MEDIATIZED REALITY - PARTICULAR THESES

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Mediatized reality is a matter of fact. Nowadays we may refer to mediatization of the home space, of social contacts, of work, institutions, cultural behaviour models, of the economy, of culture, of participation in culture, of group and interpersonal communications, of globalization as tied to the media, etc.

In the separate sections of this theses, without claiming to be comprehensive, I focus on these and other media-determined social processes and effects, using them as illustrations and demonstrations of the mediatization of society and also as an explanation of the preconditions for the new conceptualization of modernity and for the identification of mediatized society as a third stage, following upon Max Weber's traditional and modern society.

KEY WORDS: *medistization, mediatized society, DIY culture, new media; Facebook communication; restructuring of communication; internet economy; communication action, etc.*

The media have long been a topic both for theoretical specialists and non-specialists, such as journalists, essayists, politicians. The focus of writing has included nearly all dimensions of the topic, ranging from the birth of the media, to the media as the fourth power, their "narcotic" role, etc. (*Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1944; Shannon, Weaver1949,* Innis; Katz 1957; *McLuhan,1964;* Berger, Luckmann 1966; Sherkovin 1973; Bandura, Blumler & Katz,1974; Schramm,1975; Lasswell 1975; Kellner,1994; Nikolov, 1975;1995; Habermas, 1995; *Thompson* 1995; Castells 1996; Luhmann,1996; Burkhart, 2000, etc.). This list of authors who have made a theoretical contribution in the retrospective aspect could be enlarged with other familiar and not too familiar names, but a full enumeration would be too formidable a task. Here we may add the names of contemporary scholars who have defined the media as a means of articulation of society itself (Lash 2004) and have discussed the mediatization of society (Peicheva, 2003; Schulz , 2004; Hjarvard, 2008; Шаронов, 2008; Livingstone, 2009;

Lundby, 2009). There is still no simple definition of the theoretical framework of the media, of their specific features, the similarities and differences between the different media, their contemporary transformations; concepts relevant to these problems are also lacking.

In the first years of the 21st century I first used the concept of mediatization; and now, in this work, I employ the term in the sense of an almost total intermediation and dependence of many social processes and relations and of society as a whole, on the new means of communication, on the mass media, and on the new media constructs in the internet stream.(Peicheva,2003)

The mutual influences between communication innovations and socio-cultural changes have permeated modern society, and they are still at work, even more forcefully so, in the post-modern conditions of today. These mutual influences transform nearly all social spheres and areas into mediatized trajectories that bring about various types of cultural consequences and redefine society as post-modern rather than modern, as information, super-symbolic, or, ultimately, mediatized society.

In fact, the mass media are intended as a counterpoint to mass society, as a potential means for reducing the heterogeneity of society. Present-day, 21st century society, is not simply a mass society, and communications in it are not simply mass communications. There are parallel processes of de-massification of mass communications, of personalization of media "players" and constructs, of transformations in perception, which is acquiring an increasingly consumer and creative quality. For its part, society is becoming increasingly dependent on the traditional and new means of communication. The new type of massification of communications is provoking a new reading of communications in the time unit. The new means have grown incredibly, but, together with this, the mass contacts containing identical content have decreased.

The process of formation of new social communities and formations of a virtual and exceptionally mobile kind, the parallel existence of a physical and virtual environment and their unification in a common mediatized reality, the mixing of mass and interpersonal communication, the change of proportions between them and within them, the transformations in written culture and in culture generally, all these indicate a

new type of complexity of society and of the functioning of society. This complexity is accompanied by mediatization of many of these processes and also by a greater facility related to compression of time and space when performing various activities, by access of various kinds, by new forms of group and community solidarity determined by the media. The media and society have interlocked into an inseparable whole due to the concentration of all these processes in the media. One of the forms of interweaving between media and society is the appearance of the so-called Web 2, or the social media, unexampled in the past evolution of culture. (Ahonen, 2008; Cammaerts, 2008; Dowining, 2008; Gillett, 2007; Taricani, 2007; Wall, 2007)

These have become a haven of multiple social-communication transformations in the organizing of and participation in new forms of solidarity; here the ideas of Emile Durkheim are revived at a new level. Social action as interpreted by Weber is acquiring vivid dimensions in the field of communications. Today the so-called 'mass society' is increasingly synthesizing contradictory characteristics: it is both an anonymous and de-concentrated society *and* a society continuously forming into social groups. It is both an alienated and anomic society *and* an empathic and organized society.

