

# HOMO COMMUNICANS – PERSONALISTIC DETERMINANTS OF COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT OF MEDIA

Michał Drożdż<sup>10</sup>

## Abstract

The aim of this article is to present the communication process as an act of a person who, as a communicating being, constitutes himself the basic criteria and determinants of communication. It means that communication as an act of human being is above all personally determined. Therefore, speaking about communication, we understand it mainly as a manifestation of human rationality, as a process of communicating in the context of human rationality, as an intrapersonal, interpersonal or collective process. In this article, above all, we try to use the universal meaning of the 'person in the action' and to accommodate the scheme of thinking and arguing of Wojtyła to the analyses of the presence and communicative acts of a person. Following this point of view, any communication, even through media, is an act of a person and a participation in communication relations with other people. Also our analyses endeavor to be a communication study through the prism of a person. Referring to the aforementioned Wojtyła's thought, in the course of our analyses we will try to show that a human being is an integrating subject of his communication activities and a platform of integration of intersubjective media activities. Therefore, it can be said that a person is *homo communicus* and *homo communicans* and, conversely, that *homo communicus* that becomes *homo communicans* is a person.

**Keywords:** communication, person, media, philosophy of media, personalism

## Introduction - *homo communicans*

Every communication process has man<sup>11</sup> as its creator, actor or participant. Every act of communication is an act of a person and in each such act other people take part as well, according to the nature and the character of the communication. The basic thesis underlying our reflections is the statement saying that a man, being *homo communicans* and *homo communicus*, is a person. Boethius once defined this elementary truth about a man as a person, with the help of the notions of profound content, by describing a human being as a *rationalis naturae individua substantia*. Regardless of various attempts to define human being descriptively<sup>12</sup>, which show different dimensions of humanity and indicate its elementary and constitutive features, man is a rational and free "subject, being the centre of reference for values and experiencing them" (Styczeń, 1993, p. 19). It means that a man as a person is the subject of communication.

The aim of this article is to present the communication process as an act of a person who, as a communicating being, constitutes himself the basic criteria and determinants of communication. It means that communication as an act of human being is above all

<sup>10</sup> dr hab. Michał Drożdż, prof. WSB-NLU, Wydział Psychologii, Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu – National-Louis University, midro@wsb-nlu.edu.pl

<sup>11</sup> Polish word „człowiek” used in the original text refers to both men and women, so similarly the word „man” is obviously meant by the authors in this volume to refer to both sexes with no sexist (editor's note).

<sup>12</sup> Every philosophical current has worked out its own anthropological concepts, starting from the ancient description by Thales, to the effect that man is a „microcosm”, through Pascal's vision of man as „reed shaking in the wind”, to contemporary projects of man lost in the chaos of the universe. See also Szewczyk (1998, p. 41n)

personally determined. Therefore, speaking about communication, we understand it mainly as a manifestation of human rationality, as a process of communicating in the context of human rationality, as an intrapersonal, interpersonal or collective process. In this article, above all, we try to use the universal meaning of the ‘person in the action’ and to accommodate the scheme of thinking and arguing of Wojtyła to the analyses of the presence and communicative acts of a person. Following this point of view, any communication, even through media, is an act of a person and a participation in communication relations with other people. An act is – following Wojtyła’s definition – an entirely conscious and free action of a man. It can be said that an ‘act’, ‘action’, ‘fulfillment via action’ are closely connected with what we call “personal communication” (Wojtyła, 1979a, p. 32; Wojtyła, 1976, p. 53-59; 1979c, p. 273-301; Wojtyła, 1993; Buttiglione, 1997; Smolka, 2002; Pokrywka, 2000; Podgórecki, 2000, p. 23-29; Filipiak, 2003, p. 13-53). Personal communication is to some extent a condition of the media communication. In this article we try to show and justify this elementary thesis.

It seems that the concept of a person in the action elaborated by Wojtyła contains a great heuristic, analytic and argumentative potential for analysis of communication processes. This concept has not been ‘used’ in any way in the philosophical analyses of communication and mediality. We can surely say that a man’s act is of communicative character. It is an elementary media act because it becomes the first ‘medium’ of a person that communicates and, what is more, even transcends himself through the act. The notion of ‘act’ contains rich content explications, including communicative ones, that not only explain the nature and the character of human action but, most importantly, also indicate the subject of this activity. This explanation of the profoundness of the content of a human act is at the same time a gradual revelation of the reality that a human being is. Wojtyła maintains that a human being experiences in himself what is ‘internal’ as well as what is ‘external’. Both the former and the latter can be consciously and freely communicable through acts (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 37-38). The direction of Wojtyła’s research is relatively novel in comparison with traditional ontological approaches (*operari sequitur esse*). Traditional philosophy of Aristotle’s and Thomas Aquinas’ explained human *agere* – we can add here human *communicare* – as human *esse*. However, Wojtyła states that *esse* reveals itself by *agere*. “An act assumes a person” – writes Wojtyła. This approach was popular in many fields of knowledge on human activity, especially in ethics. Ethics has always been a science about acting that assumes a person: a man as a person. In this study we are going to reverse this approach. Namely, it will be the study of an act that reveals a person, a study of a person through an act” (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 14, 29-30; 34-35; 1976, pp. 5-39; 1969b, pp. 5-24; Kowalczyk, 1995, p 25). Also our analyses endeavor to be a communication study through the prism of a person. Referring to the aforementioned Wojtyła’s thought, in the course of our analyses we will try to show that a human being is an integrating subject of his communication activities and a platform of integration of intersubjective media activities. Therefore, it can be said that a person is *homo communicus* and *homo communicans* and, conversely, that *homo communicus* that becomes *homo communicans* is a person.

