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World Youth Days in Cracow as a media event

World Youth Days (WYD) is a particular initiative of pastoral evangelisation, inspired by John Paul II in 1995, and has been periodically held in various parts of the world since 1986¹. It integrates young people with the Church and emphasises the importance and hope they are given for the future of the human race and the world². World Youth Days have been held twice in Poland, first in 1991 in Częstochowa, and then in 2016, when Cracow became the host city for the pilgrims and Pope Francis between 26 and 31 July, thus relating *explicitly* to sites of memory, spiritual heritage and the achievements of Karol Wojtyła, the man identified with freedom and transformation as well as an awakening in Poles of messianic aspirations and a belief in their historic significance. The organisation of WYD in 2016 also symbolically emphasised the celebration of the 1050th anniversary of the baptism of Poland, which greatly enhanced the local role and the meaning of Christian tradition and the Catholic Church.

World Youth Days primarily affirm sacredness, yet they also integrate young generations around Christian values and ideas, promoting an exchange of the forms of expressing and experiencing contact with transcendence in a multicultural context. They are based on three dimensions: firstly, dissemination of teaching about Christ; secondly, experiencing the Church and the significance of Christianity through

¹ Jan Paweł II, *List Ojca Świętego do kard. E. F. Pironio z okazji seminarium zorganizowanego w dniach 13-16 maja 1996 r. w Częstochowie*, after: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 1996, no. 7-8, cited after: H. Tomasik, *Ojciec Święty Jan Paweł II o znaczeniu Światowych Dni Młodzieży*, in: *Świętymi bądźcie. Orędzia Ojca Świętego na Światowe Dni Młodzieży*, Częstochowa 2002, p. 5. This cycle of meetings of The Pope with young people may include also the ones held in Rome from 14 to 15 June 1984 – Jan Paweł II, *Ojciec Święty do uczestników Jubileuszu młodych zgromadzonych na Placu Świętego Piotra*, 14 IV 1984, in: Jan Paweł II, *Nauczanie papieskie*, v. VII (1), January-June 1984, Poznań 2001, pp. 476-480; Jan Paweł II, *Jesteśmy świadkami krzyża i zbawienia*, 15 IV 1984 r, in: Jan Paweł II, *Nauczanie papieskie*, v. VII (1), January-June 1984, op. cit., p. 480-483.

² Cf. Jan Paweł II, 1985, *List Apostolski Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II do młodych całego świata z okazji międzynarodowego roku młodzieży*, z 31 III 1985, in: Jan Paweł II, *Nauczanie papieskie*, v. VIII (1), January-June 1985, Poznań 2003, pp. 410-435.

participation in celebrations; and thirdly, through mission-mindedness³. Therefore, apart from their *stricte* religious dimension related to the methods of deepening spirituality, developing bonds with the Absolute involving participation in liturgy, masses and prayers, the agenda of the meetings of the young includes quasi-entertainment or recreational elements, including both projects supervised by the WYD organisational committee and initiatives spontaneously undertaken by pilgrims and designed to enrich the event and make it more appealing. Most importantly, they present the meaningful and multi-faceted impact of faith, which inspires and stimulates creativity, principled actions, social involvement, willingness to help and support others, and the establishment of responsible relationships with other people. The scenario of World Youth Days involves shows and performances depicting the culture and heritage of the host country and the role played in it by the Church and religion. The range of events offered by WYD includes projects which are entirely directed and selected to have a coherent main message and motto, and therefore to be in line with the formal and institutional dimension as well as with bottom-up initiatives and animations, integrating the participants in ludic and free formulas of manifesting axiological unity. Consequently, the whole, in its external and thus slightly simplified appearance, is related to contemporary popular and commercial festivals and events, treated as a tool of corporate communication and identification of a brand⁴, where the cascade of emotions makes the participants believe that they are involved in a unique and unusual celebration, involving, multi-dimensionally, the emotions and senses in a spectacular collage of stimulants and impressions. Illusion penetrates through reality, yet the leitmotiv of WYD remains Jesus Christ and teaching about Him, and also the sense of community and joy from experiencing God and faith.

In the above context, this enterprise becomes an modernized model for consolidating and promoting religious messages, a model which borrows the instruments of contemporary culture and commerce, which quite efficiently position and promote selected brands and products in a competitive environment, requiring a continuous striving for customer attention. The implementation of this model in the sacral dimension enriches a conventional ritual and seems to enhance spirituality, which may be treated dialectically. On the one hand, it reveals attempts by the Church to enrich ways of proclaiming the Gospel, whose aim is to halt contemporary forms of secularisation, including the trends of moving away from sacredness; thus, it points to a permanent search for effective tools and actions in the pluralised socio-cultural

³ Cf. *W szkole Papieża. Wywiad z biskupem Renato Boccardo, współorganizatorem Światowych Dni Młodzieży*, in: P. Zuchiewicz, *Szukalem Was. Jan Paweł II i Światowe Dni Młodzieży*, Radom 2005, p. 395.