The reconstruction of certain theoretical standpoints and processes and their link to contemporary articulations of spirally unfolding – though at a complex level – communication processes, may serve as a precondition for the explanation of many concomitant processes related to the rise and features of the massification and de-massification of communications in society and of the mediatization of society.

Society today has perhaps become much more *mediatized* than *industrialized*. The developments in the media not only pre-determine this trend, but also predetermine the processes occurring within the model of mass communication.

The one-way direction of communication processes that was typical for mass communications through radio, television, the press, has now been enriched by the possibility of interruption, two-way direction, and multi-linearity. This transformation of mass communications leads to the emergence of new attempts at conceptualizing and redefining their paradigm.

The two-way flow and the multi-linearity of communication technologies have drawn a dividing line between "new" and "old" media, between traditional and non-

traditional media and super-media, and between the respective audiences contacting with those media. The main thing that divides the "old" from the "new" is the super-media development of the new media, or, in other words, their meta-media characteristic.

The actual potential for two-way flow and the change of roles of recipients and communicators, represents an evolutionary development of the communication process effectuated through intermediation. In the non-meta-media, if we may use this term for television, radio, the press, printing, cinema, etc., two-way contacts between products and audience are impossible.

The provided interactivity in the evolution of contacts with the new media and the expansion – as yet to a limited degree – of this interactivity to the traditional means of mass communications, is becoming a precondition for redefining the scope of mass communications, for redefining concepts and processes related to the latter. We may express the idea of a possible return to the initial source of communications, but at a high technologically determined level.

The traditional mass communications model is based on a perception of the public as passive, but this model is also undergoing transformations. It is moving on, in its extreme form, to a model of interpersonal communication through e-mails, personal blogs, and to a model of traditional mass communications in which the public enters as co-author, author, etc. These transformations in the participation of recipients presuppose a new view of the audience and make it possible to identify the audience as a mix of convergent processes: simultaneous passiveness and activeness, simultaneous directness and indirectness, and as a mix of communication means used simultaneously: hearing, speaking, writing, reading.

The new communication models are based on a view of the audience as both recipient and communicator, as a bearer of mobile communication actions, as a focus of communication means, as self-controlling its own media space, etc.

In the past history of culture and communications, the audience did not have the possibility to use its creative potential.(Dermendjieva,1998 Doulov,2002; Petev, 2009;) But this is no longer so. Individual persons are becoming embodied as media when they

administer their own sites, blogs, or create fan fictions. All this is due to, and predetermined by the potential of, the internet.

The media and their development are contributing in a greater degree to the mediatization of societies than industrialization has contributed to their industrial development.

Of course, some might claim that mediatization is part of industrialization, others might say that industrialization is becoming mediatized, and still others might assert that industrialization was an earlier stage of mediatization. There are different possible perspectives, but the grounds for such assertions acquire new supporting arguments.

Since 2003, when I first published my idea regarding the mediatization of society in the book *Economics and Communication. The World of Communications or the Media Society* and tried to present arguments in support of this thesis, many new media-determined processes have arisen, new representative and in-depth surveys have been carried out, many new observations have been accumulated, most of which have been used as materials for the arguments. The fact that such a development is taking place is supported by the articulation of these processes in works by foreign authors (Schulz , 2004; Hjarvard, 2008; Livingstone, 2009; Lundby, 2009).

