Media Philosophy—
A Reasonable Programme?

Siegfried J. Schmidt, Münster

1. Media philosophy: discourse or discipline?

It is beyond any doubt that media have an enormous impact on our media-culture societies. Media influence our perception and our knowledge, our memory as well as our emotions. They create public spheres and public opinions and give rise to media realities. Media shape our socialisation and our communality. They transform economy, politics, science, religion and law. "What we know about our society, even about our world we are living in, we know via the mass media." (Luhmann 1996:9; my translation) Accordingly, "the media" have become a paramount subject of interdisciplinary discourses in the last decades all over the world.

All these developments have become topics of scientific analyses as well as parts of media programmes. Since decades, various academic disciplines focused on an other-observation ("Fremdbeobachtung") of the media from an external state, whereas the media increasingly tend to observe themselves as well as one another in order to transform this self-observation into parts of their respective programmes. The other-observation is carried out either by scholars of communication- and/or media theory or by philosophers; but whereas the former are organised in academic disciplines, no established discipline entitled "media philosophy" exists until today. Instead, the various approaches to philosophical analyses of media are heterogeneous and lack a solid theoretical basis as well as a disciplinary organisation. Some scholars even hold the view that media are not even within the province of philosophers.[1]

Some people deeply regret this deadlock regarding not only topics and discourses but also future jobs and positions for scholars of a discipline "media philosophy" to come. Others welcome this stalemate which gives room to creative solutions of thematic as well as of organisational matters.

Let us have a short look at some of the *foreseeable options*.

One of the actual media philosophical approaches concentrates its efforts on a reformulation of traditional philosophical topics in the framework of

media efficiencies. The list of such topics is rather long and covers nearly all famous crucial subjects of philosophical discourses, reaching from reality, truth, culture, society, education or politics to time, space, emotion, subject or entertainment. This kind of *rethinking* or *reformulating* philosophical topics concentrates upon the question how—in the co-evolution of media systems and society—our daily experiences as well as our theoretical modellings of these topics have changed on the historical way from writing to the Internet. Some few examples may suffice.

- Consider the fundamental change which all concepts of time and space as well as all daily experiences of and with time and space have undergone since the introduction of the Internet.
- Consider the stepwise implementation of research topics such as media pedagogic or media psychology in the evolution of media-culture societies.
- Consider the questioning of all concepts and experiences of reality initiated by electronic simulation and virtual realities. Today, zapping and infotainment are equally serious philosophical topics as the transformation of politics into media performances or attempts to replace the ecclesiastically based religion by a "TV-mass".

Another media philosophical approach is primarily concerned with *technical aspects* of media and their efficiencies. It is argued that the traditional concept of man has faded away. Man has turned into a mere appendix of technical systems. His body (no more than tedious "wet ware") step by step becomes replaced by hard ware taking over the relevant functions. The logic of machines substitutes the traditional order of knowledge. New kinds of social relations arise in globally operating networks, new play-cultures are developed. The digitalisation of democracy, the basic transformation of our modes of perception in the context of virtual realities or even the transition of our "death culture" into virtual memorials in the Internet appear on the agenda.

These few examples already elucidate that a mere list of topics, concepts or organisational devices does not suffice to establish *a/the* future "media philosophy". Too many basic concepts wait for consensual definitions; too many selection problems regarding necessary, indispensable or solely additional topics of a future discipline "media philosophy" are still unresolved. Over and above, one cannot be sure, how the universities will develop in the near future in an international context of globalisation and informatisation. And, last but not least, we do no longer believe in any kind of finality—except perhaps in the finality of transition.[2]

Regarding this situation, in the following I shall try to deal with those basic problems in the discourse about "the media" which I consider sufficiently essential to attract the attention of *all* scholars of media research—no matter how this research domain shall be named and organised in the future.

2. Language and/as medium?

Nearly every scholar participating in the discourses on media advocates his/her own media concept, and these concepts reach from light, sand and stone to technical distribution-media or symbolically generalised communication media (sensu N. Luhmann) such as love, money or power. Yet, most of the scholars agree that—of course—language is a medium, if not the "mother of all media".

