadcasting in a separate frequency band of TVP2. The leading news programme from this channel was the national and regional *Kurier*.¹³

In subsequent years, public television maintained its position as the leader of the “big three” (TVP, TVN, Polsat) and began to air thematic channels. The market leader in thematic channels was TVN, although TVP did not fall far behind. In this way, TVP Kultura (Culture) launched

¹² R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

¹³ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, pp. 310–312.

on 24 April 2005, TVP Sport on 18 November 2006 and TVP Historia (History) on 3 May 2007. As a result of the agreement signed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Polish National Television, TV Bielsat began broadcasting in December 2007. The program broadcasts in the Belorussian language and offers information and journalistic programmes, reportages, stories and children's programming. Polish Television assures its technical and infrastructural support and also funds the project.¹⁴

As more and more of the Polish audience began to use digital platforms (in 2009 almost five million people were using digital platforms), TVP began to operating in this area too.¹⁵ First, TVP HD was founded (6 August 2008); then on 5 September 2009 TVP entered the digital platform market. In this time the first free part of the TVP digital platform was activated and TVP began to implement recommendations that resulted from its "Launch of Digital Terrestrial Television" strategy.¹⁶ At the same time, TVP received a license for the channel TVP Parliament.

After several years of public television in Poland, the monopoly that it had at the beginning of the twenty-first century slowly began to weaken. Commercial broadcasters were increasingly influencing TVP's activities. To this we can add the general tendency of the media market for TV stations with the biggest range to reduce their share in the market in favour of smaller TV stations.

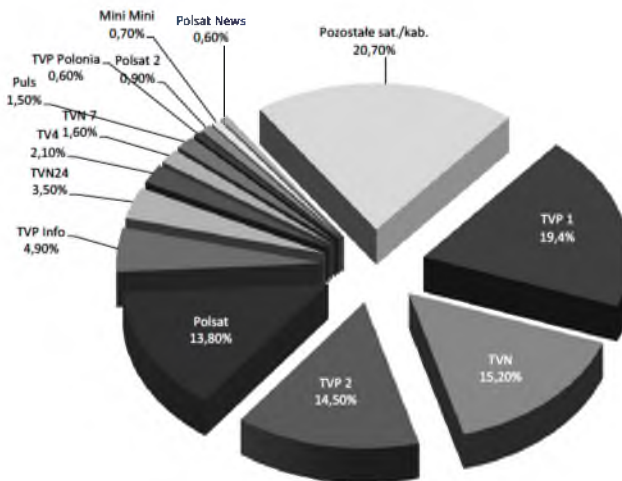


Figure 2. TV market shares in 2010

Source: KRRiT, Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji, Warszawa 2011.

¹⁴ http://www.belsat.eu/pl/o_nas/, accessed: September 2011.

¹⁵ R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁶ <http://www.tvp.pl/o-tvp/platforma-cyfrowa/start/cyfrowa-platforma-tvp>, accessed: August 2011.

Almost 39.8% of the shares in the market belonged to the public sector (TVP1, TVP2, TV Polonia, TVP INFO, TVP Kultura, TVP Sport) in 2010, which is two percentage points less than in 2009. An analysis of the share of public television in recent years shows that this is the continuation of a downward tendency. In 2009, public television held 41.8% of the market and 44.1% in 2008. To compare, in 2006 the public sector held more than half of the market. What is important to note is that the share of nationwide programme audience has been decreasing, although interest in TVP INFO has been increasing. After an increase in the previous year, TVP Kultura and TVP Sport's share remained at the level of 2009¹⁷.

Public radio

Similar to public television, Polish National Radio faced serious financial problems before it became a public broadcaster. During the distribution of Radio Committee assets, TVP was favoured, forcing Polish Radio to undertake heavy investments; low income as well as high employment and redundant organisational structures would result in Polish National Radio losing its financial liquidity.¹⁸ The liquidation of the National Organisational Authority of Polish Radio and Television (Państwowa Jednostka Organizacyjna Polskiego Radia i Telewizji) in July 1991 began the sudden evolution of regional Polish Radio branches. In April 1990 the president of Polish Radio, Józef Kowalczyk, decided to extend the airtime of regional programs from four to 12 hours, in time even to 24 hours. Paweł Zegarłowicz (director of Polish Radio Programme 3 in 1994–1997) regarded this decision as one of the most important for the progress of public radio during the first decade of its existence. In his opinion, this decision gave regional branches the chance to exist as independent radio stations, not only as a supplement to nationwide channels.¹⁹

“The implementation of four differently programmed nationwide channels (Polish Radio Programme 1, Polish Radio Programme 2, Polish Radio Programme 3 and Polish Radio Programme 4) and 17 independent local Polish radio stations in public broadcasting”²⁰ accompanied the rise of new radio stations in the early nineties. Creating an order in the airtime

¹⁷ KRRiT, *Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji*, Warszawa 2011, p. 85.

¹⁸ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

¹⁹ P. Zegarłowicz, *Polskie Radio SA 1989–1999*, [in:] *Media w Polsce w XX wieku*, ed. R. Gluza, Poznań 1999, p. 132.

²⁰ R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

and the first licenses influenced Polish Radio's activity to a great extent. As a result of concessions granted for three nationwide radio stations (RMF FM, Radio Zet and Radio Maryja) and over a hundred local stations, the audience ratings started to drop.

In October 1994, Polish Radio Programme 4 ceased broadcasting. It was replaced by Radio Bis. It featured a popular science angle and was addressed to young people.²¹ Major expenses for technical infrastructure led to success. Thanks to the renovation of the Agnieszka Osiecka studio, Programme 3 (Trójka) had the most modern broadcasting studio in Poland. And it was Programme 3 that became the first nationwide radio station to begin broadcasting live on the Internet. Trójka's first online audio broadcast appeared on 13 November 1996.²²

Polish Radio also broadcast Programme 5, which was the channel for people living abroad. In the early nineties, Radio Polonia started broadcasting a program for Polish people in the East. Since January 2007, Radio Polonia has broadcast under a different name – Polskie Radio dla Zagranicy (Polish Radio External Service). Programmes are transmitted in seven languages: Polish, English, German, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Russian and Belorussian, and additionally in Esperanto on the Internet.²³

The appearance of competitive radio stations on the market influenced it more than in the television market.

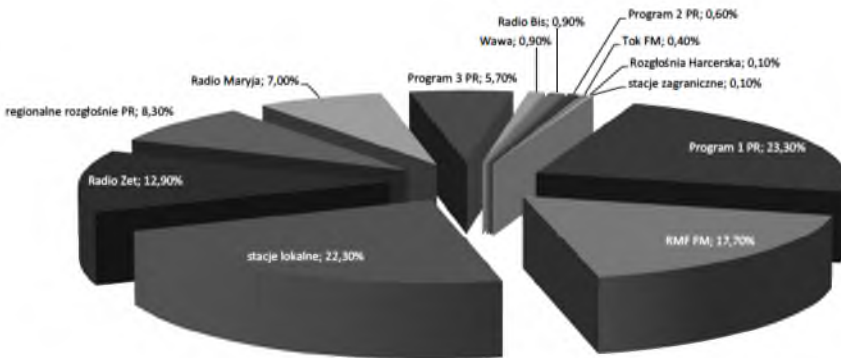


Figure 3. Weekly shares in radio audience in 1999 (OBOP)

Source: KRRiT, Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji, Warszawa 2000.

²¹ <http://www2.polskieradio.pl/85/kalendarium/>.

²² P. Zegarłowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 135–136.

²³ *Ibidem*.

The previous monopoly on the radio station market had to accept an audience decrease due to the rise of new nationwide commercial stations. Even though Programme 1 PR S.A. won the first position in terms of audience ratings, the new radio stations RMF FM and Radio Zet came in second and third. The next spots were occupied by Radio Maryja, Programme 3 PR S.A., Radio BIS and Programme 2 PR S.A.²⁴

After 2000, the process of ownership concentration influenced the activity of radio stations. This affected local station networking and programme formatting, particularly limiting talk for the benefit of the music. The extreme example of this kind of innovation was PR Programme 3. It had a journalistic and musical angle and had been dedicated to an educated audience. After 2000, due to the foundation of private radio stations, which limited Programme 3's range, Trójka changed its programme from journalism and entertainment to "background radio" that was focused on music.²⁵

In October 2001, Public Radio launched the long wave transmitting Radio Parliament to broadcast Polish Parliament debates and provide journalism related to national legislative activity.²⁶ Currently it is possible to listen to Radio Parliament on the Internet.

In 2003, Radio Zet overtook the public Programme 1 in terms of market share for the first time.²⁷ PR Programme I had a 16.1% share of the media market and Radio Zet, the nationwide station created in 1994, had an 18.9% market share. RMF FM became the leader with its 23.6% market share²⁸(as well as in 2002, in which the media market shares were as follows: RMF FM – 22.4%, PR Programme 1– 17.9% and Radio Zet – 17.5%).²⁹

At the end of second decade of Polish Radio's activity, it was listed as the most listened to nationwide radio station in Poland over the past twenty years.

²⁴ KRRiT, *Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji*, Warszawa 2000, p. 63.

²⁵ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, pp. 228–232.

²⁶ J. Myśliński, *Kalendarium polskiej prasy, radia i telewizji*, Warszawa 2004, p. 158.

²⁷ R. Filas, *op. cit.*, pp. 40–41.

²⁸ KRRiT, *Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji*, Warszawa 2004, p. 135.

²⁹ KRRiT, *Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji*, Warszawa 2003, p. 87.

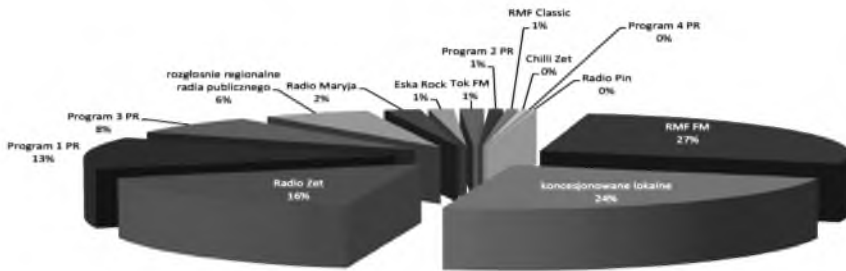


Figure 4. Radio market shares in 2010

Source: KRRiT, Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji, Warszawa 2011.

Similar to the first decade, the most popular group of programmes were those with a nationwide range, i.e. both public radio channels (Programmes 1, 2, 3, 4 PR S.A.) and licensed channels (Radio Maryja, RMP FM and Radio Zet). Their total share of the market was 66.8%, of which 21.3% belonged to public nationwide channels and 45.4% to licensed nationwide channels.³⁰

Programme 1 of Public Radio (I PR) has had the largest share of the radio market from amongst the public radio stations. In 2010, 14.6% of Poles were listening to it. In second place was Programme 3 (III PR or Trójka) with 7.5% of the market share. 8.7% of respondents listened to Trójka in 2010. The share of the radio market for Programme 2 and Programme 4 was 0.8% and 0.2%, respectively, during that time period.

Every year since 2004, lower and lower license fees have been noted. While the decrease of license fees has not significantly affected the broadcast of public television, in the case of public radio this reduction of license fees has had a great impact. Admittedly, the means of license fee distribution to public radio, especially regional radio, has changed, but license fees are the major source of public radio financing. In 2010 KRRiT expected to finance almost 70 per cent of regional public radio activity (74.5 % – data before balance for 2010).³¹ For public television, a decrease in license fees meant an increase in the impact of commercial earnings in financing its activity. However, in public radio this meant an effect on the budgets for reconstructing and infrastructure investments, modernisations and programming changes.

³⁰ KRRiT, Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji, Warszawa 2011, p. 73.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

The statement by Jan Dworak mentioned at the beginning of this article was not accidental. Public media in Poland is actually in a crisis, not only one of finances but of social confidence as well. More often it is said that public media are unnecessary, especially when we have so many commercial broadcasters, which are able to satisfy everyone. All the more, the recent years of public media are worth analysing to address what went wrong and determine whether it is worth actively improving the current situation of public media.

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Tadeusz Gałka

Local media

Regional and local media are a relevant part of the media system in Poland as well as in other countries. The changes that Poland underwent during the late 80s and early 90s had a crucial impact on the current state of the media, including regional and local media. The objective of this article is to present the local media as it is today as well as to illustrate the changes that this segment underwent during the last two decades. This matter is especially important, as despite the development of communication globalisation affecting all kinds of media, the local media still constitute the foundation of the national media systems.¹ Moreover, for many experts, local media are the basis of civil society.² What is more, local media are the most numerous group among the mass media types. In this text, regional media are several times categorised together with local media – this is because of their significant role on the local media markets. The basic criterion of considering a medium a local medium is its content.

The local press

For the Polish local press, the last two decades have been an extraordinary period. It is especially the last decade of the twentieth century that is viewed as a time of revival of the local press in Poland.³ The events that had the greatest influence on that element of the media system were:

¹ *Media lokalne i dziennikarstwo. Aspekty współczesne i historyczne*, ed. K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, S. Michalczyk, Kraków 2010, p.15.

² L. Pokrzycka, *Rozwój mediów lokalnych i regionalnych po 1989 roku*, [in:] *Oblicza polskich mediów po 1989 roku*, ed. L. Pokrzycka, B. Romiszewska, Lublin 2009, p. 139.

³ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce*, Poznań 2009, Vol. 2, p. 16.

- The Polish Round Table Agreement and the decisions taken in the media sub-table (1989)⁴
- The passage of bills pertaining to the removal of the Publishing Cooperative as well as the GUKPPiW (The Office for Controlling Press, Publications and Performances) and its local branches (1990)⁵
- Passing the bill that established local government (1990),⁶

The legal state that emerged allowed various subjects to compete on the press market. The economic lobby started to take over the role of a governing body supported by capital from abroad.⁷ That capital was much more significant for regional daily newspapers. The state of the local market could be described as editorial euphony and the relevant period of time (1988–1991) can be dubbed “socially heroic”.⁸ This name underlines the motivations of those who undertook the task of forming new titles on the publishing market. In the majority of cases, they were driven by an awareness of the crucial part that the press could play in the making of civil society, the open communication system or even, in broader terms, the foundations for the new political system – democracy.⁹ During those years, 80 regional and 615 local titles came into being.¹⁰ According to Włodzimierz Chorążki, late in 1991 as many as 1,426 local papers and magazines were published.¹¹ Characteristic of that period is the greatest increase in the number of titles published in the last 20 years. The period that followed (1992–1993) is often defined as political, as various political powers, both national and local, had a considerable influence on the emergence of new local titles.¹² The relevant feature of local publishing houses that came into being in the first years of the Third Polish Republic was their evanescence. A relative stabilisation of the local press market came in 1993, when the market period began. It has lasted until today.¹³

⁴ W. Chorążki, S. Dziki, *Media lokalne i regionalne*, [in:] *Dziennikarstwo i świat mediów*, Kraków 2000, p. 130.

⁵ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja. Środki masowego komunikowania w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 13.

⁶ S. Michalczyk, *Media lokalne w systemie komunikowania. Współczesne tendencje i uwarunkowania rozwojowe*, Katowice 2000, p. 165.

⁷ M. Kolasa, *Prasa Krakowa w dekadzie przemian 1989–1998. Rynek–polityka–kultura*, Kraków 2004.

⁸ W. Chorążki, S. Dziki, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁹ R. Kowalczyk, *Media...*, p. 17.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ W. Chorążki, *Prasa lokalna i sublokalna w Polsce 1989–1991*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 1991, No. 3–4, p. 48.