Nowadays we may refer to mediatization of the home space, of social contacts, of work, institutions, cultural behaviour models, of the economy, of culture (writing, reading, perception), of participation in culture, of group and interpersonal communications, of globalization as tied to the media, etc. [1;2;3] In the separate sections of this theses, without claiming to be comprehensive, I focus on these and other media-determined social processes and effects, using them as illustrations and demonstrations of the mediatization of society and also as an explanation of the preconditions for the new conceptualization of modernity and for the identification of media society as a third stage, following upon Max Weber's traditional and modern society. On the other hand, these discussions are used to redefine the social paradigm of social action, in the context of mediatization, towards a notion of communicative action.

The mediatization of social contacts first began with the appearance and widespread use of stationary telephones, fax machines and other technological determinants of interpersonal contacts. But mobile phones and other mobile

communication means inscribed in the internet led to a definition of mediatization in terms of mobility.

Communication with friends and relatives is increasingly being conducted through mobile telephones and the internet, while "live" meetings are increasingly being displaced by communication through the new media[3] (Humphreys,2005; Kenichi; Ishii, 2006; Katz, Sugiyama, 2006 Campbell, 2007; Jia, Weber, 2007; Kim,G. Kim, P., Rice, 2007) The mediatization of social contacts is the new cultural phenomenon possessing mobile immanence, while the change of various cultural behaviour practices and communication patterns is one of the results of mediatization.

The media, including the new ones, have become permanently situated in people's homes. The presence of these media in the households of our country is growing in direct proportion to the increase of home computers. Having first started out as a fashionable domestic article, the internet is now a main means of communication, together with television and mobile phones.[2]

From the indicators used and the preferences expressed in the sociological surveys[3] it becomes evident that the basic directions of internet communication in the household comprise all aspects: mail, information and culture, learning, business activity, etc.

The mediatization of the home - even when measured solely by computerization and internet communication - in its various forms and varieties, most of which are utilitarian ones, and the processes of reorientation and shifting of the workplace to the home, are indicative of the growing range of processes and consequences related to the mediatization of society.

The restructuring of the general picture of written communications is towards a growing proportion of electronic mail. As a result of this, the use of traditional letter mailing services and stationary telephones has greatly decreased. The restructuring and concentration of writing within the mobile media is an intense and growing trend – firstly, a growth in terms of number of communication acts per unit of time; in a second aspect, in terms of a change of mediation technology; in a third aspect, there is a change of material bearers. The modifications and varieties of written communication through SMS messages, e-mails, chatting, etc., have given rise to a **new written culture**,

predominantly youthful in style; the new verbal equivalent of this style has emerged as a mix of national and international language, as a combination of verbal and non-verbal expressions (emoticons), as a mingling of digital and lexical signs and symbols(Peicheva,2009). The constant element in the contemporary restructuring of communication space is their mobility; the constant feature of the mobile media is their interchangeability, mutual compatibility, and conjoining. (Murphy, 2008a; Murphy, 2008b)

The observations and results of sociological studies serve as a ground for a conceptualization of the process of communication restructuring as stemming from mediatization; this conceptualization occurs in the following directions:

- Interpersonal communication shifts from face-to-face, i.e. immediate, contacts to increasingly mediated communication. Direct, live social contact is being increasingly replaced by contacts through letters, messages, or mobile telephones;

- The traditional written communication is transformed into Internet-based written messages, or e-mails (electronic mail), and SMS messages;

- The modification of written language through the new media is reflected in a new type of written culture frequently possessing surrogate elements;

- Group communication has acquired quasi-characteristics, but has numerous positive features;

Before the appearance of new social network sites in the internet, such as Facebook, My Space, Twitter, etc., the conceptualization of group communication as generalized by the classical sociologists had not undergone any theoretical reconstruction.