⁴ Cf. M. Bruhn, *Kommunikationspolitik*, Munich 1997, s. 777, cited after: M. Pfadenhauer, *The evangeliation of faith as a marketing strategy: World Youth Day as an innovative response of the Catholic Church to pluralization*, "International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing", 2010, vol. 15, p. 383; B. Rozwadowska, *Public relations. Teoria, praktyka, perspektywy*, Warszawa 2009, p. 230. Na temat społeczno-kulturowych wymiarów eventów, see inter alia D. Getz, *Event studies. Theory, Research and Policy for Planned Events*, Routledge 2007.

domain, where competition occurs not only among religious entities but also concerns secular bidders of various ideas and goods. They frequently promote their products by means of narration, attributing features of divine provenance to products and services, taking advantage of the symbolism and arsenal of meaning of religious systems, but frequently excluding their traditional contexts⁵. On the other hand, this formula incorporates the expectations and preferences of the young, who are continually motivated and stimulated by entertaining proposals encouraging them to succumb to the temptations of temporality and ephemeral experiences. The festival-like form of WYD is supposed to offer a sophisticated alternative to the mainstream, imitating in style and reproducing popular productions, yet still offering a deeper structure of meanings. This form combines tradition and modernity in a refined way, depicting religion in a truly innovative manner, where the components of faith, the kerygma, receive a revitalisation, enriched with inspirations and borrowings from popular culture. This is supposed to signal the opening of the Church to innovation and to correspond with the needs of the young generation, especially Catholic youth, who are the main recipient of this offer and for whom this festival of faith and interestingly-staged glorification of Christ are a chance for limitless presentations of integration and identification with a specified meaningful universe. It refers not to the past, traditionalism and conservatism, but rather to the manifestations of modern, popular experiences. It is they who emphasise the specific character of contemporary culture, accepting eclecticism, incorporating various trends and idiosyncrasies, and experiencing elation, delight, excitement and even fun around the exceptional "idol" they perceive God to be.

Thus, the event-like character of the World Youth Days translates as the Church's adaptation to current conditions, linked to the assimilation of specific cultural-commercial solutions, which encourages the dissemination of the sacred among the young. It offers them an innovative form of experiences and experiments in the field of religion, especially if manifested externally. Simultaneously, this specific religious offer, which attracts numerous young people from all over the world, attracts the interest of the mass media. They situate sacredness within the context of mediatisation and accentuate the supremacy of this sector, which significantly affects individual spheres of social life along with the sphere of religion, and thus constitutes a new range of challenges for the Church, whose monopoly and supremacy in distributing and managing the meanings and symbols of sacral provenance are gradually being weakened. Mediatisation may also mean the media taking over the function of producing the content, meanings and experiences and also placing them within a pop-culture formula, along with influencing the recipients in domains so far reserved for

⁵ Cf. inter alia J. Baudrillard, *Symulakry i symulacja*, Sic!, Warszawa 2005, p. 111-120; A. Draguła, *Bluźnierstwo. Między grzechem a przestępstwem*, Warszawa 2013; E. Stachowska, *Między modą a tradycją. O grze symbolami religijnymi*, in: *Spółczesność, kultura, religia*, J. Kojkoł, B. Guzowska, A. Wójtowicz (edit.), Gdynia 2015, pp. 103-115.

religious institutions⁶. Bringing together young people who are enthusiastic about sacredness and presence of the Pope translated – in Polish conditions – into a significant interest, which was additionally exposed and stimulated by media coverage. It created a particular form of narration which indicated that WYD had such a unique character and exceptional atmosphere that this event required permanent attention and monitoring from almost everybody, irrespective of their level of religious involvement and philosophy of life. This is why the media intentionally prepared coverage of the stage events to allow viewers to satisfy a potential interest, to participate vicariously in the festivities, or even become immersed in the mood of the participants and experience exceptional emotions. The coverage resembled a specific spectacle which, apart from the ‘regular’ coverage of real events related to the visit of the Pope and the pilgrims, also contained elements of self-promotion and creation. This type of media production is characterised by a pragmatism aimed at attracting a large audience who should immerse themselves in the magic of the presented images, whose meanings are rooted in the leitmotif of this global project, in a simplified presentation of sacredness, integration, feeling of community and vitality of faith, *eo ipso* of Catholicism. This was permanently emphasised in this media story, yet what this production concurrently promotes and feeds is the “message” of the exceptional quality of the media coverage, with all the measures which enhance its uniqueness and phenomenal character, which ensure that viewers celebrate this event in front of their TV screens. This trend of creation and staging turns the event into a show held on a media stage⁷, the celebration centre of which is located away from the broadcasters and beyond their control; however, it is they who, on the basis of the covered events, constitute a proprietary “creation” for their own viewers, encouraged and lured by assurances of their exceptional character, all of which place this production within the model of media events.

