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## Convergent landscape : "39 and a half" as (multi) promotional intertext

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## **Convergent landscape. *39 and a half* as (multi) promotional intertext<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to provide a broader characterisation of the media convergence strategy applied by producers of the Polish commercial television station (TVN) series *39 and a half* (*39 i pół*). In order to examine the convergence strategies of production, distribution, promotion and media usage, this paper analyzes metaphors of landscape, terrain, map and simulacrum. Moreover the concept of convergent (inter)text is proposed. In the case study of *39 and a half* the author examines three main strategies implemented by the creators: the promotional virtualisation of reality, making virtual reality more real, and multiplied fiction. Transmedial and synergetic brands illustrate the hybridisation of the convergent and integrated media landscape.

**Keywords:** media convergence, new media, media landscape, convergent intertext

### **The media landscape**

The use of “environmental” metaphors in media research stems from an ecological perspective and brings with it considerable cognitive potential. Very often, media and literary scholars make use of geographic metaphors, such as landscape, when analyzing data. For example, some describe the media landscape as market division picture and the position occupied by specific companies – it’s a market landscape, while others analyze the content of various media, thereby shedding light on the proportion of different types of media and programmes. Finally, some understand the landscape as a visual side of the technical infrastructure. The landscape that stretches before the eyes of media users means the material or virtual evidence of existence of the media environment.

With the developing media convergence, several aspects of the media landscape change as well: the configuration of companies subjects on the market, the arrangement of the content among media platforms, and finally, the technical capability and aesthetic design of

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devices and networks<sup>2</sup> that are used. The analysis of the media landscape has its own spatial as well as temporal dimension (Bolin 2006, p. 70). The spatial dimension of the landscape can be analysed by using the metaphors of map, terrain and simulacrum (Bolin 2006, p. 70). The terrain concerns “the physical surroundings, the obvious relations between different media technologies. This is the structure of media technologies and contents on a denotative level” (Bolin 2006, p. 70). The map refers to “general descriptions, or representations of the media structures on the one hand and of geographical, social, economic, political and cultural accounts represented in the the media on the other hand” (Bolin 2006, p. 71). The map is not equal to its referent, but is an abstraction that has a specific purpose and influences reality<sup>3</sup>. According to G. Bolin, the relationship between the terrain and the map constitutes the third dimension of the landscape, which is the simulacrum, an answer to the question “How does the map work on the terrain?” (Bolin 2006, p. 71). G. Bolin borrowed the term “simulacrum” from J. Baudrillard and he intends it to draw one’s attention to the way in which physical and symbolic landscapes in space and time are articulated, and how “these spaces are phenomenologically perceived by those who inhabit them” (Bolin 2006, p. 71). The use of the term simulacrum points out the ideological aspect of relation, which is being shaped between the terrain and the map. Meanwhile it is worth using the relatively neutral term of “relation”, as the emphasis is put on the fundamental to converge processes, a commercial aspect of convergence. The relations that are established between the map and the terrain in the convergent landscape primarily generate profits, but their cultural and social aspects are important as well. Through new forms of user activation, a new type of culture is being generated that H. Jenkins described as a “convergence culture” - this construct balances on the edge of popular culture, which derives from folk culture but also commercial culture, which is derived from business culture (Jenkins 2006, p. 135-137). It is in this perspective that convergent strategies should be analyzed.

Apart from the relation between the map and the terrain, media researchers analyze the structures of the media landscape, structures of technological relations and structure between representations, “a semiotic web” structures (Bolin 2006, p. 73). Both the material landscapes and symbolic landscapes are equally real (Bolin 2006, p. 74). The differences between them concern the relationship that is being developed between the landscape and a user. In the case of the material landscape, it is a relationship between a user and a material object; while in

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<sup>2</sup> Including use of a myth based on a black box, e.g. as multi-function mobile devices.