Group communication within the so-called social networks in the internet was transformed in a way unexampled in the history of culture and communications, and this has made it hard to conceptualize it in a simple way, to generalize it in simple terms. (Norman; Erbring, ,2002; Pearson, 2010)

Despite their exceptionally mass scale and the frequent mingling of interpersonal and group communication, the new type of constructions are mostly a media form or a media framework of group communications, are means for group communication or neo-communication constructs of group communications, rather than means of mass

communication. The elements of combining and interpenetrating of interpersonal, group, and mass communications, build up a new media form of group communications in the internet, represent a new media construct of group communication, a media synthesis that combines elements of non-traditional interpersonal, group, and mass communication. As paradoxical as it might seem, this neo group communication model is evolving from the micro level to the macro level, and assuming meta model features of sorts, inasmuch as it is the focus of all possible forms and applications of internet-based communication. Among the numerous arguments in support of the meta-model characteristics of this new media formation, is the existing large variety of forms of observation, participation, and involvement, of exerting and undergoing influence, and of kinds of communication (including interpersonal, group, and mass communication).

Its constant mobile communication configuration is what makes this meta-model unparalleled. The combination of the three forms of communication in a new social network model of contact is, moreover, technologically conditioned, not mechanically conditioned as were nearly all communication means in the past; this is why we may characterize and distinguish this new type as unexampled in the history of communications.

The media-based construction raises group communication to a level it never attained in its past evolution, by expanding its potential to all possible participations in communication configurations.

Together with this, it additionally restructures the communication space of the internet. The sending of personal messages to which the other members of the group have no access, together with the writing of non-personal or personal announcements on what may be compared to an announcement board open to all participants in the group communication, the dissemination of already published information or of ideas or viewpoints constructed when being made public to the group, all of these are restructuring the previous forms of internet communication.

On the other hand, the combination of interpersonal, group and mass communications, as well as of the three basic communication models (the unilinear, the interactive, and the two-stage models) in this new type of group contacts, where there is practically no possibility of control or regulation of any kind, implies the possibility of

contrary effects, which may be far more democratic or far more manipulative, more integrative or disintegrative, more uniting or more disuniting, more open to entertainment material or to culture, and more engaging for the leisure time of people.

The continuously growing number of participants in the social networks justifies the conclusion that this type of communication is not a surrogate of live contact but a different sort of "live" connection that grows to incredible proportions and may have serious social consequences. The new type of group communication and group structures are positioned not only according to professional characteristics, but according to shared interests, to a new type of acquaintance and friendship, and go beyond the framework of the virtual, connecting with real relationships between people in a unique construct; moreover, they are mobile and interchangeable. These new media formations of group communication, with their unique socio-cultural dimensions, are indeed independent of time and space and of the age and qualification of the participants; they are dynamic in nature and possess internal mobile sub-structures, are aimed at solidarity and expansion.

After new elements have been included in them (such as e-mails and wikis), it would not be exaggerated to say that communications in Facebook and other such represent a micro model of internet communications in general.

The new mega aggregates of media content and cultural content have revolutionized our notions of culture and cultural life, of creativity and co-authorship, of participation and co-participation, of perception and possession of cultural products, of access and inaccessibility, of selling and buying, etc. These aggregates are not only a means of reproduction of contents but also of co-participation and joint creation.((Rheingold, 1994;. Jenkins, 2006,2007;. Kaare ,2008; Cammaerts, 2008; Zelizer, 2008; Tsatsou, 2009;)

Individual people now assume the role of what amounts to independent media, by creating and disseminating video clips through their mobile phones, and in hosting their own sites, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, etc.; this is a strong demonstration that society is being mediatized at the level of individuals as well. The potential for immediate feedback is a kind of paradigmatic cultural change, of revolutionary significance.

The new meta media have resulted in a series of cultural transformations as regards reading and books. They have made reading highly mediatized and globalized. Today the bearer of a book content may have to be specified – whether it is paper, e-mail, disc, diskette, USB memory stick, etc.

The speed of publicizing, which is very important for authors eager to have their work rapidly reach the public, and not rarely involves the indication of the author's specific contributions, make internet publications desirable and preferable to the old system, where one must wait nearly a year, at times longer, before one's texts are published on paper.

The mediatization of cultural practices transforms the practices of publicizing as well, and, respectively, restructures the public space of culture.