Nevertheless, media events may be understood, pursuant to the concepts of D. Dayan and E. Katz, as “a festival constituting a break from daily life (syntax) with its sacred content treated with reverence (semantics) and its actively participating viewers (pragmatics)”⁸. Live broadcasts from specific events or celebrations are forecast, which

⁶ Cf. S. Hjarvard, *The mediatization of religion: Theorising religion, media and social change*, “Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal”, 2011, vol. 12, no 2, p. 124. On mediatization see also inter alia W. Schultz, *Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept*, “European Journal of Communication”, 2004, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 87-101; D. Morgan, *Mediation or mediatization: The history of media in the study of religion*, “Culture and Religion”, 2011, vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 137-152; S. Hjarvard, *The mediatization of society. A theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change*, “Nordicom Review”, 2008, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 105-134; M. Lövhelm, *Mediatization of religion: A critical appraisal*, “Culture and Religion. Interdisciplinary Journal”, 2011, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 153-166; A. Hepp, *Cultures of Mediatization*, Polity Press 2013; *Mediatized Worlds. Culture and Society in a Media Age*, A. Hepp, F. Krotz (ed.), Palgrave Macmillan 2014.

⁷ A. Hepp, V. Krönert, *Religious Media Events. The Catholic “World Youth Day” as an example of the mediatization and individualization of religion*, in: *Media Events in a Global Age*, Routledge 2010, p. 265.

⁸ D. Dayan, E. Katz, *Wydarzenia medialne. Historia transmitowania na żywo*, Warszawa 2008, p. 54.

were initiated by the media, as the media are supposed to broadcast events organised by public institutions⁹, yet at the same time they subtly enrich and create them through stylish and theatrical coverage, and by doing so make them unique, utilising an arsenal of influential tools and giving the recipients a belief in the exceptionality of not only the course of broadcast events, but also in the specially-designed TV show. Thus, media events transform the routine of media affected by programme guides, as well as the free-time activities of viewers, for whom watching broadcasts is supposed to be an exceptional experience and celebration, and simultaneously a surrogate for actual participation. Nonetheless, the festive character of such events is not restricted just to transformations of media functioning and interference in the routinised everyday life of recipients. It also translates into a semantic dimension whose specific meaning, rank and symbolism are, as signalled before, proposed by the initiators of this event; however, this dimension is borrowed and even exposed by the broadcasters, thereby contributing to the creation of an exceptional "theme" show on TV screens, which through its exceptional character attracts numerous viewers, who are continuously assured that they can participate in a must-see event. In addition, this semantic dimension stimulates and awakens viewers' integration around the values, meanings and contexts depicted and promoted by media broadcasting the event, which are bound to constitute – according to D. Dayan and E. Katz – reconciliation, order and bonds which forecast potential transformation or renewal¹⁰.

Thus, media events appear as a specific form of media proposal or TV show, whose exceptionality is highlighted not only by the transformation of the current programme schedule, but also by a multi-dimensional emanation of uniqueness placed on the creation of a festivity announced by the media so that viewers might prepare for them in advance, and further adopted by journalists and commentators emphasising the reverence of broadcast events and images, but also unique film shots which combine the convention of objectivity and dependability with socio-technical measures enhancing the power of transmission, like framed images and close-ups of focused or emotionally animated faces of both the leading and supporting actors of WYD. The exemplification of the uncommonness of the broadcast images and the broadcasters' highlighting of such measures may be found in the comments of W. Cholewiński – one of the journalists reporting on the Pope's tram journey from Franciszkańska Street to Błonia on July 28, 2016, who, while commenting on footage showing people gathered along Cracow's Streets waiting for the Pope, said: "it is an uncommon picture. It is the right picture, never seen before by anybody else. TVP viewers have an opportunity to see the two perspectives, actually three perspectives, yet two symbolic perspectives. All those waiting for hours in heavy rain in order to see the Pope through a tram window," and later, "Have you ever seen such pictures? To be so close to the Holy

⁹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45.

¹⁰ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 52-53, 139-222.

Father and to these many people standing nearby, from such a perspective?"¹¹. All media actions aim to consolidate the viewers, for whom the time of transmission takes the form of a peculiar – staged – celebration which encourages them to abandon the mundane nature of their everyday life, *eo ipso* devote themselves solely to this peculiar festive spectacle.