¹² W. Chorążki, S. Dziki, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

An interesting phenomenon marking the local press since the 90s is the diversity of publishers. Currently, the largest editing group on the local press market are local governments, which are in charge of over one third of the titles. Nearly every fourth title is privately owned. About 20 per cent are religious titles and 10 per cent are those owned by non-governmental organisations.¹⁴ The changes on the local press market overlapped with the general increase in the number of titles. It was estimated that in 1996 there were about 1,500, whereas in 2005 the number soared to approximately 3,000 and 3,500 by 2007. The current number of local paper titles is believed to be about 3,500–4,000.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the increase in numbers was not followed by higher circulations – it was quite the opposite. Despite the fact that local paper titles amount to as much as 50 per cent of the total titles in the Polish press, they constitute no more than 10 per cent of the total circulation.¹⁶ Another relevant problem of the local press is periodicity. Almost 70 per cent of the titles are published once a month or even more rarely, which is definitely an impediment to one of the basic functions of the press – being informative.¹⁷ Yet the most serious problem of the local press appears to be its dependence on local authorities or business elites. The fact that every third local paper in Poland is to some degree supervised by a local government renders these subjects unable to maintain their control function. Private press finds it difficult to develop in such circumstances as well – it often has to face conditions of unfair competition. The editors of local press are attempting to tackle the problem by forming associations and unions. As early as in 1992 the Local Press Association in Poznań came into being. Later on it was followed by the local press associations in Lublin, Warsaw and Tarnow. Currently the most significant of those organisations is the Association of Polish Papers, which unites 20 of the most important local Polish independent papers. The purpose of the association is the integration of the editors, strengthening their companies in terms of organisation and economics as well as defence against unfair competition.¹⁸

Local radio

Similarly to the local press, radio broadcasting has undergone a break-up in the monopoly for nationwide broadcasting along with the system trans-

¹⁴ R. Kowalczyk, *Media...*, pp. 19–20.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ *Słownik wiedzy o mediach*, ed. E. Chudziński, Warszawa–Bielsko-Biała 2010, p. 145.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik Akademicki*, Poznań 2009, p. 108.

formation.¹⁹ Nevertheless, in the case of the press the system, changes were followed closely by legal ones. For the radio, the first couple of years meant a kind of lawlessness as the new emerging broadcasting stations had no official licences.²⁰ In 1992 a bill of radio and TV broadcasting was passed. It authorised the liberalisation of the radio broadcasting market. In 1994, the first licensing process was implemented, the objective of which was to marshal the chaos in the ether. For the non-public local stations, the most important provision was granting 153 licences to broadcast.²¹ The bill also had a relevant impact on the proceedings on the local market of public radio broadcasting. It served as a foundation for 17 newly formed regional joint ventures of Polish Radio.²² The stations of the Roman Catholic Church adhered to different broadcasting standards, which emerged on the basis of a bill defining the relationship of the state and the church of 17 May 1989. Before the first licensing process, 31 permits to broadcast church-related programmes were issued.²³ The second licensing process, which ended in 1996, brought about over 30 permits for broadcasting for local stations. During the first licensing period, that is between 1994 and 2001, about 250 local and regional broadcasters were registered and 150 of them were active on the market.²⁴ The basic problem of this sector at the end of the twentieth century was the market crisis of local advertising, which forced the concentration of local broadcasters, similarly to the way it happened to the press.²⁵ In time, the rudiments of the two main broadcasting groups, namely ZPR Inc. and AGORA started to appear. These were precisely the two groups that led to the emergence of the first two formatted local networks: *Złote Przeboje* from Agora and *ESKA Radio* from ZPR.²⁶ The processes of radio broadcasting station consolidation, concentration and formatting were strengthened at the turn of the twenty-first century as the expiration date of the licences issued in 1994 and 1995 loomed. Two new radio broadcasting groups emerged on the market, namely AD. Point and Multimedia. They, along with ZPR and Agora, took over a large part of the local radio stations in Poland. Within the period of about four years (2000–2004), the number of licensed radio broadcasting stations fell by

¹⁹ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

²⁰ L. Pokrzycka, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

²¹ R. Kowalczyk, *Media...*, pp. 118–119.

²² T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

²³ R. Kowalczyk, *Media ...*, p. 119.

²⁴ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

²⁵ R. Kowalczyk, *Media...*, pp. 118–119.

²⁶ R. Filas, *Dwadzieścia lat przemian polskich mediów (1989–2009) w ujęciu periodycznym*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2010, No. 3–4, p. 34.

36 per cent. The formatting process proceeded during the following years. New players emerged on the local market (RMF Maxxx) while others underwent various transformations (Ad. Point into Eurozet, ZPR into the Time Group). Networks also merged with one another. The PLUS network was included in Eurozet while the VOX network joined the Time Group.

The local radio market in 2010

The radio stations that are currently on the local market can be divided into two general groups: public and non-public radio. The regional public radio broadcasting stations' share in the market is four times lower than that of licensed local stations. However, a noteworthy fact is that there are 10 times as many licensed local stations as public ones. The public radio broadcasting group is constituted by 17 regional state broadcasting stations and six autonomous stations.²⁷ The regional stations work as one-man cooperatives of the Treasury. Those cooperatives are the members of the Public Radio Association and they operate within the Auditorium 17 programme agreement.²⁸ Five of the stations gathered in the A17 broadcast programmes for cities alongside regional ones. The regional stations of Polish Radio cover virtually the entire country within their range, which has no reflection on the listening figures, though. While it is no surprise that they are ranked lower than nationwide (predominantly commercial) stations, they also keep losing to other stations of regional or smaller range. These are the non-public stations that dominate the local station market in terms of numbers. The networking coefficient is steadily rising for this group. In 2004 it was over 45 per cent. Currently more than a half of the local stations are owned by a network and adapted to the station format. As of today, there are about 220 licensed radio stations in Poland, 126 out of which are stations operating as a part of a network. The networking coefficient is then almost 58 per cent. The numbers of stations owned by the respective networks are as follows: Eurozet – 38 stations (Planeta FM-14, Radio Plus-21, Antyradio-3); Agora – 26 stations (Złote Przeboje-18, Roxy FM-7, Blue FM-1); the Time group – 44 stations (ESKA FM-38, WAWA-5, VOX FM-1); the RMF group – 17 stations (RMF Maxxx). As you can see, the largest number of stations is owned by the Time Group, followed by Eurozet, Agora and RMF. In terms of the listening time, on the nationwide scale the situation is as follows: the Time

²⁷ R. Kowalczyk, *Media...*, pp. 128–131.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 123.

group has the highest listening figures. This can be ascribed to the excellent listening figures of ESKA Radio, whose share in the market equals that of Polish Radio Channel 1. The listening results of the remaining three groups are about three per cent.²⁹ The local broadcasting stations unrelated to networks work as autonomous and independent economic subjects. Among the stations of that type, four basic groups can be distinguished: the market-independent radio (55 per cent of the group), the Roman Catholic Church radio (approx. 25 per cent), academic radio (approx. 10 per cent) as well as the radio of other religions, inter-religious and ethical or national minority radio (approx. one per cent).³⁰ The listening figures of non-network stations are very diverse. The vast majority lose to nationwide or network stations on the market. However, there are also those broadcasters that do well on the local markets. Among them are undoubtedly Muzyczne Radio Jelenia Góra or Radio Hit Włocławek as well as Radio Bielsko, which is second only to nationwide stations in terms of listening figures. Those stations are leaders among the non-nationwide broadcasters.³¹ The interesting fact is that local radio stations achieve the highest listening outcomes in middle-sized towns. With the networking coefficient being on the increase, the leaders among local broadcasting stations are the representatives of radio networks. As it was with the local press, radio too is undergoing a process of consolidation. At the same time the pluralism and diversity of the local media of that time is under threat. Nevertheless, network radio is certainly the future of local stations, especially keeping in mind the fact that the main source of financing for those broadcasters is advertising revenue. The non-network stations attempt to deal with local market competition in a similar way as local papers. In 2003 a trade agreement called A Block of the Independent was established. The fact that the Block is closely related to the Eurozet group allows one to assume that some of the stations may soon join one of the group's formats. The future of local radio broadcasting appears to be in less serious danger than the local press. For radio itself is prospering in perhaps the most efficient way among all the traditional media.

Local television

The changes that the local television market underwent after 1989 were very similar to those in local radio broadcasting. The borderline was the

²⁹ Badanie Radio Track, period of December 2010–January 2011.

³⁰ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 145.

³¹ Badanie Radio Track, *op. cit.*

passing of a bill of radio and TV broadcasting on 1 March 1993.³² In the context of local media, the processes initialised in that period seem relevant. First, it was the launching of the genuine regional branches by Polish National TV (TVP) initialised in 1992.³³ Second and no less important, the first non-public television stations began to emerge, both aerial stations and cable networks.

The local aerial television

ECHO Television in Wrocław is considered the first aerial station of its kind in Poland. That station was active in the period of 1990–1993. The pioneers in this realm were also local stations constituting the Polonia 1 network.³⁴ None of the local television stations operating before 1994 had a broadcasting licence.³⁵ It was precisely in 1994 that the National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT) granted licences to two regional stations: NTP Plus (broadcasting in 11 cities in the north of Poland) and TV Wisła (broadcasting in nine cities in the south).³⁶ Moreover, 13 local stations were granted licences. The local television stations had to face massive financial and organisational problems and, most crucially, were not as popular as they had expected to be. These were the reasons for six of the stations to enter into an agreement. The stations united by that agreement cooperated on the commercial market and broadcast the common eight-hour-long commercial programming by the name of Odra.³⁷ In addition, each of the stations produced its own local programmes. In 1998, the stations decided to broadcast *Nasza Telewizja* (“Our TV”) again – later on it became TV4. When its licence was about to expire, only three of the stations united in Odra continued broadcasting their local channels.³⁸ The condition of the licence extension imposed by the National Broadcasting Council was, among others, that the local channels be broadcast again.³⁹ In 2004, out of nine local television stations in Poland only four broadcast their own channels. Alongside the aforementioned members of Odra, TV Lubań was in that group.⁴⁰

³² R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

³³ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 170.

³⁴ R. Filas, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 170.

³⁷ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

³⁸ They were NTL Radomsko, Telewizja Dolnośląska, Telewizja Legnica/Lubin.

³⁹ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 193.

⁴⁰ T. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

The crucial year for the development of local aerial television was 2005, when the existing licences were to expire. Some of the local stations ceased to function even earlier than that, predominantly for financial reasons. A new player on the market emerged as well – Gryf TV. Soon NTL Radomsko joined the Odra network and the remaining stations of the union turned into Odra Television Ltd. That cooperative was granted a licence to broadcast local channels. In 2010, the situation on the local television market was as follows: five aerial TV channels of a local range were broadcast by Odra Television Ltd., while NTL – Radomsko Ltd., TVT Television Ltd. and Łużyce Television Ltd. each broadcast one channel. All of the channels were universal in nature and the topics were specifically local. Odra TV is cooperating with Polsat, rebroadcasting the TV4 channel, which has five hours of local programmes a day in two parts. NTL Radomsko belongs to the TVN group. The line-up of the station is constituted by three local slots and the rebroadcast of TVN. Another station, TVT, rebroadcasts TVN's programmes and has four of its own slots (6:30-8:30 a.m., 11:35 a.m.-12:40 p.m., 6:25-7 p.m. and 7:30-8 p.m.). The last of the stations in question, Łużyce Television, also rebroadcasts TVN and has three slots of its own, with about 2,5 hours in the morning, afternoon and evening all together.⁴¹ The main factors inhibiting the development of local ground television are the lack of unoccupied frequencies and the costs related to broadcast initialisation.⁴²

Cable television

Yet another crucial element of the local TV market is cable networks. They began to emerge as early as in the late 80s, but it was not until the beginning of the next decade that they started to develop rapidly.⁴³ Cable network development can be divided into the following periods:

- The pioneer “community” period (March 1988 to February 1989)
- The free-for-all period (March 1989 until the end of 1990)
- The rapid development period (1991 to 1993)
- The professionalisation period (1994 to 1996)
- The intense consolidation period (1997 to 2000)
- The multimedia activity period (since 2001)
- The beginning of multimedia transmission digitisation (since 2005).⁴⁴

⁴¹ Own analysis based on identification of these stations.

⁴² R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 208.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ R. Filas, *15 lat telewizji kablowej w Polsce*, „Zeszyty Prasoznawcze” 2002, No. 3–4, p. 24.

As far as the availability of cable networks themselves is concerned, in 2010 one could receive TV and radio channels via cable in more than 300 Polish cities, all of them having more than 40,000 inhabitants.⁴⁵ About four million households have access to cable television. Over three quarters of them have contracted the service of one of the 10 biggest cable network operators.⁴⁶

Another matter is the preparation of local channels by cable networks and other subjects. Broadcasting foreign programmes requires an entry in the register of the National Broadcasting Council Chairman, whereas it takes a licence to put an original programme on the air. Since the Council started to grant licences for broadcast, 482 of them have been issued (as of the end of 2010).⁴⁷ According to estimations, 222 of 363 permits in 2006 pertained to local programmes.⁴⁸ Most of the subjects receiving them belonged to private persons (39.2%) or limited liability companies (24.77%). The rest of the owners were: cooperatives (12.16%), joint stock companies (9.01%), local governments (7.65%) and non-governmental organisations (7.21%).⁴⁹ Wherever recipients have access to local cable television, it is often the case that its audience figures are comparable to or even exceed the figures of the Polish National TV (TVP) regional programme. A common phenomenon on the local broadcasting market is the exchange of content between broadcasters. Thanks to this, the channel's selection can be enriched without increasing its production costs.⁵⁰ The average time of a programme broadcast on cable television is an hour a day. The longest time of broadcasting is 13 hours a day, whereas the shortest time is 20 minutes a day. The channels' own licensed programmes were dedicated to local topics and they filled a gap in access to the information that the nationwide aerial broadcasters and regional channels popularised by Polish National TV weren't able to deliver.⁵¹ The clash with developing digitisation and Internet use will undoubtedly be a challenge for cable TV. Internet television is the greatest threat to cable television today.

⁴⁵ KRRiT, *Informacja o problemach radiofonii i telewizji w 2010 roku*, Warszawa 2011, p. 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

⁴⁸ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 214.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ KRRiT, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

TVP – Polish National Television

The last of the players on the local television market scrutinised here is the public broadcaster, TVP. As it was mentioned before, in 1992 the process of launching genuine regional channels by TVP began.⁵² The provisions of the radio and TV broadcasting bill made TVP a company with local branches and one of the main objectives for TVP Ltd. was to broadcast regional programmes. In 1998, public TV had 12 local branches, which were developing closer and closer cooperation. That was the moment when the board decided to form a network, which was to become Regional TVP3 later on.⁵³ The programme of the respective branches had two parts: a common programme and separate programmes for each branch. In 2001, the common programme amounted to three quarters of the regional programme broadcasting. That programme was universal in nature. Since 2000, regional channels have used the logo of TVP3. In March 2002 Regional TVP3 was formed. It authorised what was already in place for several years, namely one channel with 12 editions. In 2004, four more regional branches came into being and there were 16 editions. The nature of the station was also changing steadily – from a universal channel it turned into an informative and journalistic station. More and more of the line-up was consumed by the common programming (84 per cent in 2007). In 2007, Regional TVP3 was transformed into TVP Info which was strictly informative.⁵⁴

In 2010, TVP Ltd. was broadcasting 16 regional channels by the common name of TVP Info produced from 16 regional branches in Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Katowice, Kielce, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Olsztyn, Opole, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Warsaw and Wrocław. TVP Info covers 70.81% of the national population within its range and 52.82% of the surface. The share of TVP Info in the television market in 2010 amounted to 4.9%. In terms of TVP Info line-up, one can observe the domination of informative and journalistic programmes, which is confirmed by the nature of the station. 2010 was the last year that regional programmes were broadcast in the separated band in TVP2 by TVP Ltd. In 2010, each of the branches aired about 115 hours of regional programming on average (19 minutes a day). The total of the regional programmes on the separated band was 1,831 hours and was less significant

⁵² Ustawa z dnia 29 grudnia 1992 r. o radiofonii i telewizji, Dz. U. 1993, No. 7, item 34.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ R. Kowalczyk, *Media lokalne w Polsce. Podręcznik...*, p. 174.

than in 2009 by 683.5 hours.⁵⁵ In 2011, TVP Ltd. quit broadcasting regional programmes on the separated band of TVP2.

TVP has undoubtedly the best basis for active operation within local media of all Polish TV broadcasters. The resources devoted in the past and currently to the functioning of the local branches are disproportionate to the revenues obtained on this market. This is why the current state, with 16 branches working for one channel, leads to a marginalisation of regional let alone local content. TVP Info is unquestionably general in nature. TVP Ltd. cannot give up airing regional programmes, as it is bound by the bill to do so.⁵⁶ In many areas of Poland TVP Info is the only television from which members of local communities can find information related directly to them. Although the local programme amounts to as little as 15 per cent of the line-up, it is still a significant element of everyday regional information.

Local media on the Internet

Whereas research on the press, the radio and television has been conducted for several decades, the Internet is still a relatively new phenomenon for experts. A dozen years ago the order of importance in media appeared to be clear. The radio broadcast a piece of news, the TV showed a bit more about it and a day later, and then the news concerned was covered in the papers.⁵⁷ Today the situation is much different. It is all because of new media and more precisely, the Internet. The Internet is radio, film and TV all in one. It oversteps the limits of print, radio and TV.⁵⁸ The Internet is beginning to play an increasingly significant part as far as local media are concerned. It is enough to say that virtually all traditional media have their own websites where the information they have so far conveyed in a traditional way can be accessed. There are numerous indications that Internet media are bound to replace the traditional ones. It is then worth looking at the Internet as a part of the local media market in comparison with the respective traditional media.

⁵⁵ KRRiT, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁵⁶ K. Jakubowicz, *Media publiczne. Początek końca czy nowy początek*, Warszawa 2007, p. 237.

⁵⁷ K. Urbanowicz, *Pięć zagrożeń jakie internet stwarza dla prasy*, Media Café Polska³ [online]. <http://mediacafepl.blogspot.com/2006/01/pi-zagroe-jakie-Internet-stwarza-dla.html>.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

The Internet vs. the printed press

It is not a secret that the popularity of the press in general is steadily declining. Many factors affect that; one of them is certainly the dynamic development of the Internet. The section of this paper pertaining to local press enumerates the major faults to be found with this element of the media system. One of them was periodicity – 90 per cent of Polish papers are issued less frequently than daily. It is needless to say that here the advantage of the Internet is overwhelming. Online media enable virtually constant updating of content. The involvement of financial and human resources is incomparably lower than in traditional media. Another problem of the local press was the paper ownership structure – over one third of the titles are dependent on local governments. It is much easier to start managing Internet media without the influence of governmental structures. Virtually everyone with even insignificant resources can be medially active on the Internet, which is reflected by the number of local websites. Most of the districts have their own local news websites owned by a private person. The editors of printed press, especially regional dailies, are also active on the local Internet media market. Two of the biggest concerns of that group, *Polskapresse* and *Media Regionalne* (Regional Media) are very active in that area. It is often the case that in the process of restructuring, editors give up issuing local paper supplements just to publish them on the Internet. Equally involved on the local market are the giants of the nationwide Internet sites: *Onet.pl*, *Interia.pl* and *Gazeta.pl*. All of those portals are intensifying their regional activity, predominantly via personalising content depending on the place of the recipients' residence.