## Communication as a person's action

An act is – following Wojtyła's definition – an entirely conscious and free action of a man. In the philosophical tradition it is *actus humanus* that is the equivalent for the English word 'act'. Additionally, it should be emphasized that if any communication is to remain, the work of man should not extend the boundaries of *actus humanus*. An act is simply an activity characteristic of a man as a person. If the expression *actus humanus* shows this activity as some 'becoming' on the ground of the potentiality of a personal subject, then at the same time the notion of act introduces us to an extremely complex and rich world of man's communication. It can be said that 'act', 'activity', 'becoming' are most closely connected with all those things that relate to a man present and acting in the media space.<sup>13</sup>

The notion of 'act' contains rich content explications relating to the communication space. Man not only cognitively enters the world of communication and finds himself in this world as one of the essential elements of the processes going on there, but also becomes aware of his own active participation in the world of communication and media. It can be said that *homo communicus* becomes *homo communicans*. For consciousness not only reflects but also in a special way makes it internal, i.e. internalizes what it reflects and provides it with room in the 'I' of a person. According to Wojtyła – in a man it is possible to experience what is 'internal' and what is 'external' as well. Both the former and the latter can be consciously communicable (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 37-38)<sup>14</sup>.

Man acts not only consciously and in a free way but also according to self-reflection, which means that he is aware of the fact that he acts consciously. Therefore, man is aware of his action and of himself as the personalistic subject of act. Man is aware of the act and its subject in their dynamic correlation (Wojtyła (1969a, pp. 33-35). More on selected typologies of communication acts can be found in Stewart (2002, pp. 35-161) and Necki (2000, pp. 51-89). In Wojtyła's thought, a reversal of perspectives can be noticed, which is interesting from the methodological point of view. On the one hand, Wojtyła makes the inner human experience, acts of consciousness and freedom which constitute the basis for the ethical action, a point of departure. On the other, metaphysics of a human being, in the discussion conducted in such a way, becomes the destination point<sup>15</sup>. However, we can still encounter the opposite direction in Wojtyła's thought. A person transcending himself in his act is a point of departure, whereas different types of interpersonal relations and communication are an end. These two perspectives always show a human being in the centre. In whatever way we approach communication processes or media space, there will always be a man in their centre. A human being appears as the main basis and the main principle of communication ethics. Accepting a human being as the main basis of ethics can become the common platform for constructing media deontologies for many rational axiological orientations. The basis should be understood in a threefold way: as the beginning, the way, and the end. A person and his transcendence is at the roots of ethics because man as an acting subject experiences the foundations of his activity, experiences his rationality and freedom. an as a person is also a way of respecting the dignity of every other person. In this sense it becomes the basis for

<sup>13</sup> In our former analyses we demonstrated that media communication has features characteristic of interpersonal communication. The latter notwithstanding, media message is a communication process in which a man is present together with his act (Wojtyła, 1969a), see also McQuail (2001, p. 97n).

<sup>14</sup> Interioriation is very well dealt with in the psychology of communication studies, e.g.: Ratajczak and Zabierowski (2001, pp. 89-98); Lindsay and Norman (1984, p. 7n; 1977).

<sup>15</sup> The first part of our study has show the dominant tendencies in contemporary theories of media. These are first and foremost pragmatic-functional, constructivist, structuralist and post-modernist approaches, all of which are characterised by negative attitude towards the metaphysics of a person. Lack of these references makes them as if suspended in the anthropologic-axiological void (Necki, 2000, pp. 90-119).

ethical valuation. And finally, man is the end of ethics oriented at his self-realization and improving his humanity.

Man as a person is himself the basis that unifies different elements and qualities: the spiritual and the material spheres, rational freedom and biological instincts, different attitudes, experiences, values, contexts and the like. Despite their dichotomic or alternative character man is a personal unity in the way that all those elements, being sometimes pairs of opposite qualities, form one structure of humanity on the strength of the personal essence of man. Man is a unity of the spheres of the spirit and the body. Both these spheres are integral and constitutive elements of the human being, regardless of whether they are defined and explained on the notional or methodological basis. The spiritual aspect of a person expresses itself through the body and due to this integrity of a person, human communication in the broadest meaning of this word is possible at all. Above all, we talk about media communication, though it consists of other forms of communication, for instance: expressing opinions, communicating cognitive acts, body language communication, communicating feelings, communicating values and so on. A simple but very important thesis can be put forward that media communication is possible because man as a person is *homo communicus* and *homo communicans* at the same time. It should also be indicated that it is man's rationality that is at the bottom of man's communication abilities and at the same time it is the basis for ethical valuation.

### **Communication – a person's transcendence “in truth”**

Each communication process must be performed in the atmosphere of truth, which, in other words, means that no communication is possible without reference to truth<sup>16</sup>. We can therefore say that an act is fully human and communication is fully human only if they are „true”. The guarantor and the source of that truth is a person's transcendence in the truth. Understood as a dynamic property of a person, transcendence may be partly explained by comparison to the dynamism of nature. The ability to decide about oneself needs to be respected and put higher in regard to any condition of human communication. That supremacy, which takes its origin in the possibility of human self-possession, allows people to transcend all their limits. Rejection or denial of that superiority causes man to reduce himself to perform the role of the object of external interactions or the subject of acts determined by or conditioned by instincts (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 124). In the first case, we are dealing with the person acting in action itself or through action (*in actu persona*), in the other, we consider the person as *individuum* who functions through his response and action (*individuum in actu*). If in any theory of the media this operation of *in actu persona* is rejected or denied, man will reduce himself merely to the role of *individuum in actu*. In this way man will deprive himself of what is fully human, and thus he will become only a natural „individual”. For every act, including all types of communication, the right formula for man is to meet and implement personal actions, rather than actions of an individual. No communication in the strict sense can be realized where man is not able to submit his own „dynamics”, „acts”, „expressions”, „relationships”, „ties”, and other human activities, to his personal „true self” (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 125).