In this context, the media event highlights the contemporary interference between the sacred and the profane, which in the case of WYD takes on a peculiar form, as they broadcast a course of events and religious ceremonies whose significance and meaning are presented by the media, highlighting and artificially emphasizing them, introducing arrangement, props, experts and interlocutors to precisely define and explain the essence of the presented images and events. At the same time, the convention and purpose of this media show leads to the staging of a festivity by implementing the symbolism, elements and the structure related explicitly to a ritual¹², in which the broadcast spectacle becomes the object of attention and almost adoration. This gives the TV production a quasi-religious character¹³, related primarily to the presented theme and content, sacred *in extenso*, but also having an allegoric character, when they present secular events and performances; and secondly referred to the mimesis of the form, based on rituals, replicating their attributes and emphatic character, which "interfere" and affect the daily reality of the viewers, who are jointly watching – as suggested by Dayan and Katz – a spectacle¹⁴. For the media, the theme of the broadcast events is a leading motif of the TV production, translating into a formula of an adopted and propagated TV narrative, yet an analogous engagement and pathos is seen in media creative directors when approaching such religious enterprises as World Youth Days, papal visits or pilgrimages, sports or political events¹⁵. *The sacred* is from this perspective slightly instrumentalised by the media industry, for which the celebrative meaning and the role attributed to a model of media events, regardless of their thematic connotations, seem to serve mainly to improve the attractiveness of its own offer, emphasising the openness and mainly declarative sensitivity of this sector to culturally and sociologically significant issues, and distinguishing themselves from the currently dominating mainstream, which is based on amusement and sensation. Regardless of the motives leading the animators of the media industry, their participation in promoting the image of religious events like WYD contributes to and supports the presence of sacred content and ideas

¹¹ Comment by journalist Witold Cholewiński during a special edition of TVP Info based on audio visual materials from TVP Info archives provided by Television Information Agency, TVP S.A. on 7 February 2017.

¹² E. W. Rothenbuhler, *Komunikacja rytualna. Od rozmowy codziennej do ceremonii medialnej*, Kraków 2003, p. 100-103.

¹³ Cf. A. Hepp, V. Krönert, *Religious Media Events. The Catholic "World Youth Day" as an example of the mediatization and individualization of religion*, in: *Media Events in a Global Age*, cit. edit., p. 265-266; D. Dayan, E. Katz, *Wydarzenia medialne. Historia transmitowania na żywo*, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁴ Cf. *ibidem.*, p. 48, 64; and *ibidem* E.W. Rothenbuhler, *Komunikacja rytualna...*, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

¹⁵ D. Dayan, E. Katz, *Wydarzenia medialne. Historia transmitowania na żywo*, op. cit., pp. 67-102.

in public discourse. This corresponds with evangelising strategies of the Church, within the framework of which occurs a search for contemporary and efficient methods of communicating the gospel. It is from such a perspective that WYD is incorporated, as secular media and others devote a lot of broadcasting time to covering the youth meeting and the Pope's visit, and to explaining the religious contexts and symbols. However, it is an open question how much these hours of TV viewing affect the revitalisation of faith and stimulation of spirituality. Furthermore, is it a sufficiently stimulating factor which constitutes specific religious viewpoints on contemporary tendencies of isolation from the sacred, rather than just a break from the mundane daily routine, which is occasionally made more attractive in a festive manner?

Emanating festiveness, marked with ritualism in the WYD broadcast, may be presented in a dichotomous way – in its simplified recognition, taking into consideration the emblematic criteria D. Dayan and E. Katz have attributed to this phenomenon. Firstly, those from the mass media and undertaken preparations, as well as technical and organisational efforts to manage the event and its worldwide broadcast, along with signalling changes in the broadcast schedules of TV stations in Poland. Secondly, the capabilities and efficiency in consolidating viewers during coverage of the youth meetings and the visit of the Pope on the grounds of viewing ratings. The first dimension related to WYD in Cracow concerned Polish Television and Polish Radio obtaining the status of an official broadcaster, which entitled these institutions to cover the event and share it with other interested stations or entities. Upon signing the agreement with the Conference of the Polish Episcopate, the president of Polish TV, Jacek Kurski, emphasised the role of WYD for state television, stating, "It is a great moment for us to be here now with the Polish Church. The World Youth Days, established by Saint John Paul II are being held in his former archdiocese", adding that "It is an event that I believe will go down in the history of the Church and the world. I am glad that Polish Television will be granted the status of official broadcaster today"¹⁶. To implement this challenge TVP used – as TVP Information Centre informs – 24 broadcasting vehicles, including 11 HD vehicles and 23 satellite stations¹⁷, which allowed it to send the signal worldwide. Consequently, the transmission from WYD in Cracow was presented by "350-500 TV stations on all continents"¹⁸. The most significant recipients included, among others: TV stations associated with the European Broadcasting Union, Vatican TV

¹⁶ TVP nada relacje ze Światowych Dni Młodzieży. „To jest dla nas wielka chwila”, 29 II 2016 r., source: <http://www.tvp.info/24231376/tvp-nada-relacje-ze-swiatowych-dni-mlodziezy-to-jest-dla-nas-wielka-chwila> [access: 29 I 2017].

