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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Klinika Dziennikarstwa — Credo
(Journalism Clinic — Credo) (multi-author publication)
Eds. Kazimierz WOLNY-ZMORZYŃSKI, Katarzyna KONARSKA
Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego,
2016, 168 pp.

Increasingly today there seems to be no doubt that the mass media face a dilemma: whether to fulfill the public mission in their service or simply adjust to the mechanisms of free market in political conditions. Especially the latter dependence interferes with the media's mission. The media coverage of politics has a dual character. On the one hand, the media, managers, owners, and journalists pursue their political agenda in explicit or hidden manner, serving a selected political option, and on the other — politicians corrupt the media with their biases, influences, multiple interdependences, depriving them of their freedom and independence. All of the foregoing hinders the actualization of the universal public media mission (Michał Drożdż, pp. 30—31).

The reviewed study is a work of distinguished authors in the field of Poland's media studies. The authors agree on one matter, namely, that journalism needs to be reformed. That is why in the book's title appears the word — "clinic." What the authors illustrate in manifold ways is the thesis regarding journalism "which until recently has been the foundation of mass media activity, yet as a result of contamination of the environment with dangerous components of the modern world, above all commercialism, quantitative competition, information overload littering the minds of recipients, becomes an expensive ballast of media owners" (p. 9). That is why in the world of modern media the presence of wise and highly ethical journalists is irreplaceable, and not only of those who simply know their

trade. Journalism is therefore a “mission,” not just the production of media content. The foregoing premise corresponds very well with the Christian understanding of “the mission.” Hence, the contributors, being aware of the cultural changes taking place, ask themselves and the reader important questions. First of all: Is journalism still necessary in the communication era of the abundance of amateur internet footage? Secondly: Who and what are the journalists for? And thirdly: Is it worth put together a clinical team of specialists who would deal with saving journalism?

Surely, for those who gathered on 18th of March 2016 at the Institute of Journalism and Social Communication, University of Wrocław, the above-mentioned questions must have been answered unambiguously. For the general public, the citizens, that is, for us being the recipients of the media, journalism is an indispensable component determining the quality of public life, which warrants and safeguards the proper functioning of social life. Therefore, to remind you how important professional journalism is, following the initiative of Professor Kazimierz Wolny-Zmorzyński and Professor Jerzy Jastrzębski, the said “Journalistic Clinic” was established. The main task of the team of “clinicians” is to carefully examine the spiritual and moral condition of Polish journalism, diagnose particular diseases, and search for their etiologies, as well as to indicate the commensurate remedies. During the meeting of experts of the “Clinic” in the Institute of Journalism and Social Communication of the University of Wrocław, the problem was outlined, but no full diagnosis was made and no specific spiritual treatments were administered. However, what was underscored were the cases of serious spiritual illnesses of today’s man. From the proclamations and conference proceedings it also seems clear that the contributors issue a serious invitation to theologians, especially those specializing in evangelization and moral theology. It appears that it is not enough to simply receive a proper diagnosis (hence the subject of work — “clinic”!) — but ethics is necessary as a determinant of professionalism, which was particularly emphasized in its analysis of media ethics.

In the reviewed work, “new media myths” were given adequate attention to. In particular, the myth of media independence received a stringent criticism. Mythologization is understood here in a broader sense, as an attempt to treat certain issues and problems in a way that differs from reality. It is often claimed that the media is to be independent, which some important questions. The authors are asked namely: independent from what and whom? From politics, from ownership structures, from recipients’ ethos, from views and biases of journalists, from the selection structures of the so-called gate-keepers, from public opinion, from intended goals, from preferred worldview-axiological visions, ambitions and competition of journalists, from advertising, etc. Today we know for sure — and this is

clearly illustrated by the reviewed monograph, that the media function as the fourth estate within the structures of many dependencies. In the local community, the media operate under conditions of various dependences on local authorities: financial, political, in terms of prestige, etc. Some of them cannot be avoided, but the media will remain independent as long as all media dependences are subordinate to the major one, that is, on truth and honesty. It is the priority of the truth that makes the media independent and objective. This is also depicted in the herein reviewed work. It opens a very interesting discussion on the subject of evangelization and the need for true Christian conversion and true ecumenism.

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