One can often be dissatisfied with the level of content in the local press. In local Internet media, especially those owned by individuals or based on the citizen journalism, the quality problem is even bigger. Often there is little control over the articles published and their content as well as stylistics that are often far from the benchmarks of journalism.

The Internet vs. radio

The radio found a perfect place for itself in the new media. The opportunities made possible by the Internet allowed broadcasting stations to create their own websites, which often are an addition to their traditional activity. Moreover, the Internet has become an extra channel for sending their signal, which is simultaneously emitted in the traditional way. The radio

has lost virtually nothing in the confrontation with the Internet, as the circumstances of listening to it in an average case on one hand disable the use of the Internet (e.g. driving a car) and on the other, they allow for the simultaneous use of both (e.g. office work). The latter is much harder in case of the television or press. It is worth noticing that the number of radio stations broadcasting only on the Internet is increasing. Most of the users treat them as they would use traditional radio, tuning in for live broadcasts. Less than one listener out of five browses past programmes or downloads them onto a hard drive.

The Internet vs. television

For local TV stations, the Internet has become an additional channel for broadcasting information, as is the case with radio. There are more and more Internet television channels on the local TV market. Moreover, more and more local television stations make their programmes available on the Internet as well. While in the case of radio users have no objections to streaming, it is more popular in Internet TV to play programmes downloaded beforehand. The Internet poses a threat to local television insofar as the costs connected with launching an Internet TV channel are much lower. What is more, the issue of licensing or registering Internet media is still not settled, which makes opening a new channel considerably easier.

It seems that in the field of local media (but not only there), the one under the greatest threat from the Internet is the press. However, this does not mean that radio or television owners are safe. Convergent media (i.e. those which have the elements of all of the traditional media) are undoubtedly the future of media systems. The only hope and salvation for many traditional media owners is intensifying their online activity.

Conclusion

During the last two decades, local media have completed a journey best described by Tomasz Mielczarek's book: "from monopoly to concentration via pluralism". That part of the media system is undoubtedly a barometer of the changes Poland has undergone. It appears that currently we face yet another important period in the history of the media, not only the local ones. The Internet is turning into an environment that is capable of devouring the media as we know it. From the local media viewpoint, the

traditional ones should be able to survive longer than their counterparts on a nationwide scale. The reason for that may be the fact that the percentage of the digitally excluded is highest in small local communities. On the other hand, new media offer local communities precisely what they are missing in the traditional media, namely freedom in the sense of genuine access to public discussion. The emerging problem of Internet users is their anonymity and the lack of editorial background. It is not difficult to find Internet articles full of invectives, aspersions and accusations signed by an anonymous person. Equally easy to find are local Internet media articles that have nothing to do with journalistic rectitude. The Internet, despite its advantages, has introduced numerous vices to the local media market. Paradoxically enough, the medium that enables us to find relevant information in a matter of seconds requires much more involvement of discerning users than the traditional media. A journalist once was an intermediary between the government and the people. Today, both the authorities and the individuals can be journalists. The result of that is, instead of the clearing up of public affairs, a fading away of a once clear-cut division of roles. The future of local media is very much dependent on local community activity. In times of globalisation, the growing influence of the nationwide media on the local ones, free market economy and the dynamic development of the Internet, only the local media that react to external factors and at the same time bear in mind the specific needs of local recipients will be able to survive.

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Paweł Jezierski

Catholic media in Poland

Introduction

After 1989, when the State began to withdraw from many of its activity areas that it had been involved in, the Catholic Church began to acquire an important position on these issues and became one of the most serious political pressure groups. Although the political realm was not the major dimension of its activities, the Catholic Church appeared as a subject of political life.¹ Some of the clergy and organisations with Catholic attributes would seem to forget the fact, that in light of *Gaudium et spes* – “The Church in the contemporary world” Pastoral Constitution, proclaimed by Pope Paul VI, 7 December 1965 – the Church should not involve itself in politics. The Polish Catholic Church, which under communism was deprived of its important role, wanted to repossess – in its opinion – its “rightful” position in independent Poland, also with the help of the mass media. The Catholic Church as an institution reached the faithful through a medium called “the Catholic” according to the benchmark of the broadcasting station, which is defined by Katarzyna Pokorna-Ignatowicz: “through the media established and run by Church structures, and those that are ‘Catholic’ by the presence of the so-called ecclesiastical assistant editor.”²

In this paper I will write about the Catholic media distinguished into the criterion of the receiver, which is a broader term. All in all, the Catholic media, by the definition above, are all the media that are Catholic according to the criterion of the broadcasting station. However, not all Catholic

¹ P. Borecki, *Geneza modelu stosunków państwo – Kościół w Konstytucji RP*, Warszawa 2008, p. 5.

² K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *Media katolickie w III RP i ich wkład w budowę polskiej demokracji*, [in:] *Media a demokracja*, ed. L. Pokrzycka, W. Mnich, Lublin 2007, p. 122.

magazines according to the criterion of receiver are Catholic in accordance to the criterion of the broadcasting station (e.g. *Nasz Dziennik* and *Tygodnik Powszechny* lost ecclesiasticals in the early nineties, due to conflicts with the Church hierarchy).

A road to freedom

PAX accepted PRL, with its totalitarian face. However, “Open Catholics” were willing to agree with anti-communists environments, also with its left-wing parts. This was manifested in Bohdan Cywiński’s book *Rodowody Niepokornych* (Indomitable Pedigrees), in which the author refers to the ethical affinity between different ideologies: “endecy”,³ Catholics, socialists and progressives of all kinds.

In the 1980s, the Catholic press became a place of public journalism for many opponents. It opened up opportunities for those who could not or did not want to publish in the PRL’s media and for those who wanted to criticise society⁴. “Many times earlier, in spite of the careful post of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, some Catholic environments actively supported an opposition, giving some columns to rebellious writers, accepting expelled students from other universities to the Catholic University of Lublin, providing shelter in the defence of political prisoners. The choice of the Polish Pope, friend of the ‘Kraków – Warsaw Salon’ only strengthened this anti-system alliance. The Alliance of the Secular Left with the open hands for the Catholic Church led to the ultimate success at the end of the PRL; brothers in combat from KOR (Workers’ Defence Committee) and Solidarity (Independent Self-governing Trade Union) dominated the Round Table negotiations and co-created the first non-communist government”⁵ The Round Table Negotiations were opened by Jerzy Turowicz and it was the best evidence of how important a role the central environment of the *Tygodnik* magazine had played.⁶

³ Proponents of prewar Polish political movement of nationalist ideology.

⁴ I. Kowol, *Kościół katolicki i media katolickie*, [in:] *Media i dziennikarstwo w Polsce 1989–1995*, ed. Gerard G. Popper, I. Rutkiewicz, K. Shliep, Kraków 1996, p. 102.

⁵ *Katolicyzm otwarty – „Tygodnik Powszechny”, „Więź”, „Znak”, [in:] Kuroń. Autobiografia*, ed. S. Liszka, S. Sierakowski, M. Sutowski, A. Szczęśniak, Warszawa 2009, p. 537.

⁶ K. Biernat, *Obraz demokratyczny lansowany w Radiu Maryja i „Tygodniku Powszechnym”, [in:] Media a demokracja*, ed. L. Pokrzycka, W. Mnich, Lublin 2007, p. 132.

The unfortunate gift of freedom⁷

Thanks to the agreements established at the negotiations of the Round Table under the Act amending the Press Law of 29 May 1989, the controversial 19th Article (the need for authorisation to publish or secure processing costs) was deleted. As a result of the Act of 11 April 1990, the Central Office of Control of Publications and Performances ceased its activities. The Central Office of Control was a body of institutional preventive state control for over 45 years.⁸ From this time, without any obstacles anyone could become a publisher of the press, by only making a commitment to operate within the law in force in Poland.

The concession system was replaced by a registration system⁹. Another decision that affected the press market in Poland was the liquidation of the RSW “Prasa-Książka-Ruch” party group. Under the law adopted by the Parliament on 22 March 1990, the allocation of RSW property caused much more controversy and its privatisation is often referred to as a typical example of the “enfranchisement of the *nomenklatura*”. However, insufficiently precise rules dictating the sale of newspapers and magazines resulted in a collapse or takeover by foreign concerns of some of the magazines.¹⁰

The Catholic media, using such records like the Law of 17 May 1989 on the Relation of the State and the Catholic Church in the Polish Republic, established the right of the Church to:

“Publish newspapers, books and other printed materials and establish and run publishing houses for the Catholic news agency and its printing mills

“Broadcast masses on Sundays and holidays in the mass media, and their religious, moral and cultural programmes

“Establish and run their own radio and television stations in consultation with the Minister (now the National Council of Radio and Television)

“Establish and run their own theatres, cinemas, studios and other audio-visual distributions and wide-spreading films without the obligation to obtain permits and authorisations required.”¹¹

⁷ The title of the chapter is the title of Tischner’s book – J. Tischner, *Nieszczęsny dar wolności*, Kraków 1996, which focuses on the same period.

⁸ The legal foundation for the GUKPPIW was the decree of the Council of Ministers of 5 July 1946.

⁹ W. Sonczyk, *Media w Polsce*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 28–29.

¹⁰ Z. Bajka, *Rynek mediów w Polsce*, [in:] *Dziennikarstwo i świat mediów*, ed. Z. Bauer, E. Chudziński, Kraków 2010, p. 85.

¹¹ J. Jarowiecki, *Studia nad prasą polską XIX i XX wieku*, Kraków 1997, p. 214.

First, which is understandable not only for technological reasons, a new era for Catholic media could be noticed in the press. In 1988, in the final full year when Poland was under the rule of “real socialism”, 35 titles appeared, with a total circulation of 1.2 million copies. In 1989, the number of all the Catholic newspapers and magazines was estimated at 135 titles.¹² In 1994, Bishop Adam Lepa and Zofia Czop mentioned 264 titles in the *Catalogue of the Catholic Press in Poland*.

This number is quite limited, because the authors based it on a very narrow definition of the Catholic press – the definition relating to the broadcasting station. The fact is, that the impact of the Catholic press has not been vastly extended, even though the number is higher than before 1989.¹³

Press

Let me start from the beginning. I will take into consideration the division of the press by its periodicity; first the daily press, because there is only one title which can be taken into account when discussing Catholic media in contemporary Poland. *Nasz Dziennik*, which I will discuss, is considered to be the only real Polish Catholic newspaper, though this is not completely true. *Nasz Dziennik* cannot be recognised according to the criterion of a broadcasting station. Archbishop Życiński stated that: “*Nasz Dziennik* has as much in common with Catholicism, as *Trybuna Ludu*¹⁴ had with the working class”.¹⁵

Nasz Dziennik found its space in Poland due to a deficiency in the Polish market of important Catholic media. Attempts to fill this gap took a long time from the early nineties. Since 1947, the PAX press association *Słowo Powszechne* and on 22 January 1993 limited liability company Inco Veritas, which was included in the Civitas Christiana publishing house, released the first issue of the newspaper *Słowo* (The Word).¹⁶ It did not find a group of faithful readers. In 1996, the title steadily declined. On weekdays sales of *Słowo* did not exceed eight thousand copies and the monthly

¹² T. Mielczarek, *Środki masowego komunikowania Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce na przełomie XX i XXI wieku*, [in:] *Środki masowego komunikowania, a społeczeństwo*, ed. M. Gierula, M. Wielopolska-Szymura, Katowice 2006, p. 26.

¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 36–37.

¹⁴ Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), „Trybuna Ludu”.

¹⁵ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja, środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 25–26 September 2004.

¹⁶ *Idem*, *Prasa Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce w latach 1989–2004*, [in:] *Media wyznaniowe w Polsce 1989–2004*, ed. E. Kossewska, J. Adamowski, Warszawa 2004, p. 92.

deficit was around 0.4 billion PLN. Father Tadeusz Rydzyk (the head of Radio Maria) was interested in taking over the newspaper, but afterwards he declared that it was impossible to save.¹⁷ *Słowo* appeared as a newspaper on 9 May 1997, and in June 1997 began to come out as a weekly magazine.¹⁸

Father Tadeusz Rydzyk also maintained his interest in issuing a nationwide paper, and on 29 January 1998 *Nasz Dziennik* began to appear. This newspaper has been and is still considered a controversial title. It is worth quoting the opinion from 2003 of outstanding, recently deceased, Archbishop Józef Zyciński, who during a meeting with the priests of Chełm compared *Nasz Dziennik* to PAX's press association *Słowo Powszechne*: "In this version, which was proclaimed in the pages of *Słowo* was an attempt to combine faith in God with political pathology, dictated by principles foreign to the teachings of the Church. Today, a similar combination is found in *Nasz Dziennik*."¹⁹

Weeklies

Weekly magazines from the all Catholic press are the best placed on the media market in Poland. The market leader is *Gość Niedzielny*, whose circulation in April 2011 was estimated at a level of 210, 771 copies and sales at 158, 603 copies, according to data provided by the Association of Press Distribution Control developed by the web site wirtualnemedial.pl.²⁰

It is worth mentioning that *Gość Niedzielny* is a market leader not only among the Catholic press but also in general. This weekly is ahead of the other large influential weeklies, which are presented below:

- *Polityka* – circulation 192, 600, sales 134, 278.
- Ranking 2nd: *Uważam Rze, inaczej pisane* – circulation 327,267, sales 133,215.
- Ranking 3rd: *Newsweek Polska* – circulation 174,183, sales 100,531.
- Ranking 4th: *Wprost* – circulation 177,159 sales 90,526.
- Ranking 9th on the market: *Tygodnik Powszechny* – circulation 41,591 (April 2011), sales 19,273 copies.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ Data from the ZKDP – ABC Poland (Związek Kontroli Dystrybucji Prasy) portal developed by www.wirtualnemedial.pl, (accessed on 06/06/2011 and later).

- Sales of *Tygodnik Powszechny* are five times greater than of *Przewodnik Katolicki* (literally: *Catholic Guide*, position number 10, circulation 40,504 and sales 3,781).²¹

However, this does not satisfy either the editorial staff of Wiślna Street or the owner of the majority stake, ITI Group. The previously-mentioned *Przewodnik Katolicki*, which celebrated its centenary on 17 January 1956, closed the top ten ranking.²² Furthermore, we cannot miss *Niedziela* – a weekly that is not controlled by the Association of Press Distribution Control, but its sales are impressive at a level of 150–190,000.²³ Katarzyna Pokorny-Ignatowicz has expressed doubts relating to the accuracy of *Niedziela*'s circulation, and proposed a comparison with the results of *Gość Niedzielny*, the leader among weeklies.²⁴ Apart from the question of the Association of Press Distribution Control, she admits that the extent of editing can be a source of pride. In 2006, the “Sunday Visitor” celebrated its 80th birthday – it was founded as a diocesan magazine by Bishop of Częstochowa Teodor Kubina in 1926. Today, *Niedziela* has 24 Polish editions and two foreign ones – Italian and American (Chicago).²⁵ The bi-monthly *Tęcza* is intended for younger readers, launched by the *Niedziela* publishing house. The aim of *Tęcza* is to introduce children to the essence of Christianity and to help parents, grandparents and catechists in discussing the issue of faith.²⁶ Despite the various forms of paper editions, the *Niedziela* FM radio service run by the editors also helps in reaching out to readers. It broadcasts reports of various important events of the magazine and the Church, some discussions in its “Under the Collar” programme, and almost daily “The Statement of the Editor”. Different programmes cannot only be heard but also seen thanks to its TV station, Studio TV *Niedziela*.

Niedziela does not avoid policy. Journalists who write for *Niedziela* have the opportunity to express opinions not only about their Christianity, but also about different events, “especially social and political ones”.²⁷ For the above we can thank Krystyna Czuba, who was the former advisor to Prime Minister Marcinkiewicz and lecturer at the School of Social and

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² T. Mielczarek, *Prasa Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce w latach 1989–2004*, op. cit., p. 93.

²³ E-mail from the editor of *Niedziela* (redakcja@niedziela.pl) of 30 March 2011: “Dear Sir, We inform you that the circulation of *Niedziela* ranges from 150,000 to 190,000 copies. *Niedziela* Editors”.

²⁴ K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, op. cit., p. 125.

²⁵ www.niedziela.pl – „Niedziela w diecezjach” (accessed on 06.06.2011).

²⁶ www.niedziela.pl – „Moje pismo Tęcza” (accessed on 06.06.2011).

²⁷ www.niedziela.pl/galerie/filmy/80/czuba.wmv (accessed on 06.06.2011).