<sup>3</sup> G. Bolin gives an example of map, which is of economic plans of the Soviet Union economy.

the case of the semiotic landscape there is a relationship between a user<sup>4</sup>, a sign structure and other users (Bolin 2006, p. 75). Technology, the organization of media, its material base, and media texts constitute sign structures (Bolin 2006, p. 75-6). Therefore, the infrastructure and text are significant, both from the perspective of sender as well as receiver. In order to analyse landscapes of representation, we need to consider “the signifying practices” as these designed by marketing, branding, political and public relations, as well as practices of media use resulting from cultural patterns (Bolin 2006, p. 78).

### **Convergent (Inter)text**

An analysis of the relationship between maps and landscapes of converging media, its significant material, textual structures, and practices, reveals a commercial and cultural landscape with considerable economic and cultural potential. However, such an analysis requires defining the terms like a map, a terrain, converging media text and meaningful practices.

Media convergence, e.g. the relation between television and the Internet, “requires greatly expanding the notion of what a TV text is” (Caldwell 2004, p. 51). “[T]elevision programs are now produced and marketed not as self-contained texts, but as the foundation of larger networks of related products, content extensions, activities, and spaces” (Askwith 2007, p. 52). Therefore, N. Couldry suggests analysing “textual processes”, “textual events” (Couldry 1992, p. 9) “intertextual by nature and engaging abundant media” (Couldry 2000, p. 86), and “textual environments”, which are made of the complex flows: “the material structures of textual production”, “the material structures of distributing texts”, “the processes which tend to order how we read, what connections we make between texts, what texts we screen out, and so on” (Couldry 2000, p. 81). ”That involves looking at the features of the text (its generic features, plot, characters, associations), not in isolation but alongside the other factors [...] circulating about the text and its themes; and so on” (Couldry 2000, p. 81). N. Couldry's postulates, therefore, correspond with G. Bolin's perspective. Both opt for resignation for the analysis of the text *per se*. From the perspective of convergent strategies that are carried out, the relation between texts as well as texts and products, brands, activities

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<sup>4</sup> G. Bolin uses the term “individual subject”. For the sake of consistency, I use the term “user”.

and the media platforms seems to be more essential. “This web of cross references creates an intertext”<sup>5</sup>.

The Internet is the platform of the most intensive intertextual strategies, in a number of television productions, the program itself becomes the terrain of numerous activities of which the map is drawn by the content of the official web site, promotional spots, and interviews with creator. The commercial nature of the intertextual activities means that the analysis of the intertext sometimes becomes the analysis of the positioning strategy of a product and a brand. However, not every strategy refers to the external objects. While most have the nature of self-referential television “commercial intertext” (e.g. series) and mainly serve its promotion, it also reinforces the brands that make up a synergetic package with the program.

### **Case study: Television series *39 and a half***

The series *39 and a half* was broadcast in the spring of 2008 TV season and in 2009 across spring and autumn TV seasons by the Polish TV channel TVN<sup>6</sup>. The series was completely produced by TVN itself, which resigned from any external production company. The series tells a story of Darek Jankowski, a fan of punk rock, who is 39 ½ years old. This series is an example of the application of new promotional strategies and is a promotional platform for numerous diverse subjects. The production generates a complex web of relations of varying types with *Onet.pl*, *MySpace.com*, *Radio Zet*, *Antyradio*, *Magic Records*, *Orange*, *Nikon*, and *Polish Army*. The official website of the series <http://www.39ipol.plejada.pl> functions within the *Plejada.pl* web portal. The majority of the intertextual strategies take place on that website.

### **Intra-, inter- and extratextual strategies for promoting the series**

The textual strategies for generating interest, loyalty and engagement are gaining in importance, together with the development of official websites for TV productions. J. Caldwell enumerates six strategies, or online tools (“online strategies”), which broaden the notion of the TV text: “characterized” proliferations of the text; “narrativized” elaborations of the text; “backstory” textuality; “metacritical” textuality; technological augmentations; and merchandizing augmentations (Caldwell 2004, p. 51). The main aim of these strategies is to establish and keep the relationship with the TV production – out of them the commitment

<sup>5</sup> ”into which we fit ourselves, positioning ourselves to construct different readings of the film (e.g. – author) and positioning the film and its intertext to suit our own particular purposes” (Meehan 2003, p. 313).