In the proper understanding of the basics of personal communication it is vital to refer to two important phrases, namely: 'assignment to the truth „and „relation to the truth.” Both of

<sup>16</sup> The discussion on this subject reaches quite wide at the moment and is very diverse because many authors speak differently about the same matter, see Seifert (1988, pp. 37-47), Jonkisz (1999), Jaskóła & Olejarczyk (2003), and Jabłoński & Wygoda (2002).

these phrases define the essence of the dynamics of human action. Relationship between the act and the truth does not end in the structure of volition, defined as an intentional act. Basically, this relationship profoundly determines – not only in the psychological sense – how deeply a given action will take roots in the person. Each act of volition shows a peculiar dependence on the person, because it is most profoundly connected with resolving and taking a decision. This particular dependence between a person's volition and his essential being becomes also a dependence on a person and on the truth. „Dependence on the truth” – as Wojtyła puts it – seems to finally explain a person's transcendence in the person in action, his superiority in relation to his own dynamism” (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 144-145).

Searching for the bases of personal communication, it is worth considering once again „relation to the truth”, already mentioned here. In every process of communication there has to be at least one moment of truth. It seems that by this „moment of truth” Wojtyła understands the personal criterion of truth, which is the realization of the person in truth (Siemianowski, 1986, p. 76-103; also, in a wider context: Styczeń, 1988, pp. 47-57). In other words, we can understand “the moment of truth” as the very presence of a person in the process of communication. Apart from being evident, the truth is an undeniable value of human dignity. Without truth no communication or judgment or even forming an opinion would be possible. Thus understood, „the moment of truth” goes well beyond the authenticity of the communication process, as well as beyond every necessary criterion of truthful communication. It transcends the subjective determinants of communication, pointing out the truth about the subject of communication, who is a human being in his full dignity, and it shows a person as the basis of every ethical evaluation. If we refer to the human experience, with particular emphasis on the experience of truth in morality, we will find there the foundation of ethical decisions which are based on man's relation to the truth about his own dignity. “Thus there is no way in which individual choices or decisions of human will are always true. The same applies to communication. Man quite often wants something that is not really good and he often chooses what isn't really good. Such a solution, however, or such a choice cannot be regarded as a mistake, (...) as a mistake takes place in human thoughts, not in human will. A solution or a choice that takes as the subject something that is not real good, especially if it is made against what has already been acknowledged as real good, bears all resemblance of guilt and is evil.

However, this very reality of guilt and moral evil known from the experience of morality emphasizes even stronger the fact that in human volition the relation to the truth as well as interior dependence on that very truth is always present (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 146).” If taking a decision or making a choice were not based on that “moment of truth”, or, in other words, were those choices or decisions to be taken without any reference to the „moment of truth”, the whole ethos of human action, all the morality space which forms a vivid reality to a person – all this space would lose its sense and purpose. It is important for that reality to discern between moral good and evil. Indeed, it is important to discern between moral good and evil. The distinction is not only based on the relationship of man to the truth, especially truth about himself, but, indeed – in communication understood in a wider sense – it significantly expands the relation to the truth. In short, to distinguish between good and evil, which is so important for morality, and in its space relevant also to the ethics of media, it is assumed that cognition and volition of any object is realized on the principle of the truth about the real good of the very object. Knowing and wanting evil is always a destruction of that relationship, and a more or less destruction of one's own humanity, because man cannot destroy the truth (which dwells within him) about his purpose and his dignity.

### ***Manifestatio of a person by means of communication***

The basic thesis of Wojtyła's thought is the assertion that "a person manifests himself through act." Human act reveals a person in man, which is because Wojtyła regards the experience of act as the basic human experience.<sup>17</sup> If every human act has relation and communicativeness inscribed into it and if communication is the basic human act, consequently – in the spirit of Wojtyła's thought – it follows that every single type of communication reveals and manifests man as a person as well. In other words, man manifests himself as a person in communication processes. Wojtyła believes that every act is at the same time a person's experience. An entire human being participates and most fully expresses himself in an act. An analysis of an act can thus lead to obtain a picture of man which contains various aspects and dimensions of human existence. Human act is a reality that can be experienced in two ways. First, it is experienced from within, the lived-through and conscious side; second, it is perceived from without, both by the acting person and other people. An act is thus perceived as a phenomenological reality which stems from experiences of a perceiving awareness, and as an ontic, objective and ethical reality, for it also undergoes ethical evaluation based on objective criteria (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 29n).

Personalistic communication is – generally speaking – an expression of human causality. Man is the creator of and the participant in communication processes. Communication processes do not occur in isolation from man, but against an entire dynamism of man and in strict, organic connection with him. „It is all about intentional dynamism, which is given to us in total human experience. Not all that constitutes it finds its reflection in consciousness. For instance, the entire vegetative dynamism characteristic of the human body does not find its reflection in consciousness. Similarly, not all facts which constitute total human dynamism are consciously experienced (...). Nonetheless, the dynamism characteristic of man not only finds the basic reflection in consciousness, but man is also aware of the major directions of his dynamism, which is connected with experiencing them. After all, man experiences acting as something essentially different from happening” (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 62). A genuine personalistic communication becomes possible due to the fact that man as a person is to be characterized by means of causality peculiar to himself. With reference to the analogy of being, it is possible to view both human action and whatever happens in man, as a fulfillment of a certain potentiality. The first as well as the other are a realization, or – to use Aristotle's expression – a dynamic unity of act and potentiality. Since communication is a *sui generis* personalistic „coming out” beyond a man and towards another man, then a man can „transmit” to others the whole human dynamism, reflected in his own action. Additionally, the acting man (announcing or getting into contact) can transmit and manifest himself, both in what constitutes the context and content of his action and in what “happens” in and next to him. All of this takes place on the grounds of human rationality, i.e. in a free and conscious way.<sup>18</sup> Man thus manifests himself in communication processes in an entire complexity of his world of values, but – above all – in his personalistic dignity and merit. The statement is primarily of use in interpersonal communication, but also pertains to media communication, in which – as we keep trying to demonstrate – man participates and is constantly present.