Media Culture in Toruń and an ex-senator. Special thanks is given in the birthday recording, which can be viewed on the web page of the weekly. In the films recorded on the occasion of its 80th birthday, we will find wishes from many other politicians, representing rather one political option.²⁸ These are only wishes, but we can easily find the program line of the newspaper and the fact that politics is present there all the time. *Gość Niedzielny* can boast an equally impressive history; the first edition appeared on 9 September 1923, published by the Metropolitan Curia in Silesia. During the second world war, the weekly was suspended. After the war, the title was revived, however, under communism it suffered from various difficulties concerning the allocation of paper or censorship, though it appeared throughout the PRL. Today the weekly has 19 diocese editions, which cover local affairs and inform about events taking place in the diocese. The entire publishing house is quite a large organisation, employing 125 people.²⁹

Gość and *Niedziela* do not avoid politics. Editors can be brave, and sometimes too brave, in upholding the values they represent. This “courage” to comment on the case of Alicja Tysiąc cost the editors 30,000 PLN. In September 2009, the district court shared the plaintiff’s opinion that “the wording of the texts was harassing, offensive and contemptuous”. *Gość Niedzielny* appealed against that judgment, but the Court of Appeal in Silesia upheld the amount of damages in March 2010.³⁰ After the sentence, “nothing has changed. I mean we absolutely do not deviate even one step from what we wrote,” answered Franciszek Kucharczyk, a columnist for *Gość Niedzielny* when questioned by a journalist.³¹ Like *Niedziela*, the Catholic weekly magazine offers a supplement for young readers. It is called *Mały Gość Niedzielny* (Little Sunday Visitor) – the largest Catholic magazine addressed to children and adolescents. It has been distributed almost from the beginning of the adult edition, since 1927.

²⁸ www.niedziela.pl/serwis.php?serwis=80_lat_niedzieli (accessed on 06.06.2011).

²⁹ *Gość Niedzielny – historia i dzień dzisiejszy*, www.gosc.pl, no author (accessed on 06/06/2011 and later).

³⁰ http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,7630031_Gosc_Niedzielny_ma_przeprosic_Alicje_Tysiac_za_jezyk.html, 05.03.2010 (accessed on 06.06.2011).

³¹ K. Szyjka, *Przeigrana, która jest wygraną*, interview with Franciszek Kucharczak, a columnist of „*Gość Niedzielny*”, <http://www.faktyoswiecim.pl/index.php/inny-format/rozmowy/4819-przeigrana-ktora-jest-wygrana>, 15.03.2011 (accessed on 06/06/2011 and later).

Monthlies

Monthlies hold a significantly worse position in the market in comparison with the weeklies. Jarosław Makowski and Artur Madaliński in the text *Technikum Duchowlane* noted that the influential Catholic magazines failed in the face of the free market and Polish Catholicism. Several years ago, any public debate on the church without the thought of institutions such as *Znak*, *Więź*, *Przegląd Powszechny* or *W Drodze* would have been unthinkable in Poland.³² Today, the Catholic community is doing well without these writings, even if the majority of Polish Catholics do not know what the newspapers are, and “each of these magazines is fighting for survival – and if they are not close yet, I think – it is because of the respect for the living founders, or known and distinguished editors”.³³

However, we can note some successful monthlies that constitute the “mainstream popular Catholic press”. This phenomenon is particularly interesting with the background of a significant decline in the readership of Catholic social-cultural publications such as *Znak*, *Więź*, *Przegląd Powszechny* and *W Drodze* in the 90s (and deepening until today). If the monthly circulation of *Rycerz Niepokalanej* exceeded 200,000 copies, the periodicals listed above publish six thousand copies at best.³⁴ *Rycerz Niepokalanej* is published by Franciscan Fathers from Niepokalanów. It refers to the forces of the spirit of traditional Catholicism, and is related to the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary and folk religiousness.³⁵ Among magazines, Radio Maryja’s *Family* also holds a good market position – the newspaper has a circulation of about one hundred thousand copies and is associated with the Toruń radio station. Other Catholic magazines related to Toruń’s Radio Maryja is *Różaniec* (Rosary), published by the Sisters of Loretto from Warsaw. People who know the press market well praise its interesting layout and high editorial level.³⁶

Role of the parish press

Some of the most important and worthy of notice newspapers are those published by Catholic parishes, which are an often little appreciated media

³² J. Makowski, A. Madaliński, *Technikum Duchowlane*, „Polityka” 2011, No. 16.

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ T. Mielczarek, *Prasa Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce w latach 1989–2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

³⁵ K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 126–127.

segment. Its development is the result of the rebirth of Polish democracy; however, the historical pedigree of this type of medium came to Poland during the nineteenth century.³⁷ The Catholic parish newspaper experienced growth during the interwar period, according to Zygmunt Zielinski in the *Bibliography of Catholic Religious Periodicals in Poland 1918–1944*; we could include about 200 titles in this group based on content and publisher.³⁸ Because of the policies pursued in relation to the Church by the post-war press, the publishers of this type of magazine only reappeared in the 80s. As in the case of other Catholic media, a turning point in this matter was the Act of 17 May 1989 concerning the relationship between the state and the Catholic Church in the Polish Republic. Quite an interesting fact was that a rapid revival of the Catholic press could be noticed at the lowest level of communication with the Church, the level of the parish press.³⁹ Specific to the topic discussed above is the way this kind of Catholic press is distributed. Most are held in churches and are distributed after masses. Sometimes the authors themselves print copies and provide refills to friendly people and institutions. These publications are usually sold or made available through a church collection, but sometimes they are distributed free of charge.⁴⁰ The average parish magazine print run is approximately one thousand copies. While publication schedules may differ from parish to parish, monthlies clearly dominate (67 per cent). Newspapers are published on a weekly basis much less often (12 per cent), and rarely in two-month, quarterly, or fortnightly cycles.⁴¹

What are the main goals that a parish Catholic newspaper should meet? These titles significantly differ from the nationwide Catholic media. In the opinion of the representatives of the Catholic Church, the parish magazine should above all integrate the local community. This integration is important not only for religious reasons, but also for socio-cultural ones, because it could prevent the disintegration of basic communities, and also the parishioners may contact the Catholic press even if they do not buy nationwide, official Catholic titles. Finally, parochial newspapers are supposed to train a future staff of editors and journalists. The parish press can be considered as an element not only of religious life, but also as a factor in

³⁷ A. Kaleta, *Prasa parafialna w diecezji kieleckiej w latach 1989–2004*, [in:] *Media wyznaniowe w Polsce 1989–2004*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ M. Gierula, *Prasa parafialna, jako typ prasy lokalnej*, [in:] *Media wyznaniowe w Polsce 1989–2004*, *op. cit.* p. 143.

⁴⁰ A. Kaleta, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

public life, promoting the development of democracy, because both the integration of local communities and encouragement of their initiative and activities undoubtedly favours the formation of democratic routines.⁴²

Radio and the phenomenon of Radio Maryja

From its beginnings Radio Maryja was closely linked with the person of Father Tadeusz Rydzyk. It was launched on 8 December 1991 and aired nationwide after a year of activity.⁴³

Since the beginning, its specific formula was based on prayer, catechesis and its contact with the audience. Radio Maryja is one of the only few Catholic radio stations in the world to broadcast the common prayer of the Rosary, novenas, meditations and transmission of the mass.⁴⁴

Yet, strictly religious programmes are just one form of the program, and these are not too controversial and widely acceptable. Emotions are caused by the social and political messages that air from the Toruń broadcaster. The social journalism of Radio Maryja is based on discussions at the studio that are supplemented with calls from listeners. The topics are focused on the promotion of folk Catholicism with national orientation and the fight against liberalism and consumerist lifestyles according to the advanced societies of the West.⁴⁵ The program only serves politicians representing the right wing of the Polish political scene.

It is no wonder that this part of its activity is also controversial for ecclesiastical authorities.⁴⁶ In 1995, the Episcopal Pastoral Care Group of Radio Maryja was appointed and a few years later, in 2002, the Primate issued a decree prohibiting the activities of Radio Maryja at parish offices without a permit from a proper bishop.

In regard of the 7 February 2004 address to the Chairman of the Redeemptorist, Archbishop Józef Michalik said that: “engaging Television TRWAM and Radio Maryja in daily political activity makes the Church as a supporter of only one political party”.⁴⁷

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 242.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ Ł. Kacper, *Kościół 20 lat wolności – media katolickie po 1989 roku*, www.ekai.pl/wydarzenia/raport/x21359/kosciol-lat-wolnosci-media-katolickie-po-roku (accessed on 06/06/2011 and later).

⁴⁷ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol, pluralizm, koncentracja, środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, *op. cit.*, pp. 246–247.

Therefore, the bishops expected a situation in which the media will respect the indications of Catholic social teaching.⁴⁸ After a few years, we can note that the Episcopal actions have not brought the desired effects, and Radio Maryja has become a propaganda tool of one party – PiS (Law and Justice).

On the other hand, there are opinions that the radio fulfils a great social need through the radio programmes that deepen faith and give a sense of community. Opening up to the listeners was its path to success. Thanks to this, many people receive a social identity by joining the Family of Radio Maryja, and making the pilgrimage together to the Jasna Góra Monastery. Radio Maryja is also the Polish radio station listened to the most often around the world amongst the Polish community.⁴⁹ In Poland, according to a survey conducted by the Millward Brown SMG / KRC institute (May – June 2011), every day the radio reaches about a million listeners. According to an audience ranking of all radio stations, Radio Maryja places fifth in the ranking of the most popular Polish broadcaster (following RMF FM, Radio Zet, and Polish Radio 1 and 3).⁵⁰ We can say that there is not another medium that arouses such a large amount of litigation and discussion or a medium that has caused such a difference of opinions during the period of Polish independence and democracy.

Another important result of the Act of 17 May 1989 on the relations between the Polish State and the Roman Catholic Church was the right granted for each diocese to have its own radio station. While initially dioceses did not decide to launch radio stations due to lack of funds, now almost every diocese is broadcasting.⁵¹ In the early nineties, more than 40 regional Catholic radio stations began to broadcast.⁵²

However, initially they adopted the socio-cultural formula. They discussed the various problems associated with the diocese, and religious themes took about 10 – 20 per cent of broadcasting time.⁵³

At the end of the 90s, Radio Plus created a network of diocesan stations, which went through very complex ownership changes. What characterises this radio station is its special formula for the Catholic radio program.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ Ł. Kacper, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ „Radio nie do zdarcia”, <http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/raport/x43900/radio-nie-do-zdarcia>, (accessed on 30/07/2011 and later).

⁵¹ Ł. Kacper, *op. cit.*

⁵² K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

⁵³ *Media katolickie w Polsce*, <http://ficu.salon24.pl/137901,media-katolickie-w-polsce>, Salon24-Niezależne forum publicystów (accessed on 06/06/2011).

In contrast to Radio Maryja, which devotes much airtime to prayer and broadcasts only peaceful music, Radio Plus follows the formula of the so-called “active” broadcaster, similar to the formulas of commercial stations. The program is characterised by modern music, largely addressed to a young audience and brief news.⁵⁴

Catholic television

The first Polish Catholic television network was Niepokalanów TV, founded in December 1995. Its founders were Franciscan fathers. At the beginning, it was only operated locally (Skierniewice and cable television in Warsaw). Shortly thereafter it expanded its sphere of operation and in 1998 asked the National Broadcasting Council for a nationwide Catholic license extension. Its programmes are supposed to be family friendly, without showing violence. In addition to strictly religious content, it also broadcast series of documentaries on issues of Polish culture, history, some adventure films and films about the Wild West, and even family game shows. The National Broadcasting Council considered this project to be unrealistic, mainly for financial reasons.⁵⁵ Then came the time of TV Puls, politically supported by Solidarity Electoral Action (*Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność*, AWS). It passed through various complex organisational changes, and stopped broadcasting Catholic content in 2009.⁵⁶

Two television stations of a religious character currently operate on the Polish media market. They are TV Trwam and Religion TV. Television Trwam explores religious, social and political problems. It can be concluded that the programme of the television station is very close to Radio Maryja. Both stations tend to host the same guests. Both Radio Maryja and TV Trwam air programmes by: Antoni Macierewicz, Robert Nowak, and Stanisław Michalkiewicz.⁵⁷ Religia TV is primarily focused on the themes of religion and its impact on society. Its activities should not be treated in terms of being anti-ideological. This station is a part of the ITI Group, founded as an attempt to capture the TV Trwam audience.⁵⁸ At the head of the station, which was founded on 15 October 2007, are Father Kazimierz Sowa as the director, and Szymon Hołownia as program director. An ideo-

⁵⁴ K. Pokorna-Ignatowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁵⁵ *Media katolickie w Polsce, op. cit.*

⁵⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁵⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁵⁸ *Ibidem.*

logical picture of the station could be best characterised by its cooperation with *Tygodnik Powszechny*. Religion TV broadcasts masses and other services, and also shows the influence of religion on spiritual, social and cultural life. In relation to TV Trwam, Religion TV's audience is much smaller.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, since the beginning the station has hoped to create a modern Catholic television station. In April 2011, it joined Cyfrowy Polsat – the largest satellite platform in Poland, with over 3.4 million subscribers. Religion TV can now reach 8.3 million households. As Father Sowa said: “By being present on the Cyfrowy Polsat platform we increase the availability of our channel for most households in our country and I am confident, that this will have a clear impact on the audience of our stations”.⁶⁰

The activities of Catholic television show that contemporary media, especially those with the biggest audience, cannot escape from the classification of ideas, or even ideologies. The ideological statements of TV Trwam and Religion TV clearly show how ambiguous in the ideological dimension the term “Catholic television” can be.

Catholic News Agency as a liaison between the religious and lay media

A very specific medium on the Polish Catholic media market is the Catholic Information Agency, formed in the late 1980s and 1990s. Its specificity results from two aspects: first, some essence of agency action, and second, the presence of both types of media – religious and lay. The Catholic News Agency has a predecessor from the interwar era, the Catholic Press Agency, a private agency run by the Catholic Church which began its activity in May 1927.⁶¹

The idea to recreate a Catholic news agency was devised in the mid-eighties, but the implementation of the concept was made possible only after 1989.

The Law of 17 May 1989 on the Relation of the State and the Catholic Church was also critical in this case. The Polish Episcopate was guaranteed the right to have their own information agency.⁶²

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁰ Religia.tv dołącza do Cyfrowego Polsatu, <http://kmdm.pl/art.php?id=2011042920064688f2ae529a9de8> Klub Miłośników Dobrych Mediów, 2011-04-29, (accessed on 30/07/2011 and later).

⁶¹ R. Piasecka, *Katolicka Agencja Informacyjna – pomost między mediami wyznaniowymi, a świeckimi*, [in:] *Media wyznaniowe w Polsce 1989–2004, op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁶² *Ibidem*.

Since the opening of the Catholic Information Agency on 1 December 1993, it was greatly differed in its activities from the experiences of its predecessors from the interwar period because of the obvious and radical changes in the functioning of the media and its ability to make use of contemporary foreign models. It received important substantive assistance from both the Catholic News Service and Agence France Presse, one of the world's largest news agencies.⁶³

Although the Catholic Information Agency is the property of the Polish Episcopal Conference, in contrast to the Catholic News Agency, lay people constitute the vast majority of its executives and team of journalists.

The clergy take part only in the Council of Agency programmes.⁶⁴ This coincides with a desire to be present both in the Catholic media as well as the secular media. To cross the border the Catholic Information Agency seeks to develop a "universal language of the Church, which it can communicate with the world through secular media"⁶⁵

The Catholic News Agency has gained a strong position in the Polish media, to which the professional transmission of the peregrinations of John Paul II to Poland certainly contributed.

The Internet

In 1996, the independent sites and online services of religious organisations began to appear.⁶⁶ The media group joined the powerful electronic media sector.

Their formation is not only a direct result of the democratisation of the country, but also the extremely rapid technological development of the 1990s. The Church became interested in the spectacularly growing Internet, having learned from the experience of the development of cinema and television.⁶⁷ Mass media was fairly quick to serve the Church. Websites have become a standard for ecclesiastical institutions such as the diocese, parishes, monasteries, shrines, seminaries, publishers and editors, and various church organisations.⁶⁸

⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 125.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 125–126.

⁶⁵ E. Czackowska, *Między mediami a Kościołem*, „Rzeczpospolita”, 1 December 2003.

⁶⁶ I.S. Fiut, *Media @ Internet, Szkice filozoficzno-medioznawcze z lat 2000–2006*, Kraków 2006, p. 67.

⁶⁷ M. Sokolowski, *Komunikacja wiary w globalnej wiosce. Kościół katolicki w świecie mediów*, [in:] *Studia nad mediami i komunikowaniem masowym, Teoria – rynek – społeczeństwo*, ed. J. Fras, Toruń 2007, p. 248.

⁶⁸ G. Łęcicki, *Media katolickie w III Rzeczpospolitej*, „Kultura. Media. Teologia” 2010, No. 2, p. 120.

The first organisation to begin operating was www.mateusz.pl – from 19 May 1996 – and soon after the Polish Episcopal Conference entered the world of the Internet and established the foundation Opoka. Its job was to introduce ecclesiastical institutions to the online world by providing free server space. Soon after parishes, religious orders and congregations began to establish their own servers.⁶⁹

Today, all the Archdioceses and dioceses in Poland have their own websites. Most have their own domain, such as the Archdiocese of Poznan (www.archpoznan.org.pl), but many also use the Opoka domain, such as www.sosnowiec.opoka.org.pl or www.rzeszow.opoka.org.pl.

Religion has settled on the Internet. In April 2008 opoka.org.pl recorded 717,000 unique visitors. The *Tygodnik* website came in second in the ranking, with 257,000 visitors. Third place was the website wiara.pl, with 218,500 users. The Catholic News Agency website (www.ekai.pl) occupied the fourth position (196,700 users), and oldest service, mateusz.pl came in fifth (191,200).