<sup>6</sup> As at 31.12.2009.

increases in importance. In his work, I. Askwith enlists five logics of engagement: entertainment, social connection, the logic of mastery, immersion, and identification. He stresses that as television becomes active and engaging all television viewers become “»fans« of something” (Askwith 2007, p. 101-116).

From the perspective of analysed textual strategies, the most important of these logics is the logic of mastery, which contains the mastery of narrative forms and textual relationships. “Mastery describes a mode of engagement that satisfies the viewer’s intellectual desire to master complexities, interpret nuances, and solve the challenges that a television series presents”<sup>7</sup>. There are four types of textual relationships: horizontal intratextuality, intertextuality, vertical intratextuality and extratextuality (Askwith 2007, p. 107-108). All are found in the series *39 and a half*. Horizontal intratextuality is based on the connection between two elements of the same text. In the case of a TV series, or episodic television, these texts are connected by characters or specific relationships between them. Intertextuality, which is based on references to other texts that go beyond a TV series itself, requires the knowledge of other material and contexts. Such horizontal intertextuality is evident in one episode of *39 and a half*, which takes place in the *Dzień Dobry TVN* studio (*Good Morning TVN*, a morning TV show), in which the main character meets Przemysław Saleta, a Polish boxer. It is necessary to be aware of the meaning of the so-called green room, which is the reception room in a television studio where guests wait before appearing on-air, in order to understand the sense of this episode. This intertextuality serves to promote other production by the TV station.

Vertical intratextuality refers to viewers “knowledge of the series” extension, such as Darek’s videoblog on the official website and the book entitled *39 and a half. How I met Anka (39 i pół. Jak poznałem Ankę)*<sup>8</sup>, whose author is the main character of the series. The use of vertical intratextualisation allows the show’s creators to realise the strategy of reality virtualisation. In contrast, extratextuality is based on the move outside a narrative form of a TV program, pointing at the television production as the commercial product. The official website of the series *39 and a half* is full of information about the members of the cast (thus

<sup>7</sup> I. Askwith makes an assumption, as do J. Fiske and J. Hartley, that watching television is always an interactive process of constructing meaning and interpretation (Askwith 2007, p. 104).

<sup>8</sup> “(...) The book describes the events before the time filmed in the series *39 and a half*. (...) Darek Jankowski – a Faluba-fan, punk rocker from the city of Zielona Góra. Half of Poland watched with bated breath the story of his entry into a difficult age of 39 and a half, and a desperate attempt to return to his family. The main character of TVN channel TV series written by Doman Nowakowski, today he sits down at the keyboard: this book is his debut”, [http://www.tvsklep.pl/produkty\\_tv/39\\_i\\_pol\\_jak\\_poznalem\\_anke](http://www.tvsklep.pl/produkty_tv/39_i_pol_jak_poznalem_anke), retrieved: 30. 12. 2009.

advertising the series itself), news from the filming location as well as features about the making of the series and about TVN itself. The use of extratexts allows the implementation of a strategy of making the fiction more real. Multiplied fictionalisation also finds application in *39 and a half* – yet another representation of the series' fiction are supposed to make it more credible by distancing it from the original product.

### **Promotional virtualisation of reality: *Dirty Track* and a band contest**

Darek Jankowski, the main character of the series, who is played by T. Karolak, is the leader of the rock band called *The Dirty Track*. The band records new hits, plays concerts, and has many devoted fans. *Dirty Track* is an example of a vertical intertext that promotes the series through recorded songs, which were released on a CD<sup>9</sup> together with the series soundtrack. The band promoted itself – and the series – during a concert in *Empik*, a chain of shops which sells books, CDs, DVDs, and newspapers.<sup>10</sup> The actor's full name was used in the name of the band: *Tomasz Karolak & Dirty Track*. Undertaken activities were intended to shape the image of the actor: a rock music lover and an amateur guitarist in private. The extratextual strategy of virtualizing reality was also used in the contest called *39 and a half decibels above the norm* (*39 i pół decybela ponad normę*). Television and internet advertisements encouraged young rock groups to enter the contest organized by the *39 and a half* TV series, TVN channel and Onet.pl (web portal) via the official web site. The winning band “will appear in the third season of *39 and a half* alongside Tomek Karolak, and will release a single” (*39 i pół decybela... 2009*). Internet users and a panel of judges voted for the winning band. The band called *Eden Express* received 3,550 votes and 100% of the judges' support (*39 i pół decybela... 2009*).