¹⁷ Światowe Dni Młodzieży na antenach TVP, Press release of The Information Centre, 19 VII 2016, source: <http://www.tvp.pl/centrum-informacji/informacje-dla-mediow/komunikaty-centrum-informacji/swiatowe-dni-mlodziezy-na-antenach-tvp/26210001> [access: 30 I 2017].

¹⁸ Materials from Television Information Agency (TAI) TVP S.A. [further TAI TVP S.A.] obtained by the author from TAI TVP S.A. on 7.02.2017.

(VACTV), information agencies, such as “Reuters, Associated Press, Agence France Presse (AFP), Ruptly TV (Russian information agency) and EFE (Spanish information agency)”, Catholic TV stations, such as SAT-2000 (Italy); EWTN (USA), Catholic TV.org (USA), J19 (Peru), Laudato TV (Croatia), Saltandlight (Canada), TV 21 Century (Brazil), as well as foreign private stations, such as “CNN, Al Jazeera (London), Mediaset (Italy), Antena 3 (Spain), TV Lux (Slovakia)” and Polish stations, such as Polsat, TVN, TV Trwam, TV Republika, Onet and Wirtualna Polska¹⁹. For the duration of the World Youth Days, a web page was launched by Polish Television – www.sdmnazywotvp.pl, which made it possible to watch the broadcast online. To ensure the media service for WYD 2017 almost 1000 employees were engaged by Polish TV, while TAI (Television Information Agency) accredited 282 journalists on July 19, 2016²⁰. At the same time, a special studio was prepared and used by TVP1 and TV Polonia, where the particular components of the event were announced and covered. The on-air hosts included “Krzysztof Ziemięć and Paulina Guzik (...) as well as Anna Popek, Joanna Ładzińska-Molak and Marek Zajac”²¹. In addition, five special editions of the national news were prepared and broadcast from the Wawel Castle, Błonie and Brzegi, and a TVP Info studio was relocated to Cracow for the duration of WYD²². Apart from live broadcasts, TVP stations broadcast programmes, materials and thematic documentaries related to religious issues. A similar effort was also made by Polsat TV, which engaged around 50 employees, using five broadcast vehicles, 18 cameras and a mobile news crew, all of which resulted in 90 hours of live broadcast²³. For the duration of World Youth Days, the Poleski Hotel terrace in Cracow hosted an open-air studio, with an interchangeable stage design, from which the main edition of Wiadomości (the News), presented by D. Gawryluk, was broadcast²⁴.

The figures from KAI and PAP complete the image of media involvement, as these agencies were responsible for accreditation and accredited 5610 journalists from 82 countries, including 3794 from Poland²⁵. Another element supporting this process was a specially-prepared bilingual news service www.popoe2012.com, which also took the form of an electronic press centre, providing both documents

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Światowe Dni Młodzieży na antenach TVP, op. cit.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Ibidem.

²³ Information from inquiries to PR Department of Polsat TV in mail correspondence on 7.02.2017

²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, also: Rekordowe udziały Polsat News podczas pierwszego dnia wizyty Papieża Franciszka w Polsce, Press release by Polsat, 28.07.2016, source: <http://www.grupapolsat.pl/pl/archive/rekordowe-udzialy-polsat-news-podczas-pierwszego-dnia-wizyty-papieza-franciszka-w-polsce> [access: 4 XI 2016]. Rekordowy tydzień Polsat News – kanał z najlepszymi udziałami w historii stacji, Press release by Polsat, 2.08.2016, source: <http://www.grupapolsat.pl/pl/archive/rekordowy-tydzien-polsat-news-kanal-z-najlepszymi-udzialami-w-historii-stacji> [access: 4 XI 2016].

²⁵ Rada KEP ds. Środków Społecznego Przekazu podsumowała obsługę medialną ŚDM, KAI, 7.10.2016, source: <https://ekai.pl/rada-kep-ds-srodkow-spolecznego-przekazu-podsumowala-obsloge-medialna-sdm/> [access: 28 I 2017].

and speeches by the Pope as well as materials about Poland's history, economy, scientific achievements, culture and religion, including the Catholic Church and its role in our country, all of which was supposed to aid journalists in describing and broadcasting the events²⁶. This portal, launched in February 2016, was visited by 180,543 users by December 2016, with the highest interest in July involving as many as 75,992 users²⁷.

These figures only signal the scale of technological and organisational involvement undertaken by the media sector while preparing to broadcast WYD in a multi-dimensional way in order to provide a reliable yet attractive coverage from the event and the papal visit to Poland. The effect of all of this was a huge number of viewers moved by the exceptional quality of the coverage. Hence, viewing ratings of the main broadcasters covering the event may be another dimension which reveals and confirms the power of the media, especially of television's ability to attract and consolidate audiences, which reflects at least a partial interest of recipients in World Youth Days and the Pope's visit. In the period 26-31 July, 2016 the highest rating was recorded by TVP1 with 733,781 viewers and 12.25% of the TV market share. Polsat came second, with 539,839 viewers and 9.01% of the share, TVN was third with 488,540 viewers and 8.15% share. The figures for other stations were as follows: TVP Info with 443,392 viewers and 7.4% of the share, TVN 24 – 341,878 viewers and 5.71% of the share, TVP2 – 288,756 viewers and 4.82% of the share and Polsat News – 133,220 (0.69% of the share)²⁸.