These numbers may seem large; however, nearly 90 per cent of Poles declare themselves as Catholic and from this point of view these numbers are rather bleak. Research by Megapanel PBI/Gemius recorded that only one in eight (12.04 per cent) Polish Internet users visited a religious website in April 2008. This relatively low interest in the subject can be explained very optimistically – that religion is deeply rooted in Polish tradition and culture, and not necessarily associated with the development of the Internet and new technologies.⁷⁰ Internet users meet Jesus speaking within the network protocol. In contrast, the Internet has become a place of theophany. As M. Sokołowski writes in the article “Public confidence in the Global Village. The Catholic Church in the media”: “Catholics must remember that this does not turn into a virtual real presence of Christ, the true sacraments and priestly ministry. It will not be possible to go to an e-confession, take e-sacraments, and there will be no e-ministry. The concern of the clergy should be carried out in cyberspace for people that belong to the true community of the church.”⁷¹

We can observe the increasing popularity of portals that belong to the Catholic media; however, it is impossible to find news from the Church and theological articles. These websites draw in hundreds of thousands of Catholics whose mission is to find a life partner, people who adhere

⁶⁹ I.S. Fiut, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–68.

⁷⁰ www.dzien-e-mail.org/badania-internetowe/religia-w-internecie.html, data for: Megapanel PBI / Gemius, April 2008, (accessed on 06/06/2011).

⁷¹ M. Sokołowski, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

to a similar system of values and have a similar attitude to matters of faith. On these sites, people do not use the word “date” and registrants declare that they are not married and are ready to do something about it.⁷² The Portal *przeznaczeni.pl* became operational in autumn 2005. To be registered in the “zone of people with values”, you need to complete a questionnaire, where your answers are reviewed by moderators. “Do you want and can you get married in the Catholic Church?”, “Do you participate in the mass?”, “Do you respect the Church’s views on abortion, contraception and chastity in marriage?” For the portal, it is important that it is not associated with the typical dating website and casual sex seekers. Portal administrator Martin Koper explains: “We do want to be closed off, but why not create a place where our principles prevail?” On the main portal page we can read that the number of registered users is 257,000, of whom 2,946 are “in love”, 1,120 are engaged, and 1,698 are married.⁷³ *Przeznaczeni.pl* is not the only alternative for Catholics looking for a better half. The website *zapisanisobie.pl* has also seen increasing popularity, whose main advantage is its cost: free. A one-time fee must be paid by Internet users who want to be members of the *przeznaczeni.pl* service; the fee is 99 PLN – significantly higher than the usual offering to the collection basket.

Conclusion

As a summary of the deliberations on the state of Polish Catholic media and public perception we can cite significant words to suggest that even in its golden period of popularity in Polish society, church leaders were not happy with the scale of its reception: “In the economic crisis marked by a huge drop in the readership of Catholic publications, all admit the obligation to justify it because of the crisis. Unquestionably, this is a factual argument. But do we not use it too readily? The crisis is felt not only by Catholics, but most acutely it is felt by the Catholic newspapers, while the other press, that which is sometimes hostile to the Church, usually maintain their circulation, or even raise it. The truth of this observation is confirmed by press directories. Not everything can be explained by “occult forces”. Apparently Catholics began saving by reducing their spending on

⁷² M. Świątkiewicz-Mośny, *Błogosławieni, którzy nie kliknęli a uwierzyli. Kościół katolicki w globalnej sieci*, [in:] *Religia i religijność w warunkach globalizacji*, ed. M. Libiszowska-Zółtkowska, Kraków 2007, p. 441.

⁷³ www.przeznaczeni.pl, (accessed on 30/07/2011).

Catholic magazines, stopping others expenditures. It is a deprivation of light in universal darkness, it is a deepening crisis. (...) And that is why one should start saving on other things where these savings are more feasible and less harmful.”⁷⁴

What, then, would Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński say to the narrow range of Catholic media in an almost mono-religious contemporary Polish society? Is the weak reach of the Catholic media due to its variety? In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Jarosław Makowski writes: “The liberal Christian will be immediately disinherited from the faith by the conservative Catholic. If he says that he is for in vitro, the other will threaten him with excommunication. If he says he supports the equality of all citizens against the law, including gays and lesbians, he will be considered a moral relativist and ‘rotten apple’ who has no right of citizenship in the ecclesial community. And who would be the rotten apple?”⁷⁵

Polish Catholics differ in their views on in vitro as mentioned in the above text by the young philosopher and writer. To paraphrase the title of the famous essay by Jan Józef Lipski (“Two countries – two patriotisms”), it can be concluded that in Poland we have at least two churches and at least two models of Catholicism, and thus the Catholic media cannot be a monolith, whose voice would be far stronger and would have a greater impact on society.

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⁷⁵ J. Makowski, *Postępowcy, łączcie się!*, „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 2011-07-12, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75515,9929410,Postepowcy_laczcie_sie_.html, (accessed on 30.07.2011).

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Anna Frątczak

Polish feminist and LGBT press: twenty years of emancipation

Although both the feminist and LGBT movements have evolved in a parallel manner in Poland since 1989, the first one was much more visible and powerful, mainly due to an eruption of feminist and women-oriented protest movements standing against the tightening of reproductive rights in Poland. Another noteworthy rationale related with the quite quick crystallisation of feminism as an ideology and social movement, progressing virtually from the first days of constitutional transformation, was the radical marginalisation concerning women's roles in political life, symbolically sealed by the liquidation of the Solidarity Women's Committee as well as the empathic absence of women during the Round Table negotiations.

On the other hand, the movement related with sexual minorities (hereinafter referred to as the LGBT movement) developed much slower in Poland, just like in other post-communist states, mainly due to the considerable taboo of homosexuality. Both the latter phenomenon as well as the marginalisation of feminism is justified mainly by the conservative approach presented by the public opinion, which is constantly intensified by a majority of Polish political elites and hierarchs of the Catholic Church.¹ These circumstances posed a noteworthy influence on the shape and character of the press, and this is what the current text will discuss.

During the first decade after 1989, until the expansion of topic-based websites, the feminist and LGBT press was the main forum where both these groups could exchange views, and hence it constituted an important basis on which and due to which these environments built their identities.

¹ See: literature on the subject, e.g.: *Kościół, państwo i polityka płci*, ed. A. Ostolski, Warszawa 2010, A. Graff, *Magma*, Warszawa 2011, also: *Naznaczeni. Mniejszości seksualne w Polsce. Raport 2008*, ed. I. Krzemiński, Warszawa 2009.

This text is devoted to the press, as it is a graceful yet a difficult subject to study: many significant titles are no longer present on the Polish press market. Some of them, especially the ones published in the nineties, were archived solely by non-governmental organisations or private collectors. Some of the titles discussed below had a very short life span as ephemeral publishing houses with a very limited range published them. Therefore, it seems quite justified to ask whether it is worth adding an additional text to this collection that would be devoted solely to low-cost, niche publishing houses, which are virtually unknown to an average press market recipient, and what is more, are often omitted by press experts. When considering media economics, the above-mentioned doubt might obviously be considered not unfounded. Nonetheless, the aim of this article is not to analyse the place of the feminist and LGBT press on the Polish press market, as it can be assumed in advance that it is infinitesimal, taking market categories into consideration. A considerable majority of the magazines that we shall mention below tend to oscillate around a print volume of 1,000 copies (*In-aczej* is the only exception here – a monthly magazine devoted to sexual minorities, which during the peak of its popularity reached a circulation of 18,000 copies). The reason why it is worth studying press entities related with new social movements is due to their emancipative value, ideological capacity, and most of all their possible influence on the medial discourse of the main current. The profound knowledge to be gained from studying this kind of press is also priceless for all those willing to understand the transformation that Polish society experienced within the last 20 years, as well as to capture the specific equality narrative, the expansion of which was encouraged by experiences related to exclusion, discrimination and marginalisation.

This article consists of two parts. Each one is preceded with a short review of press titles. The lesbian-feminist press appears, due to its dual character, in both parts.

Feminist Press in 1989–2012 – periodical review (basic information)

Pełnym Głosem (Full Volume), edited by Sławomira Walczewska and Beata Kozak – the first Polish feminist magazine edited by the eFKa Women's Foundation based in Kraków. Five issues were published between 1993 and 1997, which statistically is one issue per year. Financial support was provided by the Network of East-West Women, the Global

Fund For Women, the Bathory Foundation and others. Circulation: about 1,000, volume: about 200 pages.

Ośka. Pismo Ośrodka Informacji Środowisk Kobietych (Ośka Bulletin) – a quarterly published in the years 1997–2002 by the Women's Information Centre in Warsaw. The Ford Foundation financially supported the bulletin and the Centre. The bulletin was free; it was distributed on demand and mailed to public institutions (including libraries). Circulation: 2,000, volume: about 80 pages.

Katedra (Cathedral) – an academic quarterly edited within the framework of Warsaw Gender Studies. Five issues were published in 2001 with a financial contribution of the Ford Foundation. One issue, sponsored by Res Publica Foundation was published in 2004. Circulation: 750, volume: about 250 pages.

Zadra (Splinter), edited by Sławomira Walczewska and Beata Kozak – a feminist quarterly continuously published by the eFKa Foundation since 1999, with financial contributions provided by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Network of East-West Women and Mama Cash. The quarterly is the best known and the most opinion-forming feminist medium in Poland. Circulation: from 1,500 to 2,600, volume: about 100 pages.

Mam Prawo (I Have the Right), edited by Wanda Nowicka and Ewa Solik – the Bulletin of the Federation of Women and Family Planning. Between 1993 and 2003 published as *The Bulletin*, and since 2003 as *Mam Prawo*. Since 2003 it is available exclusively as an e-journal. It is financially supported by the Ford Foundation and the Open Society Institute. Devoted mainly to reproductive rights and sexual education.

Prawo i Pleć (Law and Gender), edited by Urszula Nowakowska – a quarterly published by the Women's Rights Centre in Warsaw. In 2000–2002 four issues were published. Since 2005 it is exclusively distributed as an e-journal. Financially supported by the Ford Foundation and the Bathory Foundation. In 2009 the only English edition of the magazine was published. Volume: about 80 pages.

Furia Pierwsza (Fury The First) – an irregular lesbian-feminist magazine published by OLA-Archiwum (Ogólnopolskie Lesbijskie Archiwum – the Polish National Lesbian Archive) between 1997 and 2001.

Furia (The Fury), edited by Anna Laszuk – an irregular lesbian-feminist magazine published by the Feminoteka Foundation. Financially supported by Heinrich Böll Stiftung and a private donor. Five issues have been published since 2009. Circulation: 1,000, volume: about 100 pages.

From 1993 to 2011, eight feminist press titles (excluding ephemeral publishing houses such as zines and feminist women's magazines) were in circulation.² The number is quite impressive if we take into account the capacity of Polish feminism (as well as any other national movement of this type). All of the above-mentioned titles were inextricably linked to non-governmental organisations, which not only contributed to the development of this movement, but also to the crystallization and distribution of feminist notions. The above-mentioned organisations include, amongst others, Kraków's eFka Foundation (*Pełnym Głosem* and *Zadra*), the OŚKA Women's Information Centre (*Ośka. Pismo Ośrodka Informacji Środowisk Kobietych*), the Women's Rights Centre (*Prawo i Płeć*), the Federation of Women and Family Planning (*Biuletyn* and *Mam Prawo*), OLA-Archive (*Furia Pierwsza*) and the Feminoteka Foundation (*Furia*). Therefore the history of the Polish feminist press is also the history of the Polish feminist movement: it seems impossible to discuss one without the other, especially in relation to the last decade of the nineties and the first decade of the new millennium.

The editors who treated their editorial and publishing activity consciously and consequently, perceiving it as a part of social change project, also permanently mark this history. The project, regardless of the frequent deep ideological differences within the framework of feminism, continually refers to the issue of women's reproductive rights in Poland. Quite symbolically, the first issue of the pioneer feminist magazine *Pełnym Głosem* appeared on the market just a few months after the passage of an act penalising abortion, namely the Act of 7 January 1993 on family planning, protection of the human foetus and conditions for legal abortion in January 1993. *The Bulletin*, published by the Federation of Women and Family Planning, came out in the same year, and it was devoted to reproductive health, including the right to abortion, as well as sexual education and many other topics. Abortion with all its political, ideological, ethical and religious contexts, as well as references, constituted not only the main subject of interest, but also the specific flywheel of Polish feminism. This was of considerable significance not only for the shape the feminist ideology acquired, but also for the feminist press that appeared as a result of the need to protest and fight. Taking any coherent definition of ideology (i.e. that given by A. Heywood in *Political Ideologies*),³ one has to acknowledge

² Feminist zines, ephemeral magazines, occasional magazines and bulletins as well as independent women's magazines are not included in this number.

³ "An ideology is a more or less coherent set of ideas that provides the basis for organised political action, whether this is intended to preserve, modify or overthrow the existing sys-

that the Polish feminist press fulfils all of the requirements of ideological involvement and commitment, which makes it very different from what is called the women's press.⁴ The fact that the latter category is ambiguous is a considerable research related obstacle. If we assume that the category of "women's press" refers to magazines pitched to women, it is at least theoretically possible to perceive the feminist press as a part of this category. On the other hand, there is a huge and evident gap between these two, mainly due to the fundamental differences in defining the essence of femininity and consequently the subject that should be seen as feminine. These deep differences are determined by gender perspective. Female authors of articles published by the feminist press usually have and use their broad knowledge of gender, not to mention its social and political implications, while the message dominating mainstream women's magazines (such as the high volume advice magazines such as *Pani Domu* or lifestyle magazines such as *Glamour* and *Twój Styl*) most often uses and replicates sex and gender stereotypes. Nevertheless, at least from the second half of the 1990s we have witnessed some spectacular and partly successful attempts to create a popular feminist press, and this will be discussed in the second part of this article.

As was mentioned above, the first Polish feminist magazines appeared in 1993. Since then, the number of feminist titles has grown systematically to reach a peak, measured both in the quantity of published titles and in their circulation, in 2001. During the first year of the new millennium, *Ośka*, *Katedra*, *Zadra*, the *Bulletin* of the Federation of Women and Family Planning, *Prawo i Płeć* and *Furia Pierwsza* co-existed on the market and had an overall volume about 15,000 copies. This peculiar explosion was caused by several essential factors, whilst only two of them proved decisive: the peak of feminist organisations' activity reported during that period and the sources of financial support.

Sławomira Walczewska perfectly illustrated the atmosphere surrounding Polish feminism at the turn of the century: "Women's entrance into politics and Polish culture at the dawn of the millennium was a true entrance of the dragon. The fact that the number of women in the parliament increased almost twice after the election in 2001, and during three years,

tem of power. All ideologies therefore (a) offer an account of the existing order, usually in the form of a *world view* (b) advance a model of a desired future, a vision of the *good society* and (c) explain how political change can and should be brought about, how to get from (a) to (b)." A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies. An Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan 2005, p. 7.

⁴ Nevertheless, popular feminist magazines can be found in press salons on shelves intended for popular women's magazines.

between 1999 and 2002, feminist literature conquered salons and entered the mass media, is an inevitable result of mobilisation among multiple feminist societies from all over Poland. A mobilisation, which has not been repeated, at least until now”.⁵ The mobilisation mentioned by Walczewska was strictly related with the current situation on the political scene. It was determined mainly by the active operations conducted by the Parliamentary Group of Women (in the second half of the nineties),⁶ the domination of a left wing party, initially as a noteworthy opposition party, and since 2001 as the governing faction, next to action undertaken between 2001 and 2004 by Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka as the Polish Representative for the Equal Status of Men and Women, and especially the fact that the authority she governed elaborated the second stage of the National Program for the Benefit of Women – a program approved by the Cabinet on 19 August 2003.⁷ The National Program, standing as a response to Polish obligations related with recommendations and conclusions drawn from the Fourth World Conference on Women convened by the United Nations in Beijing in 1995, contained numerous references to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which was directly correlated with the forthcoming Polish accession into its structures. This is the time when the Pre-Election Women’s Coalition became active – a coalition coordinated by feminist organisations and popularised in columns of periodicals published by the above devoted to social action aiming to promote candidates in elections to the fourth term of the Polish Parliament.⁸ The change in the political climate after the right wing party and populists won the parliamentary elections in 2005, the degradation of Parliamentary Group of Women, the liquidation of the Polish Representative for the Equal Status of Men and Women, as well as the extreme antifeminism promoted by the new coalition led to a radical break in contacts between new social movements and authority elites. “The organisations had limited access to information, their lobbying capability was constricted, they lost their network of contacts, which facilitated their monitoring of the legislative process, and they also lost the discussion forum they used to present their experience and suggestions to female members of Parliament”⁹ – this is how

⁵ *20 lat klinczu demokracji i feminizmu. Zapis dyskusji, która odbyła się 4 lipca 2009 roku w Krakowie, „Zadra” 2009. No. 3–4, p. 6.*

⁶ See: D. Waniek, *Kobiety lewicy w polskim doświadczeniu politycznym*, Warszawa 2010.

⁷ See: <http://www.bezuprzedzen.org/prawo/art.php?art=130>.

⁸ See: „Ośka. Pismo Ośrodka Informacji Środowisk Kobietych” 2001, No. 2, in particular: *Przedwyborcza Koalicja Kobiet. Kalendarium Działań*, pp. 38–40.