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<sup>9</sup> The book was available in the online shop <http://www.tvsklep.pl>, and a link to the shop was put on the official website.

<sup>10</sup> The concert took place on March 12, 2009 in *Empik Megastore*, Warsaw.



Tomasz Karolak after the koncert in Empik, Warsaw 12.03.2008, Source: TVN/Fabryka obrazu, *Czadowy koncert Karolaka i Dirty Track*, [http://39ipol.plejada.pl/1281,foto,,925,19,0,karolak\\_i\\_dirty\\_track\\_w\\_empiku,aktualnosci\\_detal.html](http://39ipol.plejada.pl/1281,foto,,925,19,0,karolak_i_dirty_track_w_empiku,aktualnosci_detal.html), retrieved: 15.05.2009.



A poster promoting the contest *39 and a half decibels above the norm*, Source: *39 i pół decybela ponad normę: ruszył II etap konkursu*, <http://muzyka.onet.pl/festiwal/9888,1942083,news.html>, retrieved: 15. 05. 2009.

A map of the media structures, specifically of *Dirty Track* and the band contest, is drawn on the official web site of the series and consists of written texts, videos and photos. On the web site, viewers can learn about upcoming concerts, read information touting the band's popularity, and learn that for T. Karolak, playing in the band is a kind of travel back in time to his teenage years (*Czadowy koncert...* 2009). *The Anarchy* flooded the country like a tsunami triggering the revival of punk music, and no wedding can any longer take place without the song *I Will Take You (Zabiorę Cię)* (*Koniec zdjęć...* 2008). The relation of the map (the description of events, characters, creations and their its representations) to the terrain (the physical filming locations, the concert and the content of the series) display the nature of the simulacrum: in a specific way that “articulate[s] physical and symbolic landscapes” (Bolin 2006, p. 71) and, by means of shaping promotional discourse, interacts with the reception of



the transmedial whole. The articulation is based on the compilation of the elements of the series reality and outside the series: people, places, private life of actors and portrayed characters. The winning band is “Darek’s charge”, yet the real band also has “an excellent chance of a great music career” (*II seria...* 2009) outsider the *39 and a half*.

### **TV series as an intertextual, multipromotional platform**

This series, thanks to the use of a number of intertextual strategies, serves as a promotional platform for numerous subjects: TV station that produces the series, its programmes and other products. Within the series, product placement is realised by displaying various products: e.g., *Radio Zet* (on this radio station series characters listen to the B-27’s newest hits); *Nikon* (a friend of Darek’s mother-in-law, a recognised photographer, pursues his passion for photography thanks to a camera producer, which we learn from posters which are placed inside an art gallery visited by characters); *Orange* (Darek uses a mobile phone and laptop with internet access emblazoned with the network operator’s logo); musicians (the walls inside Darek’s record company are hung with pictures of Matt Pokora and Lenny Kravitz); as well as TV programmes such as *Good Morning TVN*, a breakfast television show. The Polish Army is also featured during a scene in which the main character tries to solve his problems regarding serving in the military, while a well-known Polish billboard that says *Profession Soldier* is displayed. The “migration” of actors-characters to other programmes and other kinds of activities serve to further promote the show. T. Karolak and his band played the “series” song *The Anarchia* during a live broadcast of *Dancing with the Stars (Taniec z gwiazdami)*. This song was also a theme of an episode of *Good Morning TVN* in which the lead singer, composer and the screenwriter of the *39 and a half* was a guest of the programme. *Dirty Track* performed together with the band *Afromental* during a party that inaugurates the second season of the series, thus promoting not only the television show, but also its own music and the band (*Afromental*). *Afromental* functions in a double role as both a collective actor (present in the second season) and a subject of the Polish music market, to which it promotes its newest album. Yet again, the synergy of the partners’ activities becomes visible: both the series producer and the sponsors benefit from the main platform, that is, the television series.

