Abstract

The aim of the present monograph is to take a comprehensive, multifaceted reflection on the changes in the mass and individual communication and to create a synthesis demonstrating the overall transformation in the functioning of the media under the influence of the digital technology revolution and the arising implications for human life as individuals and entire societies. The author searches the answer to the following questions: How the functioning of the media changes under the influence of the digital technology revolution? How the development of the Internet influences the media transformations and thus, affects the man, a society, the world? Are we really, and to what extent, the witnesses of the digital reconfiguration of the social communication? What if the future of the media in the face of digitalization and the social transformations related to it? To what extent are the technical inventions just interesting gadgets, and how much they actually changed our life, mentality and understanding of the world?

The daily monitoring of media reports and daily life allows to place the thesis that we are currently witnessing fundamental changes taking place in the process of interpersonal communication. They are the result of digitization, miniaturization, the dynamic growth of the Internet and services associated with it and other communication networks.

However, it seems reasonable to say that the sphere of changes does not affect exclusively the sphere of human communication, but it has an impact on our perception of the world, behaviors, attitudes, consumer habits, and later contributes to economics, entertainment, politics and other spheres of life that are subject to the multidimensional and multifaceted convergence processes.

As for the technical aspect of devices used for communication, they are clearly becoming more mobile and multifunctional. They cease to be exclusively receivers of media messages, but they also enable easy creating and sharing. This means that the receiver of the media is both a sender and a consumer – prosumer. The penetration of the virtual and the real world is more visible and although it is a process ongoing for a long time, it has significantly accelerated particularly in recent years.

This monograph consists of six chapters. The first is devoted to the broadly understood aspects of the Internet, both in terms of its history and changes, as well as the institutions that control it. It was impossible to ignore the issue of the rights on the Internet, including – how current! – the case of ACTA. It also raises the – rarely invoked – case of the Internet archiving.

The second chapter, in turn, refers to the analysis of the characteristics of the Internet communication and relations of the Internet to the traditional media (newspapers, radio and television). Then, it discusses phenomena such as Web 2.0, the new media and the social media, as well as the issue of their impact on the shape of journalism. The questions about the future of the Internet and the social media were also raised. The chapter ends with the axiological-ethical-moral reflections over technology and the technical progress.

The third chapter is entirely devoted to the reflection on diverse spheres and dimensions of the phenomenon of convergence, with a simultaneous reference to the themes of the information society and globalization. The next three chapters concern the functioning of the traditional media (newspapers, radio and television) in the analog and digital world, and the observation of changes and the consequences that arise to these media from the transition to the new digital environment. The question of how the functioning of the media will look like in the future was also raised. The press was discussed in chapter four, whereas chapters five and six refer to radio and television. Due to some common features of radio and television, both media are discussed together: in chapter five we look at the history of their origin, evolution and functioning in the analog world, while chapter six discusses their functioning in the digital environment.