<sup>17</sup> A lot of factors were decisive in this case. It seems that the time of the influence of the Marxist concept of act in Poland was not insignificant. Wojtyła's concept formed a strong and efficient polemic with theoretical and practical Marxism. Wojtyła definitely rejects the narrowed concept of *praxis* that was favoured by Marxism, and demonstrates the human act to be a deep personalistic reality, which is worthy merely of man, who is also capable of “participating” in acts of other people. See also Wojtyła (1979b, pp. 9-20), Niemiec (1993-1994, pp. 179-182).

<sup>18</sup> On psychological aspects of communication and media see more in: Chio (1998, p. 14n) also see e.g. some publications on the psychology of media, [online], access: 14.06.2010, <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div46/>.

Accordingly, media communication has a human dimension, becoming a space of and for human acts, which in turn reveal his personalistic merit. Man's manifesting himself by means of communication processes can become an appropriate platform of ethical evaluation of any and every human act which takes place in the space of media communication.

Personalistic communication is an expression of human causality. It is worth mentioning here that broadly understood communication has two objective structures inscribed: that "man acts" and that "something happens in man". The structures determine two basic directions of the dynamism characteristic of man. The directions are in a sense contrary inasmuch as in one of them what becomes revealed and realized is communicable activity, whereas in the other its inaction and passiveness. If the latter is perceived as such by other persons, it can be understood as a resignation from human communication activity or as the attitude of a simple media consumption.

It is also worth a mention that all that is „passive” in man is connected with communication processes. Following Wojtyła, two aspects of passiveness can be distinguished which can be expressed in the following sentences: "there's something going on in a man" and „there's something going on with a man". Colloquially, the sentences are often used interchangeably, not infrequently when we say that there's something going on with a man, do we mean that there's something going on in a man. Properly speaking, however, the phrase what happens „with a man” points at his receiving something from the outside. It is such a kind of passiveness that can even be an element determining the shape of communication. Man is then not the dynamic subject of happening whose origin is in him, but rather an object to which another subject or even another force (e.g. media technology) does something and he is only affected. Such a type of passiveness manifests itself particularly in every media manipulation or in media consumption processes.

The other expression, "there's something going on in a man", introduces us to the area of human secrets, which can be revealed only when the subject himself has evaluated these experiences, introduced them within his own consciousness and is willing to entirely or at least partly transmit them outside. The transmission is usually executed in communication processes, with the help of media, which of their own nature belong to external determinants of communication. In this context there appears an entire area of various types of media content creation, transmission and reception determinants. These determinants largely shape media communication, co-create media space as well as condition ethical evaluation of the processes that actively take place therein. It can thus be seen that the two objective structures of human communication, i.e. the fact that it is "man who acts" in media space and the fact that "man passively lets things happen in himself", have not only practical consequences as far as the functioning of media is concerned, but possess also their axiological consequences. They form the actual platform of ethical evaluation, which – after all – is accomplished in the context of what pertains to both human action and to something "happening" with and in man (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 62-65; Czarniecki, 2001, pp. 34n; Gajda, 2002a, pp. 45-77).

### **Communication as rooted in the rationality of a person**

Communication is a conscious act of man. What is more, man as a person is also aware of his action. Man not only acts consciously, but is also aware of acting consciously. Human communication is – generally speaking – carried out in the space of rationality. It is so because consciousness accompanies human action which thanks to it can manifest its personalistic roots. The manifestation is somehow inscribed in any and every type of a person's mediality. Consciousness has its continuity and identity, which are different from the constitution and identity of every human act. Man's consciousness and freedom, i.e. human

rationality, constitute a ground for human acts to be rooted in, including all communication processes.

Each process of communication stems from rationality and leaves a “trace” of its presence in human consciousness. Consciousness accompanies an act and reflects it when it is born and carried out. The proper function of consciousness is the cognitive function. Consciousness recognizes and reflects what “happens in a man”, as well as what a man “acts”. The “happening” and “acting” can be transmissible, that is communicable to other persons (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 35-36).<sup>19</sup> The fact that communication is rooted in the rationality of a person means also a connection between communication and autonomy of a person.

Autonomy not only pertains to consciousness but also to man’s freedom and its role in shaping both a person and his acts. Man’s inner freedom is reflected by means of his acts, which is to say by means of human communication. Inner freedom – according to Wojtyła – “manifests itself (...) not so much as an internal property of an act carried out by a person but as a property of a person who is capable of committing acts only because he is in possession of such a property. This relation can be reversed only to assert that it is a person who becomes manifest by means of will – and not only will – and in a person. Every act confirms and simultaneously reifies this relationship, in which will demonstrates itself as a property of a person” (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 109). A person – thanks to his freedom – becomes a communicable reality. This dynamism of man, which consists in self-revealing himself as a person by means of his own action, makes up the crux of autonomy.