The broadcast elements of the WYD programme with the highest viewing ratings between 27-31 July, 2017 included TVP1 coverage of the welcoming ceremony for the Pope at Balice Airport, watched by 2,724,000 viewers (27.81% of the share) and the papal meeting with youth held at the same time and watched by 2,474,000 viewers (17.61% SHR). The coverage of the papal speech at Błonie attracted as many as 2,317,000 viewers (22.61% SHR) and his speech from the "papal window" on Franciszkańska Street attracted 2.3 million viewers (18.4% – SHR). The valedictory ceremony of the Pope attracted 2.1 million viewers (17.28% SHR). The programmes with the highest viewer ratings in that period were Wiadomości (The News) with over 3.2 million viewers (25.01% SHR), the welcoming ceremony of the Pope, then the sports news programme broadcast on TVP1, with 2.5 million viewers (20.28% SHR),

²⁶ Ibid., also: *O portalu*, source: www.popoe2012.com [access 31 I 2017]. Service was updated till 16.09.2016 r. Ibid. On the role of this portal cf. *ibid.*: Rada KEP ds. Środków Społecznego Przekazu o obsłudze medialnej ŚDM, <https://ekai.pl/rada-kep-ds-srodkow-spolecznego-przekazu-o-obsłudze-medialnej-sdm/>

²⁷ Figures concerning the number of users of the service were obtained in mail correspondence from Mr Ryszard Niżewski Deputy Director of the Development Centre of Polish Press Agency of 31.01.2017.

²⁸ Figures from Nielsen Audience Measurement, cited after: Kurdupski M., TVP1 wygrała walkę o widza podczas Światowych Dni Młodzieży. TVP Info i TVN24 przed TVP2 (raport), 3.08.2016, source: <http://www.wirtualnemedialna.pl/artykul/tvp1-wygrala-walke-o-widza-podczas-swiatowych-dni-mlodziezy-tvp-info-i-tvn24-przed-tvp2-raport> [access: 5 II 2017].

and the coverage of the papal meeting with youth of 27 July, followed by 'Fakty' news programme, watched by 2,365,454 viewers (21.71% SHR)²⁹.

These figures indicate the significant potential of TV viewers, who followed the youth meetings and the celebrations of the papal visit to Poland, thus demonstrating a specific level of interest in these events among Poles and, indirectly, in religious programmes, where the undoubted leader proved to be Polish Television (TVP) and its stations, mainly TVP1, yet other stations, especially information stations, registered some success as well. In one of its announcements, TVP reported on the record viewing figures achieved by TVP Info at the following levels: 27 July – 392,000 viewers and 6.89% of the share, 28 July – 477,000 viewers (8.05% share), 29 July – 425,000 (7.3%), 30 July – 468,000 viewers and 8.02% of the share and 31 July – 666,000 viewers and 9.06% of the share. Polsat News registered success too, as reflected by its statement of 28 July, 2016 emphasising that "Polsat News, while reporting the first day of the Pope's visit to Cracow gained 2.72% share in the 4+ group. It is the best figure since the station launched its broadcast. Its coverage of WYD on 27 July was selected by 3.5 million viewers, which also translated into very good results for the station in the 16-49 age group (2.32% SHR). In total "around 3.5 million viewers" watched this station on that day³⁰. Its statement of 1 August, 2016 reads: "Providing coverage from the Sunday events of WYD, Polsat News obtained 2.8% share in the 4+ group. It is the best result recorded since the beginning of our broadcasting activities. Also, averaged weekly shares of Polsat News achieved record figures – on average 2.12% in the group of all 4+ and 1.72% in the 16-49 age group. During WYD, Polsat News was watched by almost 7 million viewers. The station obtained the best average weekly shares since the beginning of its broadcasting activities – 2.12% in the 4+ group and 1.72% in the 16-49 age group"³¹.

In the weekly summary of viewing ratings concerning WYD, the papal visit and the week prior to these events exemplify the indicated tendency related to the clear popularity of information programmes covering these events; as in the period 25-31 July, 2016 the average audience share of TVP Info was 412,000 viewers with the market share of 7.02%; TVN24 boasted about 330,000 viewers (5.5% SHR); Polsat News – almost 125,000 (2.12% SHR)³². A week before, these figures amounted to: TVP Info

²⁹ Figures from Nielsen Audience Measurement obtained by the author on 19.10.2016, courtesy of Ms Aleksandra Boczkowska from Nielsen Audience Measurement

³⁰ Rekordowe udziały Polsat News podczas pierwszego dnia wizyty Papieża Franciszka w Polsce, Press release by Polsat, 28.07.2016, source: <http://www.grupapolsat.pl/pl/archive/rekordowe-udzialy-polsat-news-podczas-pierwszego-dnia-wizyty-papieza-franciszka-w-polsce> [access: 4 XI 2016].