In this case, the term “simulacrum” is appropriate to analyze the materials available on the official website. However, promoted brands and institutions are very rarely present on the website. For example, when *Orange* appears, it is not mentioned in episode guides or the news section, but rather is an independent element of the website, or a widget that enables

viewers-users to watch online a premiere of an episode for free that is sponsored by *Orange*<sup>11</sup>. The appearance of *Orange*, without any comments, requires the viewers to find the connection between the content of the series, promotion of the mobile network operator in the series and its presence on the website, which is also itself promotional. Thus, there is the possibility that the establishment of this kind of connection will not occur in viewers-users' minds.



*Orange* as the sponsor of online premiere, Source: print screen: <http://39ipol.plejada.pl/>, retrieved: 15. 05. 2009.

The other brands and institutions (except the *Afromental* band which performs in the series) practically do not appear in the episode summaries. They only appear in the video materials very briefly (e.g. *Profession Soldier* poster), or photos, which shows, that the attempt to make the series fiction world more real is focused on the episodes aired on television. It makes other platforms, like the Internet, just supplementary.

The official website, however, appears as a perfect Public Relations tool. There, new information about the series and related events are promoted, awards are announced, (e.g. a *Telekamery* (Polish awards) nomination, gold and platinum records of the series soundtrack). The website becomes a tool for creating an image of music bands that appear in the series (*Blog 27*, *Afromental*, and *Eden Expres*, which participated in the band contest). To a large extent the Website is being used for shaping the series creators' and actors' images by reporting about engagements, achievements, public activity, and even issuing dementi. Most information on the website concerns T. Karolak, the leading actor. In this way, new standards of promotion and ways of shaping images are being developed on the basis of the producer's activity, television and Internet publications as well as marketing activities and PR. While these activities are creating a network, there is also network of images. It is difficult to distinguish both a character's image from the real performer (especially during the series

<sup>11</sup> It is worth mentioning that during the first season of the series one could watch the series through *Orange* mobile TV.

broadcast period), and elements of the represented world from the real world (music bands are present in both of the worlds). Also, the promotion of the series is linked with promotion of other products? by the channel and of the channel itself. In this way, hybrid models of media creations and image shaping emerge; here both “fictional” and “real” elements are equally important. New rules of creation and activities that are based on blurring boundaries, strongly connected with viewer-user activity, find application.

### **Making virtual reality more real: Tomasz Kot, *Blog 27* and *Afromental***

The strategy of making virtual reality more real is being realised not only thanks to the presence of some brands and institutions in the series, but also thanks to people. T. Kot (Polish actor), for example, played himself in the *39 and a half*. From the web site one can learn that: “In their college years, serial friends, Darek and Tomek formed one of the first independent radio stations in Poland. However, their paths diverged and, while Darek kept on his music career in the punk group the Dirty Track, Tomek became an actor. (...) In the next episode, Tomasz Kot fixes Darek up with a job, (...). Kot and Karolak make a good acting duo, which undoubtedly is a result of their previous common acting experience in front of camera as well as in the theatre” (*Karolak i Kot...* 2008). The website presents T. Kot as a dual character: an individual (real person) and an individual character in the series. The distinction between Karolak-the-actor and Jankowski-the-character is blurred. In this way, a new dimension of television production is being created: a hybrid platform situated “in-between”, from which it is more and more difficult to distinguish what is inside and what is outside, creation and auto promotion. The map, which is being drawn by the website, reduces differentiates, and strengthens hybridization. Episode summaries serve the purpose of deepening interest and surprise: “Jankowski on the brink of bankruptcy! And it is all because Rober Więckiewicz (*Jankowski...* 2009), who in the next episode of *39 and a half* will portray a crafty businessman named Marek who organizes concert tours. So we’re in for some kind of a duel between Więckiewicz and Karolak. That is an old market trouper, versus the gullibility and inattention of Jankowski” (*Jankowski...* 2009). This quotation shows that there is an attempt not only to hybridize both worlds, but also to provoke: does the duel between characters mean a rivalry between two well-known actors?