Autonomy is connected with an entire dynamism of man, of a person’s *fieri*. Thanks to the *fieri* communication is also possible. This is *fieri* of a person who has his own ontic distinctness as well as axiological dimension. One and the other dimension point at morality as the natural area of human action. Both emphasize the moral character of human action and contain elements of ethical normativeness. It goes beyond any doubt that autonomy, which is expressive of an entire dynamism of a person’s freedom, is a complex reality. A person is someone who owns himself and, simultaneously, someone who is owned only and exclusively by himself. Self-possession as a peculiar structural property of a person manifests and confirms itself in action by means of free will. Will also reveals itself by means of communication, which is a peculiar way of human action. A simple experience of “I want” cannot be read properly unless the entire dynamic reality which is self-possession is taken into consideration. Man can “acquire” a lot and he can own a lot, too. He also can – to a larger or a lesser extent – become “appropriated” by media, thereby becoming much less himself and restricting at the same time his freedom of action. Self-possession is also connected with the other inner relation that takes place in the very structure of man as a person, and concurrently most strictly bound up with man’s will and inner freedom. It is an inner ability of a person to execute self-control. On one hand, it enters the entire dynamism of a person; on the other, in the person’s all manners of communication. The person, on the one hand – respecting his entire complexity – executes self-control; on the other, the person is someone who he himself controls. This self-control, as a person distinguishing property, assumes self-possession and constitutes its larger reification (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 109-111).

It seems useful to our analyses to recall here what Marcel wrote about ownership in “To be and to have”: “Actually, everything boils down to a distinction between what one has and what one is. The trouble is, it is unspeakably difficult to express it in a conceptual form, which should, after all, be possible. What one has, comprises most evidently something

---

<sup>19</sup> If consciousness and its cognitive skills become in any way distorted by media, we deal then with a broadly-understood manipulation, e.g.: Lepa (1995, p. 23n).

external in relation to one's 'I'. This externality is not complete, however. In principle, what one has is things (or whatever can become similar to things, and to such an extent that this similarity is possible). Strictly speaking, I can only have what exists (...) independently of me. In other words, what I have becomes added to me; moreover, the fact that something is owned by me is added to those properties, qualities, etc. that belong to the things that I have. I only have what I can (...) dispose of, in other words, inasmuch as I can be treated as a force, as a being equipped with potentialities. Only what one has can be passed on" (Marcel, 1986, p. 134)<sup>20</sup>. All that means that a man can transmit, communicate who he is and what he has.

Media communication is most frequently considered in the context of transmission or message. The message, however, does not deplete the total of communication processes, as has already been remarked. Both personalistic communication and media communication are complex processes which contain a wide range of relations and interactions of various character. Man communicates mainly himself as a person endowed with a personal quality and dignity in media space in which also *communio personarum* is accomplished. Autonomy and self-possession, which are in a way two dimensions of a person's autonomy, reveal and manifest the order of „being a person” as well as the order of the person's rational uniqueness, which cannot be closed up in patterns of objectified media world. In other words, media communication is rooted in the rationality of a person and the subjectivity of human action originating therefrom. Therefore, the foundations of education and of the role of media in education must also be of rational and subjective character.

### **Integration of a person in communication**

Man lives in a rich area of values; what is more, he is the subject of ontic and qualitative values through which he realizes human nature. Man and the community of persons not only dwell in a world of values but, first and foremost, they participate in it. The participation emphasizes the subjective dimension of human activity in relation to a world of values. What is more – owing to that participation, a human being can fully develop. A human being can also – by means of various ways of personalistic communication – pass the values onto other persons. The problem of values and their transmission has been the subject matter of a wide axiological reflection, especially in the last century. In many studies of the kind the world of values used to be treated either like a reality subjectively generated by and dependent on man or viewed in such abstract terms that it ceased to have any vital connections with a person. In the first case, we can speak about extreme subjectivism and axiological relativism; in the other, about various types of axiological idealisms. Discussion over the status and nature of values is still open, involving a lot of philosophical orientations and generating various types of theoretical attitudes (Finance, 1968, p. 267n). It is moving

---

<sup>20</sup> Marcel also analyses the possibility of communication via body. He writes: „I cannot focus my attention upon what, strictly speaking, is „my body” – contrary to the body as a thing which a physiologist has in mind – without stumbling against an almost inscrutable concept of ownership. Can I, after all, say that my body as such is a thing? If I treat it like a thing, then who am I, who treat it like that? In the end – as I wrote in ‘Metaphysical Diary’ (p. 252) – we reach the following statement: ‘my body is a thing, I am nothing’. Idealism will fall back on the statement that ‘I’ is an act which constitutes the subjective reality of my body. Is it not a conjuror’s trickery? – I would add. I am afraid so. Between this idealism and pure materialism there is only one difference, somehow vanishing (...). It is the difference in the manner of reducing man (...). Isn’t killing oneself disposing of one’s body (or one’s life) in the same way as one disposes of what one has, that is, of a thing? Whatever is that inscrutably mysterious relation between one’s ‘I’ and oneself? Isn’t it clear that the relation is fundamentally different in the case of a person who refuses to kill himself because he does not claim such a right, as he does not belong to himself? Do we not notice that underneath this – as it were – minute difference of phrasing there is an unfulfillable chasm which can only be examined step by step” (Marcel, 1986, pp. 134-135). See also: Wojtyła (1979a, pp. 285-299).

over to the world of media, which, after all, are a space where values are communicated. Regardless of many dimensions of that axiological polemic and its argumentation, we make an assumption that ontic values upon which we particularly focus here are of objective character and are included in the subjectivity of man.

