

socialist model that is being realized by them may win over democratic capitalism. Brunet and Guillard think that Chinese people attempt to gain the economical hegemony in the world. That is why they adopted a policy of gaining control over the people and the economy. This policy poses threats to the democratic states which being forced to use democratic procedures can react more slowly.

The demands of A. Brunet and J.-P. Guichard seem to be not that difficult to fulfill because they require a determination and the accordance of the leaders of western countries. That would mean the isolation of China which will not be accepted by most of the countries including those who have the status of superpowers. During the economic slowdown present in companies of the United States, Japan and Western Europe, many of them save themselves by tightening relations with Chinese partners. In recent times this has been made by renowned for high

quality of their products companies such as Swedish Saab or the German Mercedes. The European leaders do not want to listen to the authors' advice. An example of this behavior is a statement by Nicolas Sarkozy who, to the question of seeking funds to rescue the Euro zone, responded: 'If the Chinese decide to invest more in the euro instead of dollar why should we refuse'?

The main theses of the book by A. Brunet and J.-P. Guichard are disavowed by the fact that the euro currency stability is a key issue for China. Currently the European Union is the most important trade partner for China. This means that a recession in the European Union would be unprofitable for the Middle Kingdom. In my opinion Europe should strive to get as much competitiveness as it is possible. This is the only way to maintain its position on a political and economic map of the world.

A review of the book:

**Jakub Nowak, *Online Activity of Citizens. Theories and Practice*,
Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2011, pp. 270**

by Małgorzata Adamik-Szysiak

Dynamic changes occurring within the area of the new media include not only technological, but also social, cultural and political transformations. The increasing

role of the Internet in contemporary democratic societies is the subject more and more often studied by scientists. Jakub Nowak's book *Online Activity of Citizens*.

Theories and Practice is one of the few publications comprehensively discussing past and current theoretical conceptions of the effect of the new media, juxtaposing those conceptions with the results of the author's own empirical analyses.

The manner in which Jakub Nowak collected and demonstrated his research material, which refers not only to the theoretical problems, thoroughly discussed by the author (based to a large extent on the English-language subject literature), and supplied with accurate examples, seems to constitute an excellent introduction to the subject of the new media functioning within the area of social, cultural and political activity of the citizens of the democratic countries, at the same time organizing and complementing current knowledge in this area.

Because it is difficult to precisely determine the beginning of the phenomenon, as a result of the fact that citizens of different countries differ in the extent to which they use information-communication technologies, the author chose the early 90's of the 20th century as the onset of his investigations. The first decade of the 21st century serves here as the ending date. In his studies, the scientist focused on the processes reinforcing the global use of digital technologies by citizens of different democratic countries, including Poland. Therefore, the book, because of the scope of the discussed subject matter, constitutes a kind of synthesis indicating directions and tendencies of the changes occurring within the area of citizens' activity.

Moreover, the introduction with which the author provided his book reflects the complexity of the phenomena occurring in the area of new media and in a synthetic way informs the readers about the directions of the author's studies and about the problems raised in the book.

Both the title of the publication and the titles of its individual sections aptly correspond with the content of the book. The conceptual approach allowed the author to divide it into four chapters. The first one provides an outline of the current theoretical conceptions concerning the development of new media, and organizes basic concept categories. The remaining three chapters constitute a detailed analysis of the aspects of citizens' activity with regard to the development and use of information-communication technologies in public debate, political mobilization and, finally, political marketing.

In Chapter I ("Theoretical Issues"), the author, on the basis of subject literature, juxtaposes current theories, clearly defining and characterizing the concept of new media and other related terms and phenomena, and specifying the most crucial social and communicative aspects of information-communication technologies. In further parts of the chapter he indicates the processes occurring in the area of media-based and political communication at the beginning of the 21st century, including, among other things, commercialization and globalization of the media, unification of media codes, mediatization of politics, professionalization and marketization of political communication. What the reader

will also find in this chapter is the author's discussion of his understanding of the category of "citizens' activity" in the information society, as well as the identification of three groups of activities important for the work and providing the justification for its three-part structure.

Interrelations between such terms as "civil society," "public debate" and "public sphere" contributed to the analyses contained in Chapter II ("Public Debate"), where the author presents the results of studies regarding one of the changes in the area of civic activity affected by new media – namely a broadly understood citizens' participation in an online public debate containing a whole range of communication activities (from attracting citizens' attention to public matters, up to their active participation in thematic discussions). What is also worth mentioning is the author's conclusion concerning the quantitative and qualitative transformation of the public sphere in contemporary advanced democracies, resulting from the advancement and common use of new media (p. 75). The space for public debate as offered through the Internet is discussed by the author through the prism of four criteria: rationality, reflexivity, orientation to dialogue and sincerity. It is also extremely interesting to follow the scientist's analyses and observations with regard to both the question of "expanding" participation (thanks to new media) in the current public debate by taking advantage of the new possibilities (civic journalism, blogosphere), and to "limiting" participation, due to which the

perception of the new media as an environment for effective public debate is hindered (including limited or no access to new technologies, discrimination of debate participants, be it on the basis of race or gender; commercialization and disinformation).