⁹ A. Czerwińska, *Poland: 20 Years – 20 Changes* [in:] *Gender Issues 2009: Gender Equality Discourses in Times of Transformation 1989–2009*, ed. A. Grzybek, Warszawa 2009, p. 56.

Anna Czerwińska summarises the existing situation in a report for the Heinrich Böll Foundation in 2009.

According to information I possess, no Polish feminist title ever obtained governmental subsidies: hence all organisations publishing the above-mentioned periodicals used and still take advantage of support provided by foundations. NEWW – The Network of East West Women, established in 1991 by American female scholars and feminist movement activists to create a free space used to exchange information and to support feminist movements in post-communist states – played a crucial role both in the development of Polish feminism, as well as within the scope of the feminist press.¹⁰ One of the co-founders of NEWW, Ann Snitow, a literature expert and lecturer at the New School of Social Research in New York, ensured the direct patronage over initiatives undertaken by feminist organisations in Poland, and she used all her resources to develop not only Polish feminism, but also the Polish feminine press (*Pełnym Głosem*, *Furia Pierwsza* and *Zadra* were published due to support offered by NEWW). Another significant aspect of this support was also help in establishing feminist libraries (such as the eFKa, Ośka and OLA-Archiwum libraries), which played a fundamental role in the perception of global feminist thought and literature, especially during the nineties, when a large part of the articles printed in *Pełnym Głosem*, *Furia Pierwsza* and the *Ośka* bulletin were translations, mainly from English. The Ford Foundation played a similar role at the turn of the century (certainly a greater role, if the limit of granted support is to be taken into consideration), since between 1998 and 2003 the foundation realised a program for Central and Eastern Europe, and the main objective of the program was to support civil society institutions.¹¹ Foundation grants enabled the publishing of *Prawo i Pleć*, *Katedra*, and bulletins by *Ośka* and the Federation of Women and Family Planning. During that particular period the Bathory Foundation also had a considerable contribution in feminist publishing activity.

An apparent regress of the feminist press can be observed from 2003, when the above-mentioned program realised by the Ford Foundation ended. Since 2005 we can observe a process of reactivating or transferring feminist titles to the Internet, which is related with limited financial resources but also reflects global trends. Between 2005 and 2008 *Prawo i Pleć* appeared solely (as an annual magazine) in an electronic format. The Women's Rights Centre Foundation ceased publishing the magazine in 2009 when an Eng-

¹⁰ See: <http://www.neww.org.pl/pl/about/historia/> accessed on 2.10.2011.

¹¹ See: <http://www.neww.org.pl/pl/about/council/0.html>, accessed on 12.10.2011.

lish number financed by means obtained from the Daphne III Project was published. *Mam Prawo* has also been available solely in an electronic format since 2007. Currently (the first quarter of 2012) only *Zadra* (bimonthly magazine) and *Mam Prawo* (monthly bulletin) appear regularly, whilst *Furia*, which is a feminist-lesbian magazine, appears on the market on an irregular basis (in reality in annual intervals). However, it is worth emphasising that the activity of feminist organisations in Poland is still quite impressive: they mainly realise intensified publishing activity, which during the last decade fructified with hundreds of publications, often written by female publicists, female politicians and women scholars, who became acknowledged as feminists due to their texts published in the first Polish feminist periodicals. The list of names is quite long, but it is certainly essential to mention authors such as Kazimiera Szczuka, Agnieszka Graff, Magdalena Środa, Kinga Dunin, Joanna Mizielińska, Bożena Chołuj, Sławomira Walczewska, Inga Iwasiów, Katarzyna Bratkowska, Sylwia Chutnik, and Bernardetta Darska.

A small number of currently published feminist periodicals may be also related to the introduction of the feminist narrative into a more general equality discourse and paradoxically, with the popularisation of certain feminist notions that are still associated with the promulgation of gender mainstreaming strategies, and this can be clearly seen in the Women's Congresses organised since 2009. It is worth stressing that the magazines that are institutionally associated with the feminist movement have contributed to popularising certain issues mentioned by feminists and women's organisations. This trend was initiated by Agora, the publisher of *Wysokie Obcasy* (literally: High Heels), a popular weekend supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza*, appearing on the market continuously since 1999, which significantly contributed to the introduction of feminist discourse into the mainstream media narrative. Nonetheless, any other attempts undertaken so far by publishers from outside the third sector to introduce other feminist periodicals have proven unsuccessful. In January 2011 a quarterly entitled *Femka* published by the Fempress publishing house (owned by the editor in chief, Marzena Chińcz) appeared among the nationally distributed titles in Poland. Its very high circulation (10,000 copies) and relatively low price (PLN 5) would allow one to assume its market success, which, as can be concluded from the further history of the magazine, did not follow. A double number of *Femka* appeared in October 2011, yet none appeared in the first quarter. This publishing initiative undertaken by Marzena Chińcz was inspired by the success achieved by the First Women's Congress. The quarterly, mostly edited by female Congress organisers and participants and mainly devoted to issues discussed during the Congress, was deprived of the subtitle "feminist" on

purpose,¹² in order to, as we can read in the editorial in the first issue, distance it from the stereotypical odium covering the term “feminism” in Poland. The *emFemme* monthly, edited by Magdalena Nagórska and published by Wordpress publishing house in 2010, also came out on the “wave of the Congress’ popularity”. All in all, only six issues of this monthly appeared on the market, which unlike *Femka* had a culture-related character, but it also revealed popularising ambitions.

Gay and lesbian press in 1989–2012 – title review (basic information)

Inaczej, ed. Andrzej Bulski, Softpress Advertising and Publishing Agency, published monthly between 1990 and 2002, highest circulation: 18,000 copies.

Furia Pierwsza, an irregular lesbian-feminist magazine published by OLA-Archiwum (Polish National Lesbian Archive) between 1997 and 2001. Eight issues appeared on the market.

Interhome, ed. Sergiusz Wróblewski, Softpress Advertising and Publishing Agency, published monthly in 2004 (four issues appeared), circulation 12,000 copies.

Replika, ed. Mariusz Kurc (until 2009: Ewa Tomaszewicz), bimonthly edited by the Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH), it has been published since 2006 with a circulation of 1,500–3,000 copies (also in electronic format), financed by the financial resources of the KPH, the first six issues appeared with support from the Róża Luxemburg Foundation.

Furia, ed. Anna Laszuk, an irregular lesbian-feminist magazine published by the Feminoteka Foundation. Between 2009 and 2012 five (topical) issues of the magazine were published with support from the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe and a private founder (Anna Sasnal).

Save for the fact that there are several elaborations (created mainly by people engaged in the feminist movement) concerning the Polish feminist press, the LGBT press, previously referred to as the “homosexual” or “gay” press is almost entirely omitted by press experts,¹³ and this state of affairs

¹² A description of “the first socio-political magazine for women” appears on *Femka*’s website. See: <http://femka.net/nowy-numer-femki/>.

¹³ The book by B. Darska, entitled *Czas Fem. Przewodnik po prasie feministycznej i tematach kobiecych w czasopiśmie kulturalnych po 1989 roku*, in which the author discusses

may be explained by various underlying reasons. First of all, it is a niche, highly specialised press, aimed at a narrow group of recipients (when compared with mass media). Secondly, the gay press has often been associated with pornographic magazines, which is entirely untrue in the case of lesbian magazines, whereas as far as periodicals aimed for homosexual men are taken into consideration, it may sometimes reflect reality; some pornographic magazines are intended for homosexuals, yet this cannot stand for the pornographic character of the gay press in general. Another reason for this stereotypical perception of the gay press may be the popular image or (what is quite common) prejudices towards non-hetero-normative behaviours.¹⁴ One famous Polish press expert described *Inaczej* as an “erotic magazine for sexual minorities”¹⁵ and enumerates it along with titles such as *Men* or *Nowy Men*, which their publishers call erotic magazines, yet in fact they contained hard-core pornography. The reason for such circumstances may be indirectly connected with the sources used by media experts, who do not deal with similar niche magazines on a daily basis. The basic source of knowledge about this type of press for an average media expert is mainly editions of the *Polish Press Informer*. The information it contains, although enormously useful and highly appreciated in the media expert environment, might still, as can be seen in the above-mentioned example, mislead not only researchers but also laypeople.

The third, and maybe the most significant reason underlying the absence of the LGBT press in media research is the fact that this is a low-cost press and in Poland, against what trends observed in Europe and the United States tend to show, it unchangeably remains unattractive for advertisers. According to Marcin Krzeszowiec, one of the owners of Softpress, which published *Inaczej* between 1990 and 2002, the highest circulation in the twelve year long history of the publication reached 18,000 copies.¹⁶ The above-men-

the topical content of periodicals such as *Furia Pierwsza*, *Interhome* and *Inaczej*, is one of a few exceptions.

¹⁴ Biases constitute a phenomenon of incredible duration and effect: in 1954 a post office manager from Los Angeles refused to send a gay magazine called *One* to subscribers, saying that the magazine is “obscene, lustful, salacious and squalid”. The case finally went to court: subsequent instances rejected appeals submitted by the organisation publishing the magazine, and the Court of Appeals considered the magazine to be “cheap pornography”, which was a true curiosity, since *One* was an engaged magazine with a clear social and political profile, which at that time focused mainly on fighting against the McCarthy witch hunt. See K. Pobo, *Journalism and Publishing* [in:] *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage*, ed. C.J. Summers, New York 1995, p. 415.

¹⁵ T. Mielczarek, *Monopol – pluralizm – koncentracja. Środki komunikowania masowego w Polsce w latach 1989–2006*, Warszawa 2007, p. 189.

¹⁶ Interview with M. Krzeszowiec conducted by the author on 16.04.09.

tioned data concern the years 1993–1995, or the golden era of the Polish press. Studies by B. Jung and T. Kowalski proved that the average circulation of magazines in Poland reached 17,900 copies in 2005,¹⁷ which means that *Inaczej* fell within the national average. What seems a much graver problem was the unwillingness of advertisers to use advertising space in the magazine from the very beginning, anticipated for recipients of great buying power. This situation says a lot about the specificity of the Polish advertising market.¹⁸ It seems that the freely demonstrated fear against the loss of the “normal” customer stands as one of the main reasons underlying the marginalisation and ghettoisation of the unsubsidized gay press, namely the only kind of press that could achieve both financial and marketing success.

After 1989 the appearance of magazines targeting the LGBT community in Poland, which was being established at that time, was mainly related with the change in the political system and release of the press market from the clamps of censorship. Before the breakthrough that occurred in June 1989, scarcely any titles had appeared in the second circulation (*ETAP* in Wrocław since 1983 as well as *Filo* in Gdańsk and *Efebos* in Warsaw since 1985) – titles related with informal groups, often having the same name. From the mid-eighties this community was in the centre of the Security Service’s (SB) interest. In 1985 SB initiated an action under the code name “Hyacinth” and its main objective was to collect materials encumbering, as they were called at that time, “persons with homosexual inclinations” (with particular consideration of democratic opposition activists).¹⁹ Humiliating hearings of persons engaged in creating the gay movement, the manner of conducting the action, as well as the scope of the latter bring to mind homosexual persecutions in fascist Germany²⁰ or the Soviet Union and prove that authorities in the failing People’s Republic of Poland used all of their resources to not allow the establishment of organisations for sexual minorities on the one hand, and on the other hand to establish a negative

¹⁷ T. Kowalski, B. Jung, *Media na rynku. Wprowadzenie do ekonomiki mediów*, Warszawa 2006, p. 145.

¹⁸ According to Krzeszowiec: “We never managed to convince (...) any company not related with the LGBT niche to advertise in *Inaczej*. We could and we still can count on nothing more than adverts of gay pubs and escort agencies. When approaching Calvin Klein’s Polish agency, among many others, we emphasised that in the west, Calvin Klein virtually based its activity on advertising male underwear in gay periodicals. Unfortunately, we obtained a response stating that the reality in Poland is quite different, and the company cannot risk the possible loss of its major customer, namely the heterosexual client, in case he would feel ‘offended’ by the fact that the producer simultaneously advertises in gay media”.

¹⁹ See: J. Kurski, *Na każdego coś jest*, „Gazeta Wyborcza” from 29.08.99, p. 8.

²⁰ See e.g.: G. Grau, *Hidden Holocaust. Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany 1933–45*, Chicago 1995.

image of these groups in society, as maintaining such beliefs supported the operating aims of the Secret Service. Mikołaj Kozakiewicz, relating in one of the *Inaczej* issues a conversation conducted with Czesław Kiszczak at that time, seems to suggest that the SS commander in chief in charge at that time strove for penalizing homosexuality, consequently maintaining that “this is a highly crime-genic environment”²¹

Second circulation magazines issued in the eighties (some in the form of hand-outs) mainly played the role of personals, which partially facilitated (although in a very complicated manner, due to discretion) establishing at least a correspondence between interested parties, and in some part constituted the organ of clubs revealing a social and assistive character. Yet, similar activity was symptomatic for the first initiatives undertaken by the community both in Poland and in other communist states; these were spontaneous activities, often local and grassroots, undertaken under the atmosphere of threat, but also dictated by the growing need to define one’s own identity.

Polish magazines directed towards non-heterosexual persons appeared on the market as early as in 1989. *Kabaret (Cabaret)*, a magazine published by a group of enthusiasts associated with the Irys (Iris) club, was probably the first one, as one of its editors, Jacek Rzońca, said in an interview given to Marta Konarzewska.²² From 1990 to 1991 about five issues of the magazine appeared. The fate of *Kabaret* is characteristic for most gay magazines in Poland, and their number, according to data made available by the Lambda association, may even reach 30 (between 1989 and 2011). Their major part was of an ephemeral, informative and interim character, and was published by numerous local LGBT organisations (mainly Lambda branches, but also many other entities) functioning at the beginning of the nineties. The beginning of the nineties was a unique period as far as the above is taken into consideration, as it was mainly associated with the lifting of censorship, which was also common in the People’s Republic of Poland. This text focuses on several titles I have selected – namely the ones that played a significant role on the press market and contributed significantly to integration within the homosexual community in Poland, as well as influenced, or are still influencing, the popularisation of knowledge on sexual minorities. This group should also include *Inaczej* (as well as its continuation *Interhome*), *Furia*, along with its predecessor *Furia Pierwsza*, not to mention *Replika*.

The first issue of *Inaczej* was published in June 1990; it was 16 pages

²¹ *Seks nie wyczerpuje twojego człowieczeństwa. Rozmowa Sz. Bukowskiego z prof. Mikołajem Kozakiewiczem*, „*Inaczej*” 1990, No. 5, p. 3.

²² M. Konarzewska, P. Pacewicz, *Zakazane miłości. Seks i inne tabu*, Warszawa 2010.

long and the quality of its print (and photos in particular) brought to mind *samizdat* publishing. Relating to my previous remarks on stereotyping the gay press, I recommend an analysis covering its entire content. The second page holds the magazine's manifesto from which we can learn that, among others, the editorial board shall focus mainly on delivering "reliable journalistic writing and information on problems in sexual minority communities", with particular consideration of AIDS prophylaxis popularisation, overcoming psychological barriers, both amongst gays, lesbians and their families, as well as to the people hostile to homosexuality (at that time the term "homophobia" was still commonly used). The declaration also emphasised that the magazine aims to play the role of a contact box, in order to "assure the lost ones, the lonely ones and the alienated ones that they are not alone", as the editorial board declared it, and during the pre-Internet and pre-mobile era this proved to be one of the major roles played by the monthly during the following years when it was printed. Apart from the above, the discussed issue focused on the description of the Lambda association established in the same year, providing the address and phone numbers (including a help line for HIV carriers). The following pages contained an interview with Professor Krzysztof Boczkowski, poems by Allen Ginsberg and Joel Oppenheimer, a review of the movie *Coming Out*, an essay on the nature of friendship, a description presenting safe sex principles, a considerable dose of information and correspondence from all over the world, which can be divided into socio-political, cultural and custom-related, extract from the Code of Criminal Procedure, a gay guide around East Berlin and the announcements section, which was soon to cover several pages. Addressing the graphic aspect, the cover presents two half-naked men turning their back to the camera; similar photos were added inside the issue (though half of them are covered with catchwords on safe sex). During the following year the magazine developed towards the direction indicated by the editorial board, yet it was very quickly revealed that it was directed mainly to men, who, as it results from a survey conducted by the editorial board in 1994 (on an overall number of 1,134 respondents), constituted 93 per cent of the readers at that time.²³ Accordingly to this proportion, lesbians had several pages in *Inaczej* magazine entitled "Seen from Lesbos" and initially possessed short stories, followed by essays, reviews and texts related to literary criticism. New sections appeared with time and others evolved (in 1995 the magazine covered more than 60 pages), a permanent column by Leszek Balcerowicz appeared, next to

²³ Wyniki ankiety czytelniczej *Inaczej* '94, „*Inaczej*” 1995, No. 1, pp. 8–9.

columns devoted to cinema, music, science and current news. The *Inaczej* interview opening each issue became the most solid tradition of the magazine. Sergiusz Wróblewski, who was the manager of this section for many years during the 12-years history of the magazine, conducted talks with more than a hundred politicians, scientists, activists of non-governmental organisations and artists. For some of them, giving such an interview was certainly an act of civil courage, while for others – a natural consequence resulting from their system of values or the ideology they support. The latter ones certainly include Mikołaj Kozakiewicz, Zofia Kuratowska, Zbigniew Izdebski, Marek Kotański, Marek Nowicki or Maria Szyszkowska.²⁴ Whereas politicians – nearly always left-wing supporters – willingly took advantage of columns in *Inaczej* during election campaigns. The most spectacular example of such an electoral strategy was an interview with Aleksander Kwaśniewski (with a significant title – “Put a Dam on Intolerance”), which appeared right before the 1995 presidential election. In any case, this interview stood as a considerable breakthrough in contacts between representatives of the Polish political scene and the gay media: for the first time, a candidate for the highest office in the country enunciated for a medium focusing on LGBT communities. During the following years interviews with politicians or sociology specialists were gradually being replaced by talks with artists – both ones from the elite (such as Andrzej Szczypiorski), as well as pop music stars or simply celebrities who were often perceived as gay icons such as Maryla Rodowicz, who was one of the first (and few) stars that appeared on the cover of the magazine. The magazine systematically expanded sections devoted to culture and literature: the magazine contained film reviews and book publications significant for the community. While, concerning literature, it has to be admitted that *Inaczej* initiated a trend in Polish writing by discovering the homobiography²⁵ – that is, biographies of homosexual writers, poets or artists in general, as well as politicians and scientists. Unveiling a homobiography is

²⁴ An interview with the latter (from June 1999), a future author of the project of the first Polish act devoted to partnership relations was widely commented among Polish gays and lesbians, which was quite a natural reaction, since the following words could be found in the interview (as a comment to words uttered by Glemp, Primate of Poland, who said that homosexuality was a disease): “This belief is absurd and non-compliant with fundamental knowledge and it is (...) entirely unworthy to be discussed. But it is certainly essential to write, enlighten and demand the rights. Now we would need hundreds of Boy-Żeleńskis and a hundred even more acquisitive Zapolska to change Poland’s mentality.” See *Obronić własne ja. Z profesora Marią Szyszkowską rozmawia Sergiusz Wróblewski*, *Inaczej* 7/99, p. 5.