The world of values is integrated with the personal nature of man. Values can be passed onto others so long as they are endowed with the quality of objectivity and, secondly, provided they are integrated with the person who passes them on, who communicates them. The ethical value is not a subjective construct of, for instance, human emotionality, but it is a value in itself, endowed with the quality of objectivity. It is also necessary to notice another important factor of ethical values, that is, their subjective rooting, their integration with man as their subjective carrier. A value then becomes “personalized”, which does not mean that ethical value gains the status of an anthropological ontic value; rather, it means that man as a person becomes a subjective platform of integration, values rooting, and the space for them to be realized. Values “personalized”, that is, linked, integrated with a human being in such a way can be, directly or via media, communicated to others. Depending on what kind of ethical values are “personalized” in man, we can speak about ethical integration or disintegration of man.

Apart from a lot of connotations, the notions of “integration” and “merging”, have in the first place, an ethical and legal resonance. Ethical integration seems to point at no so much making a whole of what used to be separated, but rather at a realizing and manifesting of the wholeness and unity of the world of ethical values on the ground of man’s subjectiveness (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 202-203) as well as an unfolding of man’s integrity in the world of values.

It seems that in order to better comprehend what personal participation in values is and what communication of values is, it may be necessary to refer to the original concept of a person’s integration in act, which was put forward by Wojtyła. Following his line of reasoning, we once again start from “a man’s experience”, from the fact that a man “acts” and “communicates” within the area of that action. This experience reveals a person’s causality, based upon rationality, which reveals the freedom and consciousness of a person in action. The experience that man is “the author” of an act conditions the action and differentiates the action as an act of a person from all other numerous indications of human dynamism. All that takes place within man as a subject, highlights even more strongly the dynamic peculiarity of an act shaped by the world of values. To put it in a different way, it is in and through his act that man articulates what values are important for him and what values are realized in him as well as which of them he passes onto others.

The notion of integration is also connected with the notion of a person’s transcendence in the action. The thought was particularly stressed by Wojtyła. „In a sense, we deduce the notion of integration from the notion of transcendence – he wrote – as the former is complimentary to the latter, whereby we can grasp and determine the other necessary aspect of reality contained within the experience ‘man acts’. It is necessary as without it, the very transcendence would hang in a structural emptiness. Going even further back, to the issue of a person’s autonomy, we deduce the notion of integration from reflections on the issue of causality and subjectivity of the human “I” in the action. Man experiences himself as the author of his own action; as a result, he is its own subject. He also experiences himself as the subject although experiencing subjectivity is different from experiencing causality. Man also experiences himself as the subject of whatever happens in him. Experiencing subjectivity always contains a kind of passiveness; experiencing causality is active to the very core – which is exactly why it constitutes human action. Nevertheless, every act contains a certain

synthesis of causality and subjectivity of the human 'I'. If, then, causality is, as it were, the area for a person's transcendence to manifest itself, subjectivity fulfills the same role in reference to integrity" (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 201).

Running the risk of a generalization, it can be stated that an integration of values also takes place on the ground of personalistic subjectivity. It is thanks to this that a person becomes not only a carrier of values, but he can also participate in them. Experiencing values becomes connected with recognizing values. A person is a ground integrating the axiological sphere with the sphere of intellectual cognition. Both cognitive grounds form the foundation of man's self-knowledge, in which all is about man understanding himself, about a kind of cognitive permeation, of both the very one and unique value – a *sui generis* value – that is the very person, and of all other values which serve a person's integral development. Self-knowledge is a cognitive act; consequently, it objectifies the totality of value experience, allowing man to recognize them more accurately (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 38). One concept is worth emphasizing here, namely that any anthropology that disregards values is incapable of providing and expressing the entire knowledge about man, naturally within the limits of its methodological competence. Similarly, the same can be said about theories of media. The concepts of media which on principle exclude the axiological dimension of the media space cannot constitute an appropriate ground for ethical analyses. As A. Szostek rightly observes, even though morality and man are two different realities, it is morality that cannot function without man and that cannot be considered in separation from man. Man lives in the space of morality. "Morality is a certain property of a human action – and of man himself, who becomes good or evil via his acts. Man, on the other hand, is not a property of morality; he constitutes a more autonomous reality, albeit hidden in its structure. And he manifests himself by means of communication" (Szostek, 1980, p. 287). What needs to be added here is that all this occurs thanks to a person's integration in the action, who in turn communicates – via the action – the world of values integrated with it.

A person's integration in the action takes place in the area of natural determinants of human life, which is to say in determinants of the somatic as well as psycho-spiritual spheres. In no way can they be regarded as determinants of human life; still, they form appropriate framework of a fully human action, in which the spiritual sphere remains independent of the somatic sphere, of which it is in command. Both the spheres are open to external interactions. There is no doubt nowadays that media can more and more efficiently influence man, affecting positively or negatively the two spheres of his life. Therefore, man either becomes integrated or disintegrated in the media space.

### **Disintegration of a person in communication**

The notion of „integration” and the process of integration of a person in communication is connected with the notion of “disintegration” (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 213). Man can also become an integrational ground for anti-values, that is he can become ethically disintegrated. Discussing the meaning of a person's integration, Karol Wojtyła also touches the other theme, namely disintegration. He not only deals with the analysis of the very term “disintegration”, but above all with the analysis of the entire reality that comes with it. “Disintegration” is an ambiguous term. It pertains to various fields of human social and cultural activity, and to analyses referring to human personality in the first place.<sup>21</sup> Most often it is used within the area of psychology, where mention is made even about so called positive

<sup>21</sup> See more on positive disintegration combined with a theory of communication: Korporowicz (1996, pp. 57-77).

disintegration. In such various contexts symptoms of disintegration are observed to arise in what in any way deviates from human normality or is unable to reach it.<sup>22</sup> It seems that the colloquial – and at the same time scholarly because applied in various specific fields of knowledge – meaning of disintegration is the basic one. In the context of ethics, disintegration always has a negative resonance. Inner disintegration would mean a person's integrating of anti-values whereas outer disintegration is nothing else but manipulation. Both, however, pertain to the inner sphere of man.