³¹ Rekordowy tydzień Polsat News – kanał z najlepszymi udziałami w historii stacji, Press release by Polsat, 2.08.2016, source: <http://www.grupapolsat.pl/pl/archive/rekordowy-tydzien-polsat-news-kanal-z-najlepszymi-udzialami-w-historii-stacji> [access: 4 XI 2016].

³² Figures from Nielsen Audience Measurement, cited after: M. Kurdupski, TVP Info i TVN24 z rekordowymi wynikami wyprzedziły TVP2, hitami programy TVP1 o ŚDM (podsumowanie tygodnia),

– slightly above 212,000 (3.91% SHR), TVN24 – above 256,000 (4.72% SHR) and Polsat News – almost 82,000 (1.51% SHR). Therefore, an increase in the market share is recorded for individual stations, 3.43pp for TVP Info, 1.08pp for TVN24 and 0.69pp for Polsat News³³. Compared to the last week of July 2015 (27 July-2 August 2015), the viewing ratings amounted to: TVP Info – over 207,000 (3.66% SHR), TVN24 – above 191,000 (SHR% – 3.37%), Polsat News – above 62,000 (SHR – 1.09%)³⁴.

The above figures show a large audience for the TV coverage which turned WYD into a television festival. Nevertheless, the summary of viewing ratings of the pilgrims' and Pope's visit with other programmes broadcast in July indicates how illusory the popularity of WYD announced by broadcasters was, since TV viewers found Euro 2016 football games more interesting than the meticulously planned coverage of WYD. The Portugal/France final attracted more than 9.63 million viewers to TVP1 and Polsat jointly, with 5.18 million viewers of TVP1 coverage and over 4.45 million viewers of Polsat. The semi-final match of Germany versus France broadcast on TVP1 attracted 4.34 million viewers and almost 3.7 million viewers to Polsat, while the quarter-final of France versus Iceland broadcast on Polsat attracted almost 4.58 million viewers³⁵. These figures reveal that although meetings of international youth with the Pope consolidated a significant number of recipients and some main information stations, *de facto* achieved record viewing ratings, the preferences and tastes of viewers were still more focused on unsophisticated entertainment, rather than any serious content, where the organisational and logistic effort was disproportionate from the Polish perspective. The broadcast of Euro 2012 sporting events was based on retransmission, while WYD events were based on a multi-dimensional involvement of media in preparing a spectacular festival. Besides this, football competitions clearly follow the contemporary trend of commercialisation, as the trans-missions are "completed" by advertising breaks, the absence of which are frequently characteristic of media events³⁶. Any potential commercial breaks while broadcasting WYD would have ruined the pre-arranged atmosphere of the festivity.

In conclusion, the TV coverage of WYD fulfils the criteria of media events both in the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic dimension, which – as noticed by D. Dayan and E. Katz – changes the forms and ways of watching TV into an activity marked with

2.08.2016, source: <http://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/arttykul/tvp-info-i-tvn24-z-rekordowymi-wynikami-wyprzedzily-tvp2-hitami-programy-tvp1-o-sdm-podsumowanie-tygodnia> [access: 6 II 2016].

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Figures from Nielsen Audience Measurement, cited after: Kurdupski M., *TVN nowym liderem w grupie komercyjnej. „Teleexpress” hitem tygodnia*, 4.08.2015 r., source: <http://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/arttykul/tvn-nowym-liderem-w-grupie-komercyjnej-teleexpress-hitem-tygodnia> [access: 5 II 2017].

³⁵ Figures from Nielsen Audience Measurement, cited after: Ł. Szewczyk, *Lipiec TV: Liderem Polsat. Hitami mecze Euro 2016*, source: <https://media2.pl/badania/134849-Lipiec-TV-Liderem-Polsat.-Hitami-mecze-Euro-2016.html> [access: 10 X 2016].