The notion of restructuring the public space now applies not only to the appearance of new mass communication means in the traditional sense (with their organizational structure and necessary staff) and not only for the modified internet variants of these traditional media – variants that are likewise collective, but also with reference to the appearance of media created and administered by individuals; these new media and DIY culture are producing and disseminating on a public and mass scale. The turning of individuals into objectified media, which began in the last ten years and is expanding right before our eyes, is perhaps the strongest proof of the restructuring occurring in cultural and public space. Moving onward from the collective-mediating mechanisms of official publicizing, mechanisms that construct concrete pictures of reality, the trend is now toward counter-cultural processes, or in other words towards individual-mediating mechanisms for publicizing of one's own constructs of reality.

Through this auto-publicizing, there has appeared in the new media a *new structural element in the action aspect*, a new kind of actor who acts both as agent and consumer, both as recipient and communicator. These are the bloggers, the forumists, the authors of video clips, of fan fictions, and other materials publicized on specialized internet sites and social networks, such as Twitter, My Space, Netlog, Facebook, YouTube, etc. Auto-publicizing may be viewed as a response to a long history of mistrust in the paradigms, programmes, personalities that claim to provide last-instance interpretations, mistrust in the institutions that provide and effectuate publicity.

(Habermas 1995; 2003; Wimmer, 2005; Barney, 2008; Domingo &,.Heinone,.2008; Hove ,2008).

Fan fiction is a new creative phenomenon in the cultural-communication process, which practically turns recipients into creative communicators who materialize their responses by new, creative intervention; this too is a form of publicizing. In creating continuations of stories, pre-stories, alternative stories, collages interweaving several works (crossovers), etc., the recipients-fans of a given work of art publicize in a specialized internet site, thus becoming co-authors of the original authors, and co-participants in creating and building up of the fictional characters. They are objectified on a non-commercial basis as interpreters of the original author's works.

When the internet had supplied the possibility for intense growth of this activity and for the creation of non-commercial databases, fandoms appeared, as a form of organization of creators of fan fictions, as new form of DIY culture and subculture. Fandoms are specialized in separate arts and even in concrete works. We see that the mediatization of cultural participation has become an irreversible trend. (Pearson, 2010)

Mediatization has extended to organizations. The appearance of global organizations and the changes in power structures, which are a specific consequence of the globalization of the world, and the appearance of the modern media as globalization mechanisms, has provoked various types of changes in the structure and hierarchy of institutions.

All this has led to a redefinition of the work environment. The actual work environment as we know it now consists of a mix of realities: it is a combination of physical objects and web-based elements, a combination of basic and additional work environment existing in parallel, with frequent changes in the proportion of the two, etc. This parallel working environment has gradually acquired the dimensions of reality and reveals the specificity of the mediatization of the work process and of the transformations of the work environment in multiple directions.

In the global society, tied to the media, the question "where", as one of the components of Harold Lasswell's communication paradigm and as a spatial reference for the working environment, is losing its meaning and importance. With the new mega means of communication and the dependence of work performance on those means, it

no longer matters where the headquarters of the enterprise, its branches or smaller structural units, are located.

The mediatization of the work environment and of the institutions results, moreover, in the emergence of a different type of institutional activity, in new media practices and new media forms of institutional activity, in new media agents servicing the new media institutional forms, and in a new audience. The internet is an alternative to a large number of traditional activities, and its application to economic activity (commerce and services, etc.) is bringing about fundamental media transformations in those activities, the appearance of new branches, but is also redefining economy itself as an Internet economy.

The internet has been described as a "financial house", as a "commercial centre", as a "stock market", as an "electronic store", etc., because, through it, all sorts of transactions are carried out, both material and ideal. In enabling the two-way exchange of information and the possibility for assessing the quality and cost of goods and services, the internet provides the facility for focusing and rationalizing many economic activities and processes. (Peicheva,2003; Forman, Goldfarb, Greenstein,2009; Johnston, Clean, 2009)

Together with this, the internet has itself become an attractive object for business, in showing itself to be a field for investment and shares purchasing; it has become an independent part of the real economy. It has expropriated the economic paths and economic processes, but it is equally true to say that the economy, for its part, has expropriated the internet, turning the latter into one of its branches, into one of its tools, mechanisms, into a space for economic relations, etc.