Promotional activities, which blur the boundaries between what is an element of the represented, fictional world (e.g. series) and the reality, take different forms and became one of the rules of the media environment. The most popular of them is product placement. More and more often, this is not restricted to a frame in which we can see a product or a dialogue,

which consist of advertising slogans. In the first season of *39 and a half*, teenage T. Szlagowska, vocalist of the Polish band *Blog 27*, played the character who was the singer in the band *B27*. One of the series' themes was the promotion of *B27* and its hit, which at the same time was a track on the newest *Blog 27's* album (*Cut (I'm not cute)*). The following advertisement was published on the official website: "Today's episode features the debut of a popular music group *Blog 27* which appears in the series as *B-27*. For fans, it will be a real treat, because we will hear tunes from the newest Tola and Co's album entitled *Before I Die*, which is released in a month's time - April 18!" (*Terrazino...* 2008). The use of coincident names: *Blog 27* and *B-27* as well as Tola and Ola, was probably introduced to keep the possibility of distinction between bands and people very low<sup>12</sup>. A number of intertextual activities in the programme were done. *B27* (in one of the series' episode) visited *Good Morning TVN* breakfast show to promote itself. Moreover, in every episode characters listened to their songs played on *Radio Zet*. At the same time, T. Szlagowska, as the leader of *Blog 27*, was hosted in both "real" television and radio stations. Coverage from the visit in the *Dzień Dobry TVN* was available on the official website of the series. There was also video material, a mix of a video-clip and an interview about the singer's career and private life, with the following "clarification": "B-27 (Tola Szlagowska and Blog 27)" or: "Blog 27 (in the series appears as B-27)", which made it more difficult to distinguish fiction from reality. Certainly, the web site became a promotional channel for the band during the first season. Press releases were published there<sup>13</sup>.



***B-27* (the same line-up as *Blog 27*) visiting the *Good Morning TVN* show, Source: TV/Fabryka obrazu (Picture factory), *Ostatni klaps na planie serialu "39 i pół"*,**

<sup>12</sup> However, in the case of *Afromental* the idea was abandoned in the second season.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. "Blog 27 official website was no longer available. The website was closed by Tola Szlagowska. Soon, all information about the band will be published on a new website under new address" (*Koniec...* 2008).

[http://39ipol.plejada.pl/2450,foto,,1299,1,0,ostatni\\_klaps\\_na\\_planie\\_39\\_i\\_pol,aktualnosci\\_detal.html](http://39ipol.plejada.pl/2450,foto,,1299,1,0,ostatni_klaps_na_planie_39_i_pol,aktualnosci_detal.html), retrieved: 15.05.2009.

The second season of *39 and a half* focused on the band *Afromental*, which promoted its album during the broadcast using the series: the band gave concerts together with the *Dirty Track* (in the represented world and outside it), recorded video clips and met with fans. There was promotional feedback between *39 and a half* and *Afromental*, evident in the actors of the series appearing in the video clip of *Radio Song*. They played characters that resemble characters in the series (e.g., the unhappy, effusive boss of a record company phonographic company and her submissive secretary; a couple of lovers; a provocatively dressed, attractive student). Enacted scenes in the video clip are based on the themes of the series (e.g., the band cannot live up to the record company boss's standards; the young couple is going through a crisis; the attractive black-haired woman charms the opposite sex)<sup>14</sup>. In the process, the video clip becomes a continuation, or rather a complementary, secondary, coherent with the series' narration. The band, situated in the centre of the video clip, is closely integrated into the represented world in which it is promoted for several months. These hybrid promotional activities were also reinforced by the joint promotion of the second season's soundtrack album and the album by *Afromental Playing with Pop*, which was available for sale in *Empik* stores, among others.