²⁵ See: K. Tomasiak, *Homobiografie*, Warszawa 2008.

a symbolic act, as it allows gays and lesbians to reclaim this part of culture, which has been appropriated by the dominating (and hence heterosexually oriented), monumental and idealising discourse.²⁶

Yet another merit that should be partially attributed to *Inaczej* is the popularisation of the word “gay”, and at the beginning of the nineties this was not so obvious in Poland, also for gays themselves who, as it can be assumed after even a superficial reading of *Lubiewo* by Michał Witkowski,²⁷ frequently accepted the image superimposed by the dominating heterosexual discourse. Gay (in English this word may be used to determine both a man as well as a woman) is a term that opened an entirely new identity perspective, as it was the first synonym of homosexual that was not associated with pejorative connotations. As Anthony Giddens writes: “Revealing homosexuality is an extremely important process and is of considerable significance for sex life in general. Its identification mark was popularising the term *gay* by homosexuals – an example of a reflective process based on undertaking mutual initiatives in order to adapt social phenomena. Obviously, *gay* brings attractiveness, openness and legitimacy to our minds, hence everything that homosexuality was associated with in the past for active homosexuals and most heterosexuals. Gay communities established in American metropolises and in many European cities created a new public image of homosexuality. Simultaneously, at a more personal level the word *gay* became an inspiration to a more extensive perception of sexuality as an aspect of individual identity. Everyone *has* a certain sexuality, gay or not, which can be captured, considered or developed in a reflective manner”.²⁸ According to Giddens, uncovering a gay becomes a part of a wider process, which is associated with the appearance of the “plastic, decentralised sexuality” that is released from reproductive requirements.²⁹

Inaczej was a mix of gay themes. The reader could find a little bit of everything there: from interviews with politicians and current informa-

²⁶ Among personalities, whose biographies (as well as works) have been presented in *Inaczej* we can find both famous writers from both foreign (Oscar Wilde, Gertruda Stein, Lew Tołstoj, Marcel Proust, Gore Vidal, Emily Dickinson, E.M. Forster or Marguerite Yourcenar) and Polish literature (Juliusz Słowacki, Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, Jan Lechoń, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Narcyza Żmichowska, Józef Czechowicz). It is worth noticing that a significant part of texts devoted to famous authors had a very high cognitive level and was far from the sweet and congratulatory form which can be associated with the process of recovering or uncovering facts. Critical essays such as *Motyw ogrodu jako element konstrukcyjny powieści E.M. Forstera Maurycy* by Sebastian Kudynowski.

²⁷ See: M. Witkowski, *Lubiewo*, Warszawa 2006.

²⁸ A. Giddens, *Przemiany intymności. Seksualność, miłość i erotyzm we współczesnych społeczeństwach*, Warszawa 2006, p. 25.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

tion (mainly of a political nature and gossip), through fragments of novels, stories, critical essays, articles on AIDS and safe sex, guides around towns, erotic photographs, and ending on social announcements. This diversity obviously resulted from the uniqueness (but also marginality) of the perspective. Gay magazines usually present everything that can be perceived as important for the community reading the given paper, and what cannot be found in opinion-creating and mainstream press or what is described in the latter with entirely different, often unfavourable language.

Inaczej vanished from the Polish press market in 2002 due to several important reasons: the magazine was abandoned by advertisers, who tended to choose the unequivocally erotic *Adam* – also published by the Softpress agency – as well as the increasing usefulness of the Internet, where the number of new “dating” sites as well as social services increased continuously. In 2004 Softpress began publishing the *Interhome* magazine, which was to be a modern magazine and as the editor, S. Wróblewski, wrote, virtually deprived of any erotic issues, but concentrated on social and political aspects.³⁰ The magazine was published in a circulation of 12,000 copies and had a fairly low price (PLN 3.90), however, this did not prevent its spectacular damp squib – the monthly lasted only four months on the press market. A little bit earlier, in 2003, the Softpress agency undertook an attempt to publish a “gay tabloid” entitled *On i On (He and He)*, a bi-monthly that was to fill the niche. Unfortunately, quite soon it turned out that the gossip format did not meet the demands of readers (who at that time had free and easy access to information of this kind on gay portals) and journalists as well, since they could not find themselves in the formula they created.³¹ With time *On i On* began to become similar to the closed *Interhome*, as it presented more lifestyle articles and continued the tradition of interviewing politicians that was initiated by *Inaczej*. Yet, the sale of the magazine gradually decreased and in summer 2007 the publisher decided to close the magazine. “Simultaneously,” says M. Krzeszowiec, “we were entirely sure that non-erotic gay journalism printed on paper, which the reader has to pay for, had no chances to survive in Poland.”³²

I would also like to contrast *Inaczej* with two other magazines, in order to show how the typically gay magazine or the one aimed mainly to gays differs from a lesbian magazine, and on the other hand reveal the differences between the old and new gay magazine, as the latter one is more politically engaged but not limited by the demands of the press market.

³⁰ *Pożegnanie z „On i On”*, www.polgej.pl., accessed on 1.05.09.

³¹ Interview with M. Krzeszowiec conducted by the author on 22.04.09.

³² *Ibidem*.

Furia Pierwsza was the first lesbian title that appeared on the Polish press market and hence the first magazine aimed entirely at a group that at that time was entirely invisible to Polish society.³³ *Furia Pierwsza* – a literary feminist lesbian magazine – as the subtitle states, was published between 1997 and 2000 (all in all eight issues appeared on the market)³⁴ by OLA-Archiwum (Polish National Lesbian Archive), and the archive's activities covered conducting the only, to this day, Polish feminist-lesbian library. The magazine was almost entirely deprived of any illustrations, and was published in an A5 format; hence its look and content resembled *Zeszyty Literackie* more than *Inaczej*. The publisher never used traditional distribution channels: the magazine was distributed individually in feminist and lesbian communities (this evanescence makes *Furia* slightly similar to feminist zines) and its price was regulated (although never indicated on the cover). Olga Stefaniuk and Joanna Mizieleńska managed the team constituting the editorial board.

Furia provided its readers with an entirely new, previously not existing in Poland, cognitive perspective, namely discovering and constituting an individual homoerotic identity solely by literary and philosophical text. It seems that the main anticipated objective of *Furia* was to educate Polish lesbians that they do exist and they do not have to exist in an intellectual void. It was soon realised that there is a large and independent branch of feminism, called lesbianism, which is inherent with feminism, since its creators perceive it as an essential and radical fundament underlying the fight for political emancipation of women.³⁵ Therefore *Furia* concentrated mainly on presenting classical texts relating radical feminism or lesbianism (in the first Polish translations) such as *Przymusowa heteroseksualność (Forced Heterosexualism)* by Adrianna Rich, *Lesbian in Revolt* by Charlotte Bunch, *Nikt nie rodzi się kobietą (No One is Born a Woman)* by Monique Wittig or *Druga płeć (The Second Sex)* by Simone de Beauvoir (a quote from this work was used as

³³ The invisibility of lesbians is partially caused by the Polish media, which tend to associated homosexuality with male homosexuality, based on a not entirely realised belief that non-heterosexual men are much more medially attractive than non-heterosexual women. This has been confirmed in a study by Jolanta Klimaczak-Ziółek, who analysed texts devoted to "non-normative sexuality" in Polish opinion-forming media (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita*, *Wprost* and *Polityka*) and noted that only seven per cent of people in these texts are women, which means that in the public opinion there is only one woman occurring among every thirteen homosexual men. Lesbians – as far as the awareness of an average recipient of the mainstream media is concerned – are a "niche within a niche".

³⁴ B. Darska, *Czas Fem. Przewodnik po prasie feministycznej i tematach kobiecych w czasopiśmie kulturalnych po 1989 roku*, Olsztyn 2008, p. 15.

³⁵ See e.g. Ch. Bunch, „*Lesbians in Revolt*”, „*Furia Pierwsza*”, December 1999–April 2000, No. 4/5, p. 79.

the motto for *Furia*). The magazine also printed fragments of the latest prose or that which was somehow covered or shielded by the main discourse. And here, as it was the case with *Inaczej*, we are face discovering or unveiling texts and biographies, which were omitted, dismissed or forgotten by the dominating discourse for homosexual women, and may stand as a constitutive element in creating their identity or individual history (“herstory”). The magazine presented quite a modern, gender-queer trend of critical studies, at that time not well known in Poland – after the magazine was closed its authors wrote for *Katedra* or *Krytyka Polityczna*.

Replika, on the other hand, a social and cultural bimonthly published by the Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH)³⁶ pretends to be a new kind of LGBT magazine. The magazine has been published without interruption since March 2006 in a small circulation covering 1,500 copies – its editorial board and printing are financed by individual means owned by KPH (though the costs of the first six issues was covered by the Róża Luxemburg Foundation). The magazine is distributed free of charge in KPH branches and gay-friendly clubs, as well as on the Internet – a free PDF version of the monthly can be downloaded from the following site: www.replika.kampania.org.pl.

The bimonthly is a magazine for young and modern gays and lesbians. Initially the magazine had 24 pages (now it has 32 pages) – it has no adverts (except for a few exceptions) – and it has a characteristic clear and aesthetic graphic layout. *Replika* in its major part plays the role of a bulletin – this can be seen both from the form of distribution, as well as from the content, but it can be also enumerated among the opinion-creating stream. Many articles are devoted to current news related with KPH and actions that the organisation is engaged in or supports (such as the tolerance march, the Kraków festival Culture for Tolerance, book promotions, debates and discussions). According to tradition (when we talk about press formatted in this manner) the cultural section covers a large part of the magazine (about one-fifth), and it presents all that a reader can find in each opinion creating monthly – reviews of recent publications, interviews, biographies of artists or analyses concerning cultural events. It is also dominated by interviews, which only proves that the gay press experienced a certain breakthrough; it seems that the number of public persons having no reservations against speaking to the LGBT press is constantly increasing (although this group is still dominated by artists and scientists). We also faced a particular change in the attitude

³⁶ Organisation established in 2001 fighting against discrimination of lesbians, gays and transsexual persons, which appeared in the Polish public consciousness thanks to a publicly commented and boycotted social action entitled “Let them see us”.

towards interlocutors, which Mariusz Kurc – editor in chief since 2009 – describes in the following way: “it is simply unimaginable that *Replika* would print an interview with a homosexual person hiding its homosexuality. We also do not talk with homophobes, we do not like to waste our energy and time to educate them or gainsay – we are present for an increasing number of gay-friendly people, for whom the equality postulate (...) is long beyond discussion”.³⁷ It seems that this aspect of interviews, not to mention the style of narration observed in other articles confirms the uniqueness of *Replika* when compared with other LGBT titles: the magazine promotes openness, “non-secrecy” and definitely discredits what minorities call “living in the closet”. This approach towards coming out covers the most important ideological declaration of the magazine. What is also a considerably significant phenomenon characteristic for the “new gay press” is a conscious discussion on topics related with economics, law, politics and media: in issue six from 2007 we can find an article entitled “We are Not Alone. LGBT Friendly Media”, which presents the results of popularity studies concerning specific media and sources among non-heterosexual recipients.³⁸ A noteworthy amount of articles is also devoted to issues such as discrimination at work or legal responsibility among partners.

The lesbian press accepted a new formula as well: in 2009 the Femi-noteka foundation performed a certain reactivation of *Furia Pierwsza* and started publishing an irregular magazine, edited by Anna Laszuk and entitled *Furia (Fury)*. This title is addressed to sexual minorities, as well as all those interested in feminist issues and distinguishes itself from other publications of this kind mainly due to its sophisticated graphic layout, which makes many readers treat it like a collector’s item and this is even enhanced by individual subjects of the following issues. When compared with its predecessor, *Furia* is much less academic, although equally focused on cultural issues.

The changes that the LGBT press faced during the last two decades in Poland perfectly illustrate the intense evolution taking place in Polish gay and lesbian communities. At the beginning of the nineties the community began to appear on an institutional level; on one hand due to organisations such as Lambda and its following branches, and on the other hand thanks to magazines, which during the pre-Internet era were almost the only forum enabling an exchange of views, information and experiences. Its uniqueness, or maybe unusualness, which I have already mentioned before, determined the va-

³⁷ Interview with M. Kurc of 20.04.09.

³⁸ See: „Replika” 2007, No. 6, p. 15.

riety and multitude of topics, and all this made *Inaczej* combine features of a socio-political monthly and literary magazine together with a tabloid paper and partly gay *Playboy* equivalent. However, *Inaczej* was a clearly androgenic magazine, focused on problems closer to homosexual males, which was even more strongly emphasised by the divided column entitled “Seen from Lesbos” admittedly present, yet presenting an entirely different, female and feminist perspective. It is therefore not astonishing that *Furia Pierwsza* appeared on the Polish press market during the time when other feminist initiatives, such as *Ośka* or *Zadra* were undertaken – *Furia Pierwsza* was a lesbian and feminist magazine at the same time, in its major part a cultural title, sometimes undertaking issues on the verge of social science (gender studies in particular), which on one hand indicated its high substantial level, and on the other hand reduced the circle of readers to educated women, aware both of the sources and cultural consequences of their sexual condition.

The expansion of gay and lesbian Internet portals (such as *innastrona.pl* or *kobiety-kobietom.com*) certainly constituted the decisive factor as far as the instability of the gay press market in the first years of the twenty-first century are concerned, characterised mainly by the necessity to closely follow titles published by Softpress. The publishing failure related with *Interhome* and *On i On* – magazines with editorial boards using all their efforts to modernise their magazines – proved that the formula of published titles was depleted in Poland, as their only outstanding feature lies in the defined group of recipients (gays, lesbians or gays and lesbians). *Replika*, although it is a free and subsidised magazine (which excludes the possibility to evaluate its market success), accepted a formula of socio-cultural magazine with clear political engagement and opinion creating ambitions, and crafted its message to young and emancipated people, who currently set the tone of actions undertaken by the LGBT environment. Since the results of studies undertaken during recent years by the Gay and Lesbian Economic Society reveal the increasing buying power of this community, next to overcoming the discrimination barrier due to an increasing number of advertisers, one should expect that in the nearest future new or reactivated titles should appear,³⁹ whose publishers, enriched with the experience of their predecessors and aware of recipients’ expectations, can assume marketing success and maintaining a constant sales level.

³⁹ Perhaps the most spectacular and successful reactivation of this kind was initiated by Anna Laszuk, a popular radio journalist who died early and unexpectedly in October 2012, shortly after this text had been accepted by the editor. In 2009 Laszuk started editing „Furia” which both title and contents referred to „Furia Pierwsza” – the first Polish lesbian-feminist magazine.

Summary

The greatest socio-cultural role among Polish feminist and LGBT periodicals appearing between 1989 and 2011 can be attributed to magazines, which due to their content, association with certain organisations and their financing sources took the form of bulletins. One could even risk a thesis stating that each gay and feminist magazine always partially plays the role of a bulletin, even if this term is not a part of their titles or subtitles. This principle mainly results from the fact that any kind of minority press is to a major extent held responsible for contact with organisations associating representatives of the given environment or the ones fighting for its rights or interest with a group of its readers, hence the potential beneficiaries of the actions realised by these organisations. The bulletin form also results from the engagement in social and political matters, and in this case it is mainly related with the necessity not only to present opinions, but also analyses, and quite often source materials, such as legal acts, manifestos, declarations, open letters or parliamentary speeches. From the beginning of the new millennium we can observe a gradual retreat from the form of the bulletin due to the fact that publishing extensive amounts of source texts became – for obvious reasons – the domain of Internet portals. A large part of the feminist and LGBT portals associated with certain organisations or initiatives have also extended sections presenting links to texts and materials made available online.⁴⁰ In their major part these portals overtook some functions of the printed press, although, as recent publishing initiatives revealed, it will be impossible for them to replace it entirely. It seems that despite the fact that the LGBT press reached a social profile characteristic for the sexual minority movement in many European states, feminist titles are still facing changes that shall be determined by the gradual transformation of the feminist movement into a women's movement. Regardless of these differences, it is worth emphasising that the press that has been presented in this text, played and still plays a fundamental role in the popularisation of the main ideas related with equality politics, which is a merit that can never be overestimated.