The basic meaning of disintegration is to be uncovered in the context of the basic meaning of integration. "That basic meaning of integration – Wojtyła writes – is always in a way a person's integration in the action and remains in strict relation with the structure of ownership and self-control, which is so essential for a person. It is a structure fundamental to being oneself even though it becomes accomplished in an act and in an act it manifests itself. What we call psychological personality or moral (ethical) personality is in relation to the very being a person something derivative, secondary and somehow aspectual. Integration – as well as disintegration – in the basic meaning is herein considered in relation to the basic structure, and not only in relation to derivative structures even though we use these terms as pertaining to those structures as well (...). In this way, then, by disintegration in the basic meaning of the term will be understood what becomes exposed in the structure of self-possession and self-control suitable for a given person as a lack or defect in that very structure" (Wojtyła, 1969a, p. 205). A person's disintegration can be accomplished in two fields or dimensions. The first of them is the inner, basic dimension. It is connected with a man's relinquishing his own ability to self-own and self-control. In the case of basic disintegration man as a person seems to be devoid of the abilities of his own accord, by integrating within himself and passing on anti-values. The other type of disintegration is of an external character and results from a negative, communicative external interaction. In such a case man becomes disintegrated as a result of external manipulation in which media perform a more and more efficient role. Generally speaking, a person's disintegration in a communicative act is merely a distortion and destruction of values with which the act is connected.<sup>23</sup>

Thanks to the autonomy in truth man owns and controls himself. Disintegration means a kind of – more or less profound – incapability of executing self-possession and self-control by means of autonomy. Furthermore, a disintegrated person is unable to subdue himself to the truth itself and to communicate positive values. Defects and lacks of value integration in a person become, consequently, defects and lacks in the communication of these values. The inability to properly execute autonomy on the part of a person leads also to a weakening of the capability of self-cognition as well as of the recognition of the world of values, which will finally negatively reverberate when it comes to the quality of human action. Disintegration also negatively affects the criteria and the very process of ethical evaluation and also the

<sup>22</sup> Wojtyła puts it in the following way: „In this formulation an integrated man is simply a normal man, a disintegrated one – is abnormal or not fully normal. A question arises what these scholarly disciplines view as norm, that is the measure of human normalcy. It seems that the measure is to a large extent accepted intuitively: simply, a sane mind will immediately distinguish between a normal person and one who is abnormal or not quite normal. Disciplines dealing with human personality – based on such an intuition of a norm – have been able to examine very thoroughly particular symptoms of disintegration in an appropriate dimension. The dimension is expressed by means of the term „psychological personality”, which is profoundly penetrated by man's moral personality” (Wojtyła (1969a, p. 204).

<sup>23</sup> “Cases of such profound and thorough disintegration are very well known to exact sciences; they also have their psycho-medical qualifications. It is these facts that we refer to here, in a manner of speaking by way of example, since we are not after a very diversified phenomenal description, but after a formulation of the basic meaning of disintegration. This meaning – as has already been stated – is connected with the dynamic structure of a person” (Wojtyła (1969a, p. 205).

possibility of making right choices. “The term disintegration leads to a better understanding the basic meaning of integration, i.e. the aspect of the dynamic reality of a person that we want to have designated by means of the term (...). Diverse dynamisms appropriate to man in the somatic layer and in the mental layer of his natural potentiality are involved in human action. Every act is a kind of “merging” them (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 205, 210). This merging, pertaining also to the merging of values and occurring due to man’s capability of autonomy, helps him shape and develop, not only the integrated world of positive values but, above all, the integrity of a person.<sup>24</sup>Man is always the subject of all communication processes. They will be efficient and ethically right so long as their foundation is a value-integrated human being (Szlaga, 1996, p. 150).

## Conclusions

Man is a source of communication, which means that human rationality is inscribed in the very nature of communication. The necessary presence of man in the communication space means that the basic dimension of all the processes taking place therein should be the human dimension, the dimension of humanity. It is from here that a simple and yet fundamental conclusion can be derived, namely that the dimension demands ethical evaluation. The presence of man in the communication space implies the need for ethics on the one hand, and, on the other, points to the very man, to his dignity and merit as the basic norm of ethical evaluation. The notion of human dignity is a term applied in many fields. It is used in anthropological, psychological, sociological and moral perspectives. Human dignity is easier to experience and to sense than to perceive and describe because it contains such contents as: veneration, respect, good fame, reputation, esteem, prestige, honor, human quality and the like. Man as a person possesses dignity, which determines his personal quality, the latter being comparable with nothing else. For any ethics of communication, it is of fundamental significance whether and to what extent it takes into account that constitutive and indispensable foundation of human dignity.

---

<sup>24</sup> Analyzing the meaning of integration Wojtyła seems to understand the notion in Aristotelian and Thomistic terms. In his explanation Wojtyła uses three other terms, namely: “reactivity”, “vegetation” and “reproduction”. When man runs short of life-giving integration, then he pushes himself or is pushed by others into the sphere of reactivity. “In the constitution of human organism the ability to react to stimuli is directly connected with the nervous system, which ‘serves’ the whole body and determines particular directions of its reactive dynamism as well as the somatic potentiality which lies at its roots” (Wojtyła, 1969a, pp. 223-224).