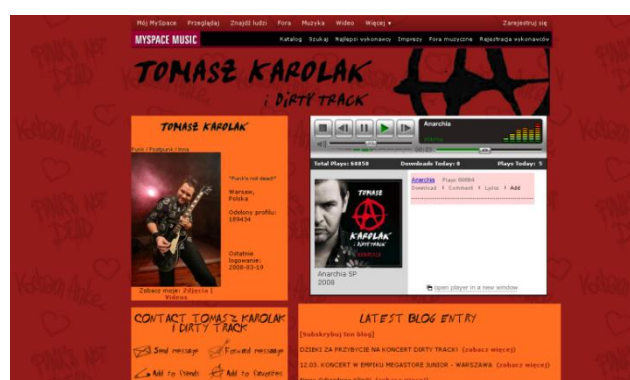


**Advertising banner of the album released by *Afromental* and soundtrack of *39 and a half* in *Empik*, Wrocław, Renoma Shopping Centre, 2009, Source: private archive.**

<sup>14</sup> The convergent nature of the promotional strategy of *Afromental* is also pointed out by the fact that the song *Radio Song* was vying for the *Bursztynowy Słownik Award* and *Słownik Publiczności Międzynarodowego Festiwalu w Sopocie 2009 Award* – a Polish festival which was produced and transmitted by the TVN station.

### Multiplied fiction: *Video blog, MySpace and Orange*

The virtualisation of reality (e.g. the presence of an allegedly fictional band, *Dirty Track*, concerts in *Empik*) or transformation of fiction into reality (e.g. by introducing *Afromental*) results in an intertextual series that multiplies fiction. Elements of the represented world – its characters, institutions, and events – are being used in further promotional activity, which pulls the show further from reality. The simulacrum, or the relation between the series’s content and its online representation, is a relation distancing a few steps further from reality. Virtualisation of reality happens when the lead character “keeps” his video blog, or online diary, which is written by the editors of the official site. One can find there video materials that are stylised to look as if they were created by an amateur. D. Jankowski has recorded all these video materials and addresses his explanations and advice to his son. Users can comment on this “communication”. This kind of hybrid solution is an example of adding variety to the means of contacting viewers; this particular form, “extension”, gives users the possibility to grasp new information, increases users’ curiosity and allows them to join the interactive world of the TV series. Extension also shows how boundaries between creation of a media product and its promotion are negligible. Another similar solution was setting up an account on *MySpace* for *Tomasz Karolak & Dirty Track*, which over time turned into a profile of D. Jankowski<sup>15</sup>. There we can find a video clip of one of *The Anarchia*’s songs, which is performed by the main character. Additionally, there is information about his past, his interests, and a circle of his “real” friends, which all *MySpace* users can join.



**Profile of Tomasz Karolak and Dirty Track on MySpace, Source: MySpace site print screen, <http://www.myspace.com/karolakdirtytrack>, retrieved: 15.09.2008.**

<sup>15</sup> During the period just before launching *39 and a half* it was advertised on web banners on *Onet.pl* (one of the largest Polish web portals, which belongs to TVN Group).

The special kind of the multiplied virtualisation is TV advertisements: *39,50 Złoty. Mobile Internet Orange Free*. The advertisements feature T. Karolak, who resembles D. Jankowski. In the first ad, he is wearing typical punk rock fun clothes (e.g., a black leather jacket) and playing electric guitar. In the second, he is wearing a t-shirt with a peace sign on it as he sleeps<sup>16</sup>. The number 40, or – *a number, which some would rather not go over (liczba, której niektórzy woleliby nie przekraczać)*<sup>17</sup> it is both the age that he does not want to turn, as well as an undesirable price for the mobile Internet. In the first spot, an animated number “40” adjusts the dials of the amplifier, disturbs playing the drums, hangs from hand-dryer, gives a towel. In the second - “40” haunts the hero at every step: the club he passes by is called “40”, he notices 40 (km/h) speed limit signs, and tram line 40 is chasing him through the city.

*Orange’s* presence throughout the series, achieved using product placement, and its location on the show’s website as the official sponsor are used to strengthen brand identification with the television production. These identifications are created through using similar design (e.g., the hero image, a similar logo), and above all, using the theme of “escaping” from the number 40. By representing the show’s main character in these advertisements, his image has become stronger; in particular, his appearance, passion, and personality have been reinforced.