Chapter III ("Political Mobilization") offers an analysis of the use of new media as a tool of political mobilization by political actors, as well as by social movements. The entire discussion is preceded by a comprehensive theoretical section intended to organize definitions and classifications, as well as the qualities of e-mobilization, constituting an excellent introduction to the subject. This is where the researcher argues that: "in the early/late democracies of the 21st century, a process of new media adaptation to the current work of social and political organizations can be observed" (p. 146), which he then explains providing accurate examples. There is also a reflection on the degree and direction of adaptation connected with the development and popularization of new media. What can serve as an example of drawing from the potential of new media are new social movements described by the author and understood as "collective actions aimed at promoting collective interests or heading for a common goal, and conducted outside the established institutions" (p. 153). As a result, those movements become subjects affecting the shape of civic e-mobilization. Among the most important manifestations of contemporary civic e-mobilization, the author distinguished:

transnational cross-linking of activism, global e-mobilization and hactivism. Those three types of phenomena are explained and analyzed in detail by the author and supported with remarkably accurate examples.

The book is crowned with Chapter IV ("Election"), showing how digital technologies have been used in democratic election campaigns. In his discussion, the author refers to the institution of e-voting and to the election campaigns carried out on-line. The use of new media as a tool for election marketing is presented by the author to a large extent through the prism of tactics utilized by the candidates running for the office of U.S. President, which is complemented, however, with the author's references to the practice of adapting ideas used in American campaigns by European democratic countries, such as England, France or Poland. Thanks to the chronological presentation of the events in which new media had been used in different ways, the author was able to offer the reader a remarkably clear outline (calendar) of applied information-communication technologies and their effects. Because of the chosen ending date (the first decade of the 21st century), set by the first effective large-scale use of the tools provided by new media, which took place in the U.S. presidential election campaign of Barack Obama in 2008, the book shows the current trends and directions of the development of civic activity. It is worth noting here that the already mentioned American presidential campaign of 2008, carried out by using new media by the presidential

election candidates' campaign teams, was not only diligently analyzed by the author but also enriched with his prognoses as to the future shape of the political communication of candidates with citizens and vice versa. In this context, the author's question about a redefinition of the term of "election silence" (p. 233) seems to be the one that provokes reflection.

In the final part of the book the author synthetically sums up his arguments, which is followed by a list of conclusions drawn from the carried out analyses. This is also where he reminds the reader of the most important concepts and categories in the area of new media, and raises further research postulates.

What seems crucial in the quest for an answer to the question about the impact of new media on the individual manifestations of civic activity is the author's reinterpretation of past and current research in this area, as well as his diagnosis of the important qualities of the contemporary media system (such as commercialization or unification of media codes) and political communication (particularly mediation of politics).

Undoubtedly, the book's value lies in the fact that it presents a wide spectrum of the discussed problem based on diligent empirical analyses, preceded by theoretical background, which is significant for the discussion and, consequently, also for the conclusions. The book is enriched with illustrated, visually appealing examples of the discussed phenomena, as well as clear diagrams and charts. It is worth stressing that the work con-

tains a great number of notes that play an important role, providing a wider background for the discussed questions and enhancing better understanding of the author's argument.

The substantive content and structure of the book, as well as its narrative qualities enable the reader to realize the complexity of the discussed questions, providing basic information and, what is even more important, provoking reflection (particularly with regard to the broadly understood effectiveness of citizens' online activity, including marketing actions undertaken on the Internet).

The usefulness of this kind of publication for discovering and understanding the mechanisms shaping behaviors of contemporary citizens seems undeniable. With no doubt, the book shall fill the empty space on the bookshelves of political scientists and media specialists. The work is provided with a rich and detailed bibliography (to a large extent composed of the most recent English-language literature), and the index of names, which is clear proof of the author's diligent research and erudition, at the same time constituting a valuable source base for young scientists in the subject.

A review of the book:

Jacek Poniedziałek, *Postemigrational Creation of a Regional Identity. Study of Contemporary Meaning of Warmińskomazurski Region*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2011, pp. 435

by Alfred Lutrzykowski

Jacek Poniedziałek's book is devoted to issues extremely important and current. Exploration of the social identity formation process, including a regional identity, has now a great importance not only from a cognitive point of view. Transformational changes in Poland after 1989 meant not only profound changes in the system of public authorities and the economic system. They also had a significant impact on the consciousness of Polish society and its attitude towards the state, power apparatus,

and the most important problems of collective life. Extremely important direction of changes in the public authority model became a more and more articulated desire for decentralization and deconcentration of unified and the indivisible sphere of state power so far. The road to this led, inter alia through the implementation of the idea of self-government (local government and other forms of government). Local government is an excellent solution because it is linked to the wide-