⁴⁰ This is the situation in the event of the website www.bezuprzeczen.org, which is co-conducted by the Autonomia Foundation and Konsola Women's Association, website of the Federation for Family Planning or the www.ekologiaisztuka.pl website hosted by the informal Feminist Think Tank.

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Marta Majorek, Justyna Wojniak

The Public Information Bulletin¹ as an example of public information digitalisation in Poland

Information, as such, as well as its creation, processing, transfer, possession and dissemination are key elements in the functioning of modern society, and have become the determinants and in a sense the core of social life. To describe these societies the term “information age”² is often used today, understood as the period in which the activity of human societies focuses on electronics and is based on information and communication technologies.

The more the role of information and its importance is exhibited in a given community, the more its recognition in terms of the information society is justified. Hence it seems a worthwhile argument about the nature of the information gradualism of communities, as a result of the greater or lesser extent of its use of information and communication technologies. The term “information society” is applied at least in two dimensions. On the one hand, it refers to the consequences seen due to the development of new technologies in society. The second meaning of the term can be interpreted as the postulated direction of the development, the desired state, whose achievement is the result of a consciously applied strategy in the community.³

Information society, considered in the context of new technologies, is a kind of “product” of social change, in the face of which stands modern man,

¹ English acronym: PIB / Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej (Polish acronym: BIP).

² M. Castells, *Materials for an Exploratory Theory of the Network Society*, „British Journal of Sociology” 2000, Vol. 51, No. 1, p. 6.

³ L. Porębski, *Elektroniczne oblicze polityki. Demokracja, państwo, instytucje polityczne w okresie rewolucji informacyjnej*, Kraków 2001, pp. 13–14. This is reflected in the official policy of many countries, an example of which can be seen in initiatives taken by the government of Japan, which already in the 1970s had developed a comprehensive program of activities related to the transformation of all aspects of social life based on the dynamic development of the information and communications sectors.

and the nature and scale of this change is reflected by the term “information revolution”. Using such a term is an expression of the belief in the achievement of the information and communication technology (ICT) to have a high level of impact, both on the daily lives of individuals and the structure of social life. In this context it is not an exaggeration to treat this situation as a deep qualitative change.⁴ The information revolution can be seen at several levels, although special attention is paid outside the dimension of technology, to its cultural and economic aspect. The background for this kind of information revolution is a new model of communication and information processing, which appears as a catalyst for crucial change. Undoubtedly the presence of new technologies in almost all areas of everyday life is an observable manifestation of the information revolution. In a way, this often implies a deep change in the daily habits of people who are not technology professionals. The scale and depth of change quite radically affects the functioning of the social system as a whole.⁵

The issue of public administration digitalisation is more often discussed in this context, which is reflected in the creation of institutions; for example, the recently established Ministry of Digitisation. It undoubtedly connects to the need to grant free access to information as a right and the freedom to receive and impart information and ideas, which can run both ways. On the one hand, we can mention the transfer of information through various media such as newspapers, radio, television, computer systems, etc. Obtaining information from these measures may take the form of free access, and may be a realisation of the right to free speech. It should be noted that the activities of the media are regulated, so it may have a significant impact on the implementation of the freedom of information access and information dissemination.⁶

But today, in the era of the information society and the growing access to the Internet, the limitations of regulation are increasingly losing their importance. The nature of the information network and its accessibility greatly limit the possibility of controlling published or broadcast content. In practice, this medium escapes censorship. Some researchers have taken the position that technology can be an effective tool used in defence of freedom and human rights.⁷ Thanks to the web, the disappearance of the asymmetry in

⁴ Z. Rudnicki, J. Sekulska, *Wpływ informacji na funkcjonowanie społeczeństwa sieciowego* [in:] *Zarządzanie wiedzą i informacją w społeczeństwie sieciowym*, ed. M. Morawski, Vol. 1, Wałbrzych 2003, pp. 94–98.

⁵ L. Porębski, *op. cit.*, pp. 12–13.

⁶ M. Mucha, *Obowiązki administracji publicznej w sferze dostępu do informacji*, Wrocław 2002, p. 55.

⁷ Such a conviction we can find in the last book published by I. de Sola Pool, entitled *Technologies of Freedom*, Cambridge, MA 1984.

the relationship between the sender and the recipient of the message, between the producer and consumer of information is noticeable, since anyone who meets the technical standards can play both of these roles, often simultaneously. Access to information, therefore, is not subordinate to any restrictions, which is so much easier because information is such a good that, unlike material ones, can almost never be impoverished or exhausted.

The second area that can be determined in the context of the right to free citizen access to public information, is the field of information exchange between government and citizen. This refers to various types of data, for example registration information concerning individuals and land or vehicles, as well as information about public administration activities.⁸

This issue is already largely governed by the Polish Constitution from 1997. Chapter II of the mentioned Constitution, entitled "Freedom, Rights and Duties of Man and Citizen", states: "The citizen has the right to obtain information about the activities of public authorities and persons holding public office. This right also includes obtaining information on the activities of economic and professional self-governing bodies, and other persons or organisational units, which perform the duties of public authorities and manage communal assets or property of the Treasury."⁹ The second paragraph states: "The right to obtain information shall ensure access to documents."¹⁰ It can therefore be concluded that the existing provisions of the Constitution have the obligation to provide individuals the right to obtain and disseminate information. However, it is worth mentioning, that this authorisation may be subject to significant limitations because they are not absolute, and the realisation of these rights can be suppressed by the rights and freedoms of other individuals. It is indicated that there are existing values which must be strictly protected in the interest of the state, and individual interest as well.¹¹ These limitations are created mainly by regulations concerning the protection of classified information and the protection of other official secrets protected by law. Access to certain data may also be limited in order to protect the privacy of individuals or trade secrets.¹²

⁸ M. Mucha, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁹ Constitution of the Republic of Poland, article 61, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, article 61, p. 2.

¹¹ M. Mucha, *op. cit.*, p. 87; see: E. Jarzęska-Siwik, *Tajemnica ustawowo chroniona*, cz. 1, „Kontrola Państwowa” 1997, No. 7.

¹² W. Rainka, *W BIP wszystko co może być jawne*, „Rzeczpospolita” archives, http://www.rp.pl/artukul/55736,207967_W_BIP_wszystko_co_moze_byc_jawne.html, (last access: 25.11.2011).

The legislature defined the concept of public information in the text of the Act on Access to Public Information issued in 2001,¹³ publishing an objective list in Article 6 that defined what information should be totally accessible. According to this article, it can be stated that “public information shall mean all data obtained for public affairs in any form, including through direct expression of the members of the public authorities, public entities and persons entitled (or obliged) to represent a body, the personnel providing the service (for example, in Sweden, employees of offices may disclose anonymous information in case of an abuse of power).”¹⁴

In this respect, this definition of public information is consistent with the definition of a legislator, as Article 1 of the earlier mentioned Act states further on the concept of public information. Hence we can read that “... under the Act any information about public affairs is public information and is made available on the principles and procedures defined in this Act”¹⁵

The statute cited above, therefore, brought to life an ICT publication, whose purpose is to ensure universal access to public information. The legislature in such jurisdictions is committed to share information about public affairs, public authorities and other bodies performing public functions. In Article 4 of the Act, we can find an exhaustive list of entities required to publish information, namely:

- public authorities,
- economic and professional self-government bodies,
- bodies representing the Treasury under separate regulations,
- bodies representing state legal persons or legal entities of local government and other stakeholders of the state agencies or local government agencies,
- bodies representing other persons or entities that perform public functions or dispose of public property, and legal entities in which the State, local governments or local economic or professional bodies have a dominant position within the meaning of the regulations on competition and consumer protection,
- trade unions and employers’ representatives,
- political parties.¹⁶

The Act also defines the form of publishing and sharing of public information by these entities, which are followed by:

¹³ Ustawa o dostępie do informacji publicznej, Dz. U. No. 112, item 1198 with further changes.

¹⁴ M. Jabłoński, K. Wygoda, *Dostęp do informacji i jego granice*, Wrocław 2002, p. 111–112.

¹⁵ Ustawa o dostępie..., *op. cit.*, article 1.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, article 4.

- publication in the Public Information Bulletin;
- making available upon request;
- placement in a commonly accessible location or through information terminals (infomats);
- admission to sessions of collective organs of public authority formed by general elections.

The ordinance on the Public Information Bulletin issued by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration plays a key role in the organisation of access to public information.¹⁷ According to this act, public information is accessible through the website www.bip.gov.pl. The site's menu is also adjustable, and the information can be searched for using the menu or a search form. The information available on the site is organised in databases.¹⁸

The design of PIB must also meet certain requirements; for example, the project must involve the ability to edit, especially facing dynamic technological development. The PIB semantic content is made available not only to view, because these pages do not have locks that prevent copying or printing. The quality of this document must also fulfil the basic standards by which an element or a printed copy would be of standard value (readable) to the user. The ordinance specifies the limitation with respect to content that cannot be considered public information. For example, ads or any other content of a commercial nature cannot be published in the PIB. The Ministry regulation also sets out the standards to be met by individual entities. In cases where they possess their own website, they must place the appropriate link on the PIB website to allow viewing of their page.¹⁹

Significantly, the regulation mentioned above also specifies the requirements for securing the content of public information. The entities that are obligated to publish information in PIB are required to appoint the persons, whose task it will be to provide the minister responsible for the computerisation of information the notification on changes to the content of the information on the website. In order to be able to fulfil this obligation, the designated individuals with access to the administrative module the PIB must be secured by a number of mechanisms for identification and authentication. In this field, a very important solution to the security of shared information is introducing a log mechanism that records

¹⁷ Rozporządzenie Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji z dnia 18 stycznia 2007 roku w sprawie Biuletynu Informacji Publicznej, Dz. U. No. 10, item 68.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ A. Monarcha-Matlak, *Obowiązki administracji w komunikacji elektronicznej*, Warszawa 2008, p. 221.

changes of content to the PIB, as well as any attempts to make changes by unauthorised persons. The PIB administrators exercise control over the electronic log system every working day.²⁰ It can be concluded that the Public Information Bulletin in the current form from a technical point of view has been equipped with instruments to prevent potential abuse and, at least in theory, provides a safe source of information.

In accordance with Article 8 of the Act on Access to Public Information, the PIB is the “official ICT publication, which seems to exclude any interaction with visitors”.²¹ Due to this interpretation, there comes into view the separation of access to public information by the means of the application mode from accessing it by browsing. Public information that is not accessible through the Public Information Bulletin can therefore be made available upon request.²² This type of separation of functions, however, seems to be unjustified, since the request mode plays an important role; namely, it can provide additional information, which for some reason was not published on the sites of the PIB. It can also serve as a control instrument over the information contained on the public pages, and therefore both types of access to information should be considered as complementary.

Therefore, the Public Information Bulletin cannot be considered the only form of access to public information, even though today this is definitely a form of necessity. The PIB is seen as an official publication and in certain areas can be compared with official records, such as the Official Journal of the Republic of Poland or Polish Monitor. However, the Public Information Bulletin differs considerably both in the form of content sharing and in semantic content. This procedure has several key application advantages; by definition it gives the opportunity to avoid a situation “in which a subject of public authority wishes to use the PIB institution as a procedural pretext to free themselves from direct contact through a request for public information”.²³ In this context, as was noted, a request for public information is a kind of tool for controlling information published on the sites of the PIB.

This is directly connected with the intention of the legislature, which gave priority to the sharing of public information in an online publica-

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 222.

²¹ M. Bernaczyk, *Wniesienie wniosku o udostępnienie informacji publicznej drogą elektroniczną. Praktyczne problemy. Praktyczne problemy*, „Elektroniczna Administracja” 2007, No. 6, pp. 1–3.

²² *Wszystko o BIP – serwis informacyjny*, <http://www.wszystkoobip.pl/?cid=3> (27.11.2011).

²³ M. Bernaczyk, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–3.

tion, which in this case is the PIB.²⁴ This way of fulfilling the obligation to inform the public is directly connected with the idea of e-government, facilitating citizen's access to public data and to the authorities by using new technologies, especially the Internet.²⁵

Assigning such a priority to share information electronically, however, can give rise to yet another negative effect, namely the reduced possibility of controlling the content of the PIB with reference to the inclusion of detailed information on its pages, and refusal to provide information on request. The problem is that the quality of information (substantive content) published on the PIB is often low, which means that the information is incomplete and, thus, poor or of little use for the potential recipient.

Often we also have to deal with another issue, namely the problem of the limits of individuals and thus the inability to efficiently navigate the resources of the PIB. Essentially these are the people in difficult financial situations, without access to the Internet or who do not hold the relevant educational and technical skills that will help them to realise the freedom of electronic access to information.²⁶ This is strongly connected with the often-discussed problem of digital exclusion. This issue can be placed in the technological discourse of postmodernity, which puts technology in the spotlight or, more specifically, communication and information technology.

It is suggested that the repercussion of these rapidly changing conditions is the emergence of a large group of individuals who are "informationally excluded",²⁷ who will meet with difficulties in coping with the obligation of searching the PIB information resources. This is connected with a concept presented by some theorists, who distinguish a group of "the enlightened", benefiting fully from the opportunities offered by new technologies, and marginalised groups that are poor, uneducated and frustrated by the lack of access to technological achievements.²⁸ The elimination of this hierarchy and the struggle with the logic of segregation appear to be much more difficult than expected: a new form of distribution, which is the digital divide, separating the data rich from the data poor. Hence, special attention should be paid to any initiatives

²⁴ See: Ustawa o dostępie..., *op. cit.*, Art. 10, Section 1.

²⁵ B. Fischer, W. Świerczyńska-Głównia, *Dostęp do informacji ustawowo chronionych, zarządzanie informacją. Zagadnienia podstawowe dla dziennikarzy*, Kraków 2006, pp. 48–49.

²⁶ M. Bernaczyk, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–3.

²⁷ J. Wojniak, *Problem cyfrowej stratyfikacji w ponowoczesnym społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, „Państwo i Społeczeństwo” 2010, No. 2, pp. 139–140.

²⁸ S. Walby, *Analyzing Social Inequality in the Twenty-First Century: Globalization and Modernity Restructure Inequality*, „Contemporary Sociology” 2000, Vol. 29, No. 6, pp. 813–815.

undertaken to counteract the digital division and strict application of the principles of IT ethics.²⁹ In this aspect it can be assumed that, taking into consideration the level of skills in using modern technologies and inequality in access, which is still low, we will have to wait to establish the complete success of the Public Information Bulletin in the form of a web publication. For this reason the continued appropriateness of the formula of providing information on request should not only be called into question, but at the same time, of course, we should not give up the development of online public information publications.

In conclusion, it can be stated that proper access to public information in a democratic country is one of the inalienable rights of the individual, but it cannot be implemented in a completely unrestricted way, without any exceptions. Although it may seem that the widest possible access to public information, also carried out through information technology, provides an optimal solution, the matter is more complex. It should be emphasised that the implementation of the constitutional rights of individuals in this respect should not be identical to a violation of the rights and freedoms of other entities. Hence, it is important to balance these rights and interests of individual participants of the public sphere and seek solutions that will not generate a conflict between them, as in the case of sharing information while respecting the protection of some data concerning officials or employees of local governments.

On the other hand, the actual realisation of citizens' rights and the obligation of the public administration concerning access to public information requires not only suitable legal and organisational implementation tools or the methods necessary to develop the most detailed standards. There is a danger that this kind of activity will become only of propaganda value and access to information remains a slogan devoid of content if it is not accompanied by the belief that just as important, even of fundamental importance, is the actual individuals' ability to use their powers and rights.

The technological tools that the administration gives its citizens will only be effective if the citizen is able to fully benefit from them, and possesses the required material or educational background. Therefore, we should not underestimate the importance and role of the factors necessary for the formation and development of an information society, including of course information and communication technologies. They are becoming an increasingly important tool for preventing social exclu-

²⁹ A. Mattelart, *Spółeczeństwo informacji*, Kraków 2004, p. 124.

sion, while expanding social participation and facilitating the involvement of individuals in the process of the development of civil society.

The information society therefore appears to have a primarily normative meaning,³⁰ as its shape depends on the scope of social inclusion. This way of interpreting the concept of public interest, as well as the shape of the relationship between the state, market and civil society, are equally significant factors. There is no doubt that a desirable way of proceeding is the recognition of knowledge and information as common, global property and an inalienable part of the public sphere. We are witnessing that the rule from the time of the Reformation, paraphrased into the statement *cuius informatio, eius regio*, proves deeply justified.³¹

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³⁰ B. Cammaerts, *Review Essay: Critical European Perspectives on Information Society*, „The Information Society” 2005, Vol. 21, p. 75.

³¹ R. Borkowski, *Cywilizacja, technika, ekologia. Wybrane problemy rozwoju cywilizacyjnego u progu XXI wieku*, Kraków 2001, p. 70.

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