Economy is present in the internet in two aspects: as economy *through* the Internet, an economy that identifies the on-going economic processes by means of the Internet (duplicated and innovative); and as a modern economy that *includes* within its framework, in addition to the traditional communications, the new ones as well, of which internet is the largest part.

In the first of these two senses, we refer to an internet economy, or web economy; in the second, to a super-symbolic or media economy.

The internet economy encompasses communications, media, software, human capital, as well as the institutions and people behind these, engaged in advertising, in

contracting, in purchase and sale of goods and services, in maintenance, etc. It unfolds in different shared spaces through a mediated yet direct path.

The changes in the global economy, which are often reflected in the media mechanisms for the functioning of the economy and in the media-determined activities, have a reverse effect on the global circulation of media products.

In fact, it is precisely the gravitational pull of the traditional and new media that are the focal points through which and by which the globalization processes have produced to a great extent and continue to produce the variety of their immanent forms and reveal the consequences of the mediatization of society.

If we may continue Apudarai's idea(2006), as expressed in an interview, that the term globalization is imposed as a substitute for the terminology related to transnational and world formations and information streams, and in order to define a new stage in modernity (Rantanen, 2006), we may assume, by analogy, that mediatization is a more precise term subsuming all of this. Mediatization is not only the backbone but the cardiovascular system of the global world, and hence an identifier for post-modernity. And while globalization is mostly an abstraction requiring further concretization, mediatization is concretely denotative and may serve as an unambiguous label for post-modernity.(Appadurai,1990; 1996)

Now as before, the socialization of processes can be accomplished only through various communication networks and institutions. Moreover, even the construction itself would be impossible today without the interactive networks and media formations. Today it is impossible for multinational companies, world banks, trade union organizations, world associations, and other global organizations to start, function and develop without the media as a precondition for globalization, without the instantaneous interaction that ensures their space of functioning, without the mediatization of societies.

Both at a social-structural and interpersonal level, the presence of, and dependence on, the media are a fundamental axis of globalization. In other words, the mediatization of society is not only a process concomitant to globalization, not only a constitutive resource of globalization, not only its ingredient, not only a supportive concept for it, but also a means for identifying, presenting, and controlling the globalization process.

The mediatization of society provokes various contradictory effects.

Massification, in the sense of sending the same contents at the same time, which used to be the aim of those striving to attract viewers, listeners, and readers, has now ceded to de-massification and to the search for a different kind of effectiveness. In fact, the segmenting of communications does not decrease their total number, but merely decentralizes and personalizes them, thus engendering a new type of dynamics related to a different kind of mass effect- , a much larger amount of contacts per unit of time but with different media contents.

Massification and de-massification, which are characteristic for the traditional and the new media respectively, develop in parallel in the course of communication. They imply a new understanding of communication dynamics, which simultaneously combines two opposite processes of mediated communications: a new connection of communication dynamics to social communication mediated through the media.

The effects of mediatization could likewise be problematized and articulated in terms of media-determined neo-constructions and phenomena that are ambivalent in their impact, most of which have not been explicated yet, have not been thematized, and in this sense have not been placed within a conceptual framework. Some of the more significant ambivalent media-determined neo-constructions and phenomena are the following: 1. the beginnings of the prevalence of "universal communicability": communicability through the classical media, communicability in interpersonal contacts, in group forms of contact, and the "message", meaning the new information, expected from all these. The "news" characteristic becomes a criterion for assessment, and the "lead" information becomes an immanent characteristic of communications – more precisely, the presentation of the essential, the significant at the very start of the message, as a sort of neo-construction, likewise used in non-media frameworks of communication. 2. Raising the real, the actually occurring, the fact, above the sphere of fiction, of abstraction; in other words, raising the feature and news reporting above the narrative, the realistic narrative above the fiction novel; and perhaps, sociology above the other social sciences. 3. The processes of vulgarizing media performance. They occur through the so-called *infotainment* media forms entertainment plus information), which make it possible to convey serious information through entertaining communicative units, at times through humourous emphases, allusions, and interpretations; self-vulgarizing of authors' presentation;

