

ECREA TWG Mediatization Report 2012

1. Overview

After being approved by the ECREA Executive Board at its 23rd Board Meeting (5-14 May 2011), the ECREA Temporary Working Group Mediatization became operational on 20th June 2011 and 2012 was its first full year of existence. In overview, the main activities included:

- first workshop of the ECREA TWG Mediatization “Mediatization in transcultural and transnational perspectives”, held at the Goldsmiths, University of London, 30th to 31st March 2012 (organisation: Nick Couldry, Andreas Hepp, Sonia Livingstone);
- organisation of the panel “Mediatization: Media, Power and Change” at the ECREA 2012 4th European Communication Conference, Saturday 27 October 2012, 15.00 - 16.30, Istanbul, Turkey (programme chair: Andreas Hepp);
- organisation of the “Reception for members and friends of the ECREA TWG Mediatization” at the ECREA 2012 4th European Communication Conference, Saturday 27 October 2012, 15.00 - 16.30, Istanbul, Turkey, sponsored by Polity Press and the ZeMKI, University of Bremen, Priority Research Program “Mediatized Worlds” (programme chair: Andreas Hepp);
- relaunch of the webpage <http://www.mediatization.eu>, with general information about mediatization and a reading list (organisation: Andreas Hepp);
- call for the second workshop of the ECREA TWG Mediatization on “Mediatization and New Media” to be held at University of Copenhagen, Denmark, March 15-16 2013 (organisation: Stig Hjarvard);
- preparation of a special issue “Conceptualising Mediatization” of the ICA journal “Communication Theory” to be published in 2013 (guest editors: Nick Couldry, Andreas Hepp).

Beside these activities Nick Couldry was elected as vice chair at the business meeting of the TWG Mediatization on Thursday 25 October 2012, during the ECREA 2012 4th European Communication Conference in Istanbul. Sonia Livingstone, beside Stig Hjarvard the second founding vice head, had to leave the TWG management team as she became involved in the preparation of another ECREA TWG on “Children, Youth and Media”. The TWG would like to thank Sonia Livingstone very much for her engagement in building up the TWG Mediatization.

2. Report workshop “Mediatization in Transcultural and Transnational Perspectives”

The first workshop of the ECREA TWG Mediatization on “Mediatization in transcultural and transnational perspectives” took place at Goldsmiths University of London, 30th to 31st March 2012 and was organised by Nick Couldry, Andreas Hepp and Sonia Livingstone.

Starting point for the workshop was the reflection that mediatization has become more and more a concept to describe present and historical media and communicative change: If media have become part of ‘everything’, we can no longer see them as a separate sphere but must develop an understanding of how the increasing everyday saturation with media communication changes our construction of culture and society. In such a perspective, mediatization is used as a concept to describe the long-term process of spreading different technical media and the linked interrelations between media-communicative change and socio-cultural change. So far, studies of mediatization have primarily been occupied with social and cultural transformations in Western cultures and societies, but processes of mediatization are also visible in other parts of the world. Mediatization may, however, display different dynamics and have other consequences in different cultural and social contexts.

This said, the aim of the workshop was to discuss whether mediatization constitutes a global process of change, and, if so, where the inequalities and dissimilarities of this process are located and how this can be researched in a comparative perspective. The core topics of the workshop presentation were the genesis of mediatization theory in a transcultural and transnational perspective, the historical development of mediatization as a challenge for transnational and transcultural research, perspectives on mediatization beyond the West, mediatization and communalization in transcultural perspectives, the mediatization of (transnational) politics, the mediatization of religion in transnational and transcultural perspectives, the mediatization of school and surveillance as transnational challenges, and methodological reflections on the transnationality and transculturality of mediatization.

In all, there was keen interest in the workshop: 54 abstracts were submitted, while at the workshop itself 21 papers could be presented. The workshop was co-organised together with the Department of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University of London, the Department of Media and Communications at LSE, and the Priority Research Program “Mediatized Worlds” resp. the ZeMKI University of Bremen. For further information on the workshop “Mediatization in transcultural and transnational perspectives”, please visit the web page of the Temporary Working Group “Mediatization” <http://www.mediatization.eu>.

3. Report panel “Mediatization: Media, Power and Change”

At the ECREA 2012 4th European Communication Conference the TWG organised a panel on “Mediatization: Media, Power and Change”. The panel took place on Saturday 27th October 2012, 15.00 - 16.30, the responsible programme chair was Andreas Hepp. During the panel four papers and one response were presented on the following topics:

- Göran Bolin (Södertörn University): “Mediatization in late modernity: Notes on the relation between the media and society”
- Anu Kantola (University of Helsinki): “The Media in Soft Capitalism: The Politics of the Mediatized CEO”
- Friedrich Krotz (University of Bremen): “Mediatization / Alienation”
- James Miller (Hampshire College): “The Media Logic of Affordances: Technology Power and the Smart Phone”
- Respondent: Stig Hjarvard (University of Copenhagen)

Across the presented papers, the question of the panel was how to integrate in a more appropriate way questions of power within mediatization research. The main shared idea was that mediatization research should reflect more how ‘power’ is inscribed in certain media and their specificities, also analysing the ‘affordances’, ‘institutionalisations’ and ‘reifications’ of the media. Here further contexts of power come in, such as neoliberalism and the alienations of late modern societies.

Further information on the workshops and further activities of the ECREA TWG Mediatization can be found at: <http://www.mediatization.eu>.

30/12/2012, Andreas Hepp, Stig Hjarvard, Nick Couldry