³⁶ Cf. D. Dayan, E. Katz, *Wydarzenia medialne. Historia transmitowania na żywo*, op. cit., p. 47.

festiveness and rituality³⁷. The current dominating influence of the media permanently creates situations which structure everyday reality through de-construction and re-contextualisation of contemporary patterns of life, thus underlining the efficiency and the power of ingredients of this sector which affect the sphere of emotions and the experiences of viewers. The media are gradually taking over the functions attributed to traditional institutions such as Churches and other religious entities, developing meaning structures and further suggesting or imposing platforms of interpretation, where the whole, though meant to be characterised by reliability and objectivity, still contains ideological interpretations. Media events in a specific way incorporate themselves into this perspective, as they borrow a traditional imaginary and symbolic arsenal and, by using more or less significant components, create some proprietary quasi-festivals, which imitate the prestige of conventional celebrations. In the case of WYD, these measures may still be treated as a contemporary form of emphasising the role and the meaning of sacredness which is gradually becoming marginalised due to secularisation tendencies. The media presentation may be an encouragement and invitation to reconstitute the traditional position of religion in public space and awaken particular spiritual needs. However, despite the skill of the media and its preference for integration, breaking spatial barriers, in particular territorial ones³⁸, which are supposed to enable the dissemination of evangelical ideas and content on a global scale, it appears that celebrating in front of TV sets and TV participation in WYD 2016 tends to preserve contemporary streams of the individualisation of religion rather than diminish them, thus making the experience of the sacred one clearly based on the private sphere and only dependent upon the choice of TV channel. Furthermore, the takeover or rather media imitation of the celebration formula, reserved both for specific institutions and lofty moments and events in an individual and collective dimension, if it does not depreciate, certainly transforms the essence of celebrating³⁹. In this way it deeply modifies its depth and meaning in reference to a sacredness that requires reflection, attention and involvement. Moreover, it demands some community affirmation. This affirmation, though quite numerous, appears to be potentially interested and integrated through a staged media presentation rather than the message of the Gospel and expression of piety towards God and the Absolute.

Due to media involvement, the religious content and ideas are at present seen and available almost limitlessly. This corresponds with the evangelistic strategies of the Church, which continues to seek effective forms of presence and communicating its messages. However, how much does this multidimensional media support halt the influence of secularisation and constituting self-control or even an unwillingness towards the sacred? Furthermore, how much does it comply with the contemporary

³⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 39-40.

³⁸ Cf. A. Hepp, V. Krönert, *Religious Media Events. The Catholic "World Youth Day" as an example of the mediatization and individualization of religion*, in: *Media Events in a Global Age*, op. cit., p. 266.

³⁹ Cf. D. Dayan, E. Katz, *Wydarzenia medialne. Historia transmitowania na żywo*, op. cit., pp. 222-223.

preferences of people permanently stimulated by entertainment productions? Media events, including WYD, primarily emphasise the potential of the media, which carries out multidimensional transformations in individual and community life. However, apart from pragmatism and self-promotion, does it include a focus on the weakening or reduction of secularisation and, by doing so, does it focus more on eschatology? WYD dominated the transmissions of broadcasters, turning their programmes into a religious epic. This indicates the opportunities and possibilities for establishing an alliance between the media and the Church, which may be ascertained by reference to the opinion of Father M. Makuła, head of TVP's religious editorial team for religious programming: "The coverage from WYD was an absolute masterpiece of what can be achieved by television" and the journalists "underwent an internal transformation"⁴⁰. At the same time, the indicated co-operation between the sacred and the profane poses challenges, since the same broadcasters were similarly involved in broadcasting the "Black Protests" in Polish cities⁴¹, which only emphasises the specificity of this sector, which is oriented towards any events that may attract viewers and *eo ipso* reveals that the pragmatics of the contemporary media significantly differs from the pragmatics of religious institutions.

Ewa Stachowska – THE WORLD YOUTH DAYS IN CRACOW AS A MEDIA EVENT

The World Youth Days is a special initiative taken by the Catholic Church, consolidating young people around faith and the study of Christ. This undertaking combines tradition with modernity through the implementation of elements which enhance the programme of youth meetings, held both by the organisers as well as spontaneously by pilgrims, where the whole fundamentally emphasises the multidimensional influence and significance of the sacred. At the same time, it refers on the outside to contemporary events organised within the sphere of popular culture. The nature of the WYD event can be treated as a form of adaptation of the Church to present-day requirements, connected with the assimilation of specific cultural and commercial solutions, favouring the popularisation of the sacred among the young and offering them an innovative formula of experiences in the religious sphere. This religious proposition also arouses media interest. Hence, the main aim of this article is to present the special aspect of the contemporary interference and cooperation of religious institutions as well as the media on the example of broadcasting the course of the visit of Pope Francis to Poland and WYD in Cracow. The coverage of the progress of WYD becomes part of the viewpoint concerning media events, which will be demonstrated *inter alia* by referring to the viewing figures.

⁴⁰ Remark of Father Maciej Makuła cited after: Rada KEP ds. Środków Społecznego Przekazu podsumowała obsługę medialną ŚDM, KAI, 7.10.2016, source: <https://ekai.pl/rada-kep-ds-srodkow-spolecznego-przekazu-podsumowala-obsluge-medialna-sdm/> [access: 28 I 2017].

⁴¹ Cf. remark of Father Henryk Zieliński, op. cit.: *ibidem*.