## References

- Buttiglione, R. (1997). *Karol Wojtyła: The Thought of the Man who became Pope John Pope II*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.
- Chio, F. D. (1998). *L'analisi della televisione*. Milano: Bompiani.
- Chio, F. D. (1998). *Journal of Media Psychology*, [online], access: 14.06.2010, <http://www.calstatela.edu/faculty/sfisco/>
- Czarniecki, M. M. (2001). *W niewoli mediów*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Antyk.
- Filipiak, M. (2003). *Homo communicans. Wprowadzenie do teorii komunikowania*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.
- Finance, de J. (1968). *Grundlegung der Ethik*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder.
- Gajda, J. (2002a). Dominująca rola mediów i hipermediów w kulturze i edukacji. In: J. Gajda (Ed.) *Edukacja medialna*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek., pp. 45-77.
- Gajda, J. (ed.) (2000b). *Edukacja medialna*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.
- Jabłoński, M. & Wygoda, K. (Eds) (2002). *Dostęp do informacji i jego granice*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.
- Jaskóła, J. & Olejarczyk, A. (Eds) (2003). *Prawda a metoda. Aporie myśli współczesnej*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.
- Jonkisz, A. (Ed.) (1999). *Postacie prawdy*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Kojs, W. & Dawid L. (Eds) (2000). *Homo communicus. Szkice pedagogiczne*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Korporowicz, L. (1996). *Osobowość i komunikacja w społeczeństwie transformacji*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Kultury.
- Kowalczyk, S. (1995). *Z refleksji nad człowiekiem. Człowiek – społeczność – wartość*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL.
- Lepa, A. (1995). *Świat manipulacji*. Częstochowa: Wydawnictwo Niedziela.
- Lindsay, H. P., Norman D. A. (1977). *Human information processing: An Introduction to Psychology*. New York: Academic Press.
- Lindsay, H.P., Norman D.A. (1984). *Procesy przetwarzania informacji. Wprowadzenie do psychologii*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IBPS.
- Marcel, G. (1949). *Being and Having*, trans. by Katharine Farrer. Westminster, UK: Dacre Press.
- Marcel, G. (1986). *Być i mieć*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PAX.
- McQuail, D. (2001). *Sociologia dei media*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Nęcki, Z. (2000). *Komunikacja międzyludzka*. Kraków: Antykwa.
- Niemiec, H. (1993-1994). Teoria moralności w filozofii kard. Karola Wojtyły, *Częstochowskie Studia Teologiczne*, 21-22, 179-182.
- Podgórecki, J. (2000). Moralne aspekty komunikacji społecznej. In: W. Kojs & L. Dawid (Eds). *Homo communicus. Szkice pedagogiczne*. pp. 23-29. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Pokrywka, M. (2000). *Osoba, uczestnictwo, wspólnota*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.
- Popielski, K. (Ed.) (1996). *Człowiek, wartości, sens*. Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL.
- Ratajczak, J., Zabierowski M. (2001). Psychologia w drugiej połowie XX wieku. Geneza i liderzy psychologii humanistycznej. *Archeus*, 2, 89-98.
- Seifert, J. (1988). Prawda a transcendencja człowieka. *Ethos*, 1, 37-47.
- Siemianowski, A. (1986). *Człowiek i prawda*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo "W Drodze".
- Smolka, B. (2002). *Narodziny i rozwój personalizmu*. Opole: Redakcja Wydawnictw WT UO.
- Stewart, J. (2002). *Mosty zamiast murów. O komunikowaniu się między ludźmi*. Wydawnictwo PWN: Warszawa.

- Styczeń, T. (1988). Wolność w prawdzie. *Ethos*, 1, 47-57.
- Styczeń, T. (1993). *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL.
- Szewczyk, W. (1998). *Kim jest człowiek. Zarys antropologii filozoficznej*. Tarnów: Biblos.
- Szlaga, J. (1996). Godność i upadek człowieka a jego środowisko In: K. Popielski (Ed.). *Człowiek, wartości, sens*. (pp. 149-164). Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL.
- Szostek, A. (1980). Doświadczenie człowieka i moralności w ujęciu Kardynała Karola Wojtyły. *Znak*, 32, 285-299.
- Wojtyła, K. (1969a). *Osoba i czyn*. Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne.
- Wojtyła, K. (1969b). Problem doświadczenia w etyce. *Roczniki Filozoficzne*, 17,2, 5-24.
- Wojtyła, K. (1976). Osoba: podmiot i wspólnota. *Roczniki Filozoficzne*, 24, 53-59.
- Wojtyła, K. (1979a). *The Acting Person*, trans. A. Potocki, ed. A. Tymieniecka. D. Reidel Publishing: Dordrecht.
- Wojtyła, K. (1979b). Problem konstytuowania się kultury poprzez ludzką „praxis”, *Roczniki Filozoficzne*, 27, 1, 9-20.
- Wojtyła, K. (1979c). The person: Subject and Community. *Review of Metaphysics*, 33, 273-301.
- Wojtyła, K. (1993). *Person and community: Selected essays*, trans. T. Sandok. New York: Peter Lang.

#### Abstrakt

*Człowiek jest źródłem komunikacji, to znaczy, że w samą naturę komunikacji wpisana jest ludzka racjonalność. Konieczna obecność człowieka w przestrzeni komunikacji sprawia, iż podstawowym wymiarem wszystkich procesów w niej zachodzących powinien być wymiar ludzki, wymiar człowieczeństwa. Obecność człowieka w przestrzeni komunikacji z jednej strony implikuje potrzebę etyki, a drugiej strony wskazuje na samego człowieka, na jego godność i wartość, jako na podstawową normę wartościowania etycznego. W toku prezentowanych analiz staramy się pokazać, iż osoba ludzka jest integrującym podmiotem własnych działań komunikacyjnych oraz platformą integracji interpodmiotowych działań medialnych, dlatego też można powiedzieć, że osoba jest homo communicus i homo communicans i odwrotnie, że homo communicus, które staje się homo communicans jest osobą.*