Clips from the first advertisement *39,50zł. Mobilny Internet Orange Free*, Source: stills from the spot. Bottom—right: *39 and a half* official logo, Source: print screen of <http://39ipol.plejada.pl/>.

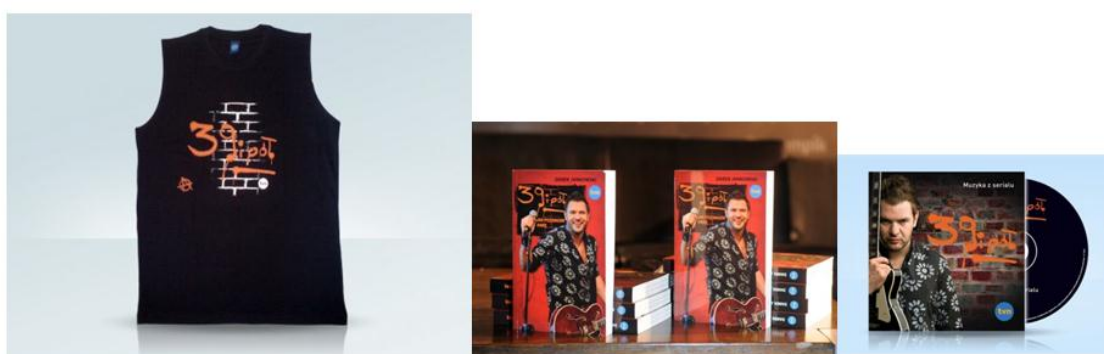
<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the orange elements of clothing (e.g. a sweatshirt or T-shirt) strengthens the connection with the *Orange* brand.

<sup>17</sup> Quotations from TV advertisement of *39,50zł. Mobilny Internet Orange Free*.



A clip from the second advertisement 39,50zl. *Mobilny Internet Orange Free*, Source: stills from the spot.

The promotional activities of a transmedial brand<sup>18</sup> (here, these include performers, songs?, products, services, institutions) go beyond mere filming locations and are located in the Internet and public sphere. Media are on the one hand material (thanks to its infrastructure and tools) and on the other - virtual (due to symbolic representation). They penetrate into users environment. Synergistically coupled brands penetrate users environment as well. Maps, which are present in the media, draw an image of the terrain, which is subject to a greater degree to the rules of commercialization. Moreover, in and of themselves these maps present reality as a hybrid, composed of media and brand, artistic and commercial elements, fictional and real dimensions, and converging. Thus, the answer to the following question: “How does the map work on the terrain?” is positive: it works effectively. The map? absorbs media users (who are the series’ viewers), Internet users (who also actively create the content of the site), and consumers of converged products (e.g. CDs).



T-shirt with series logo (reading: *39 and a half*),

Source: [http://www.mango.pl/gadzety\\_tvn/koszulka\\_39\\_i\\_p\\_s#](http://www.mango.pl/gadzety_tvn/koszulka_39_i_p_s#), retrieved: 15.05.2009.

The book "written by" the character, *Darek Jankowski wydaje książkę*, Source: TVN/Fabryka obrazu, [http://39ipol.plejada.pl/23247,foto,,9540,1,,39\\_i\\_pol\\_jak\\_poznałem\\_ankę\\_promocja\\_książki,aktualności\\_detal.html](http://39ipol.plejada.pl/23247,foto,,9540,1,,39_i_pol_jak_poznałem_ankę_promocja_książki,aktualności_detal.html), retrieved: 30.12.2009.

<sup>18</sup> This term was introduced by Henry Jenkins (Jenkins 2004, p. 38).



Series soundtrack album cover, Source: *39 i pół. Muzyka z serialu*,  
[http://www.tvsklep.pl/produkty\\_tvnl\\_39\\_i\\_pol](http://www.tvsklep.pl/produkty_tvnl_39_i_pol), retrieved: 30.12.2009.

Media users' environment is increasingly becoming an integrated media environment, which is evident in such economic transactions as buying CDs, books or T-shirts online, and then using these products. Consumption of converging products has certain consequences for media environment – more and more integrated, requiring more and more elaborate strategies, especially in the face of a more competent and selective viewer.

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