

Interview with Dr. Andrzej Adamski

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How was the "Culture-Media-Theology" established?

Actually, the title "Culture-Media-Theology" is a translation. Literally, in Polish it is "Kultura-Media-Teologia". Our Faculty (of Theology) at the Cardinal Wyszyński University in Warsaw already has a few theological academic periodicals. However, we felt that we need some kind of periodical in which we could publish our ideas and present views not only about theology, but also about culture and media. This was also important in view of the fact that a faculty of theology and of culture, as well as a complete course on journalism, have been established some years ago. Since the beginning, it was clear to us that an academic periodical is needed. Because we have the unique chance to have such programs of studies at our faculty, we wanted to present to possible readers the effects of such a combination. At the university, we have to keep academic standards, so that the same attitude should be implemented in our periodical. On top of that, we have decided that our periodical will be published in the e-version only. There were two reasons for this.

Firstly, we wanted to offer our readers open (without pay-wall), fast and easy access. The second reason was that we would always have to struggle with funding for the print version, and printing takes a long time anyway. Eventually, after a few years our periodical became well-known

and, finally, we have received recognition on the list of academic and scientific periodicals published by the Ministry of Higher Education.

What are the traditions of the Editorial Board?

Our Editorial Board usually meets once in three months. The main editorial work is done via e-mail; our web page has all the information for authors on how to present their texts.

Let me explain, perhaps this will be easier, how the process of accepting articles is organized. When someone sends us his/her article, one of the members of the board is chosen to supervise the path of this article. At the beginning, this was the job of the chief editor and of the managing editor, but now, when there is more work, any board member may be asked to do this.

This person contacts two external reviewers and sends the given text to them, but without the name of the author. When some of professors need reminders, if they do not answer for a long time, the person in charge calls or sends a message asking about the article.

Besides making his/her remarks, the reviewer has to give it a final mark, qualifying for the publication in the journal or not.

There are five possibilities. First, the text can be accepted as it is. Second, it can be accepted with minor changes which do not require the further review by the reviewer (in such a case the reviewer indicates what should be changed).

The third possibility is that the text could be accepted, but only after major changes which would then require a new opinion by the reviewer.

The two other possibilities are that the text cannot be accepted in its current form and requires a new elaboration of the subject, or that it cannot be accepted at all. Of course, the reviewers submit written explanations. These explanations are then sent to the author (after removing the names of the reviewers). In the first and the second case, the author usually accepts this, slightly changes the text (if required) and sends it back to the person who is responsible for the processing of the article.

In other cases, authors usually decide to withdraw the article. The next step usually made by the person responsible for the article is a review of the formal side of the article: whether it follows the formal rules and whether any mistakes are of minor “literary” nature. Sometimes another person from the team might be asked for help at this stage – to look with “new eyes” at the text. If everything is done, the text is sent to the chief editor to be published on our web page. It is done once every three months.

How is the journal promoted to its audience?

We are in contact with the main Polish repositories and all institutions responsible for the promotion of academic journals. For instance, we are the co-editors of one of the most popular “guides” how to be well seen in the digital scientific world (by Mr. Kulczycki). Our texts are indexed in Polish data bases such as *Bazhum* and international ones such as *Index Copernicus*.

On the other hand, the fact that we are currently on the ministerial list of academic and scientific periodicals (with a good rating of 6 points) promotes us among researchers who want to be published. Also, because we are a web page (well sided with meta dates), and we have quite a high position in the Internet search engines.

What is the most difficult part in the process of preparing the volume?

The most difficult part of the process of preparing a volume is surely the correspondence between the authors and reviewers. Sometimes it lasts and lasts.

What partnerships has “Culture – Media – Theology” entered into?

We are an independent journal, but as a legal entity we are dependent on our Faculty and University. Thus, every cooperation is started by us in part and parcel of all initiatives which occur in the Faculty and University. We are pleased with our direct cooperation with

our friends from Slovakia (Slovak Academy of Science, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra). What is more, we appreciate very much our cooperation, through the intermediary of our Faculty, with the Communication Faculty of Vilnius University. We hope that it will be also extended to the cooperation between our journal and the one published by that Faculty.

How do you react to the fact that propaganda has its origins in the history of the Catholic Church?

We first have to ask ourselves what is the meaning of the word “propaganda”. Nowadays, this term has a negative meaning, but it has not always been so. Besides, it is not true that propaganda as such has its roots in the history of the Catholic Church. In his study of the history of propaganda, Olivier Thompson sees the beginnings of organized activity with some features of propaganda already in ancient Rome. But it is true that the first institution which had the word “propaganda” in its name was the Sacred Congregation for Propaganda Fide (created in 1662). However, at that time the Latin word “propaganda” meant something different from the today’s meaning of “propaganda”. So, I am not certain that the contemporary propaganda started with the Catholic Church. On the other hand, it is true that the evangelizing activity, especially in the past, and the missionary work include the necessity of making known the message we are presenting – that is, the Gospel. Missionaries all around the world gave us quite a few good examples. For instance, in the 17th century in Poland we had a tradition of quite rapid publications of works on Japan, China or Latin America. Sometimes texts written there were published in Poland and in Polish after 3 to 5 years only.

How does contemporary evangelization care about the media literacy and critical thinking of the potential members of the Church?

In Poland, we already have a few good centers of media literacy linked to Catholic institutions. There is one TV station covering the whole

country and a few local ones. The same is true of radio stations. There is a nationwide broadcaster and quite a few local ones run by dioceses or congregations. We also have quite a good number of Catholic journals, daily, weekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly. Over a hundred titles cover different areas such as family, evangelization, missions...

The media education is taught both at Catholic universities and at theological faculties of non-clerical universities. Doubtlessly, the Institute for Media Education of the Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński University in Warsaw is such a center.

However, changing slightly your question, we care not only about “potential” members of the Church, but also about real ones.

What are your wishes for the readers and the editorial board of “Journalism Research?”

With the new digital era, we have initiated the new ways of contacting people. I wish your journal to grow in popularity. Publishing on the Internet, on the Creative Commons license, and cooperation with all kinds of academic and scientific data bases is certainly the right way to achieving that goal. Concern about the level of published texts also contributes to the ranking of an academic publication.

We, therefore, wish your journal only very good and excellent texts, self-disciplined and creative authors, discerning editors, and a high quotability and readership.