folklorizing and a mock popular style of expression; labeling people with nicknames (such as "Long Bill-collector", "Valyo the Heating", etc.); discrediting of processes and persons; self-aggrandizement; likening persons and things to others, etc. Despite the different licensing formats and surmised practices, there are many similarities between many television stations, evident in their tendency to broadcast sensational news, publish tabloid news and content, unverified information, to speculate with the hopes and expectations of people, to neglect important problems or display political and organizational bias and commitment. 4. Diluting authorship: poly-variant artifacts and, not rarely, an irreverent attitude to the original works. 5. Minimizing the role of the media as the "fourth power"; it is increasingly rare today for the media to fulfill their role of corrective of government institutions and officials. 6. Changes in personal identification in Internet communications, together with the ensuing consequences. 7. Addiction to the internet. 8. Hackering. 9. Abuse of copyrights. 10. Abuse of lottery games. 11. Cyber crime: threats, terrorism, various kinds of theft, pornography, etc.

In fact, although the changes taking place in communications and the media may give cause for concern, the positive aspects are no less, and perhaps more, than the negative ones. Regardless of the convenience provided by the new media-determined forms that people are constantly in contact with, every person also needs more personal communication of some kind, for instance a direct phone call, or a traditional exchange of letters. But there is nothing wrong with communicating through the internet in the forms we choose – writing, reading, contemplating, or creating, learning or being entertained; we would do well to take advantage of these new communication opportunities. In a highly utilitarian and mediatized world, a person is able to make the most rational choice of the form of communication, taking into account the time, the place, the people, the institutions and the possibilities of the concrete moment.

In the mediatized society a person can be present in the everyday life of his colleagues, relatives, and friends, regardless of the distance separating them. Social actions of all kinds are gradually but definitely becoming transformed into communicative actions. Communication means are becoming constant intermediaries in our social existence. Today, more than ever, Luhmann(1996) has been proven right in his view that society is a communication system, is essentially based on communication. Habermas (2003), Berger

& Luckmann(1995) have also been proven right as regards the importance of the concept of communicative action. Communicative action serves traditions and helps renew cultural knowledge, and it does this not only through the functional aspect of mutual comprehension; it serves social interaction and solidarity building not only by helping to coordinate action; it serves the creation of personal identities not only in the socialization aspect, etc.(Кольцова,1999) Today we may follow up these assertions of Habermas by stating that communicative action in the mediatized society is basic to all activities; moreover, it rationalizes activities to their possible maximum. Habermas's idea regarding the interweaving of the action approach with the communicative dimensions of actions has been perfectly confirmed. Today there are many more proofs, not only as regards this interweaving, but also regarding the determining effect of communications. The transformations observed in nearly all social spheres and those at the group and individual level provoke a reassessment of Max Weber's social action paradigm; they also lead to new conceptualizations regarding the communicative determinations. The transformation of social action into communicative action in nearly all areas − in activities connected with work, in relations with institutions, in culture, science, education, etc. − , enhances the status of communicative action to that of a fundamental concept in sociology. The combination of human intervention, operation at a distance, instantaneity, and physical result, represents the new mobile trajectory of communicative action in the mediatized society. In parallel with the "traditional" physical action, it involves a re-conceptualization of the idea of social action towards that of communicative action. The communicative aspect is the basis and the framework in which social action acquires its immanent features.

Notes

See: 1. ICT usage and eCommerce in Enterprises in 2010. Sofia: NSI.

    2. Survey on ICT Usage in Household and by Individuals in 2010. Sofia: NSI

    3. Surveys on Mobile Telephones and Models of Internet Usage, made by Dobrinka

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