In the philosophy of science it is widely accepted that definitions of concepts should not be judged by their truth but by their acceptability and usefulness in relevant discourses. Accordingly I propose to establish a difference between language and medium.[3] Language I model as a system consisting of material items which can serve as semiotic instruments. These language components can be syntactically combined with each other to texts. Texts can be used in cognitive as well as in communicative processes in systems-specific ways. Accordingly, language can be observed from two perspectives: from a process oriented perspective the use of language (viz. speaking) is a specific social activity co-ordinating human beings; pursuant to a meaning- or sense-oriented perspective language is used by speakers to construct meanings in their cognitive domains as well as to initiate understanding processes in the social domain of communication.

The materiality of language embodies socially stabilised experiences with the use of respective signs and texts in relevant contexts. Due to their socialisation and to socially successful uses of language material the native speakers of a language know keenly which cognitive operations are supposed to be attributed to the use(s) of a sign in a socially expected manner.—In this respect I still adhere to L. Wittgenstein's theory of meaning as successful use of language.—The production of meaning on occasion of the perception of language material is bound to the cognitive domains of individuals. Since the production of meaning is necessarily determined by the presuppositions and the conditions of action of the respective cognitive system, we must assume that meaning production is a highly *subject-dependent process*. Nevertheless even cognitive autonomous individuals are able to communi-

cate successfully because, due to their socialisation, they all refer in a comparable way to *collective (cultural) knowledge* which brings about a social co-orientation of subject-dependent cognitive operations.

Hence, the materiality of language, cognitive processes and communication form a mutually constitutive *framework of interactive dependencies* ("Wirkungszusammenhang") in the sense of the General Systems Theory (Schlosser 1993). As has been stated by many authors since H. R. Maturana, language serves the purpose of coupling (in a purely structural way) the separated dimensions of cognition and communication. Texts or utterances—as highly structured language offers—engender socially expected cognitive and communicative processes and orient those semantically without being able to enforce in a causal way specific results a speaker or writer has intended or expected.

We cannot step back behind our socialisation, especially not behind our linguistic competence which can be briefly drafted as a complex social competence. We necessarily rely upon these competences whenever we make use of language material in cognition or communication. For this reason, our relation to our reality is fundamentally characterised by *communicativity*. Communication can only take place if partners are involved; and all communication processes prepare cooperative actions. (cf. Janich 2006:260 ff.)

Knowledge resulting from actions transforms experiences into expectations. Both, experiences and expectations, are determined by the distinctions and descriptions a specific language offers their users, in other words they are conditioned by communicativity.

Communication is performed on the basis of collective knowledge which communication partners impute to one another. In other words, *reflexivity* can be regarded as the basic mechanism which enables communication although the communication partners are endowed with closed (self-organizing) cognitive systems which can neither be directly observed nor intentionally geared.

3. A systems-oriented concept of 'medium'

Regarding the variety of definitions and models of and for 'medium' used in the actual discussion a concept of 'medium' is needed which has to meet the following conditions:

- it has to be as unequivocal a possible
- it has to be rendered plausible by empirical applications
- it has to allow for relevant differentiations in the domain of observation
- it has to be system-oriented in order to avoid open or merely additive concepts.

As set out on many other occasions I conceive of 'medium' as a *compact concept* ("Kompaktbegriff") which integrates four dimensions and areas of effect:

- communication instruments (such as languages, non-verbal behaviour or gestures)
- technological devices (such as print, TV or Internet technology on the side of receivers and producers)
- the social systems bodies of such devices (such as publishing houses or television stations)
- media offers which result from the coalescence of these components and can only be interpreted referring to this complex context of production.

The cooperation of these four components is modelled as systemic and self-organising. In these cooperation processes no component must remain unrespected.

Communication instruments such as languages are distinguished from media, because they can be used in all media. Therefore it makes sense to use the *difference* between communication instruments and media in order to observe and describe the differences in the uses of these instruments in the different media. Here, a given example could be the Internet as a hybrid medium.
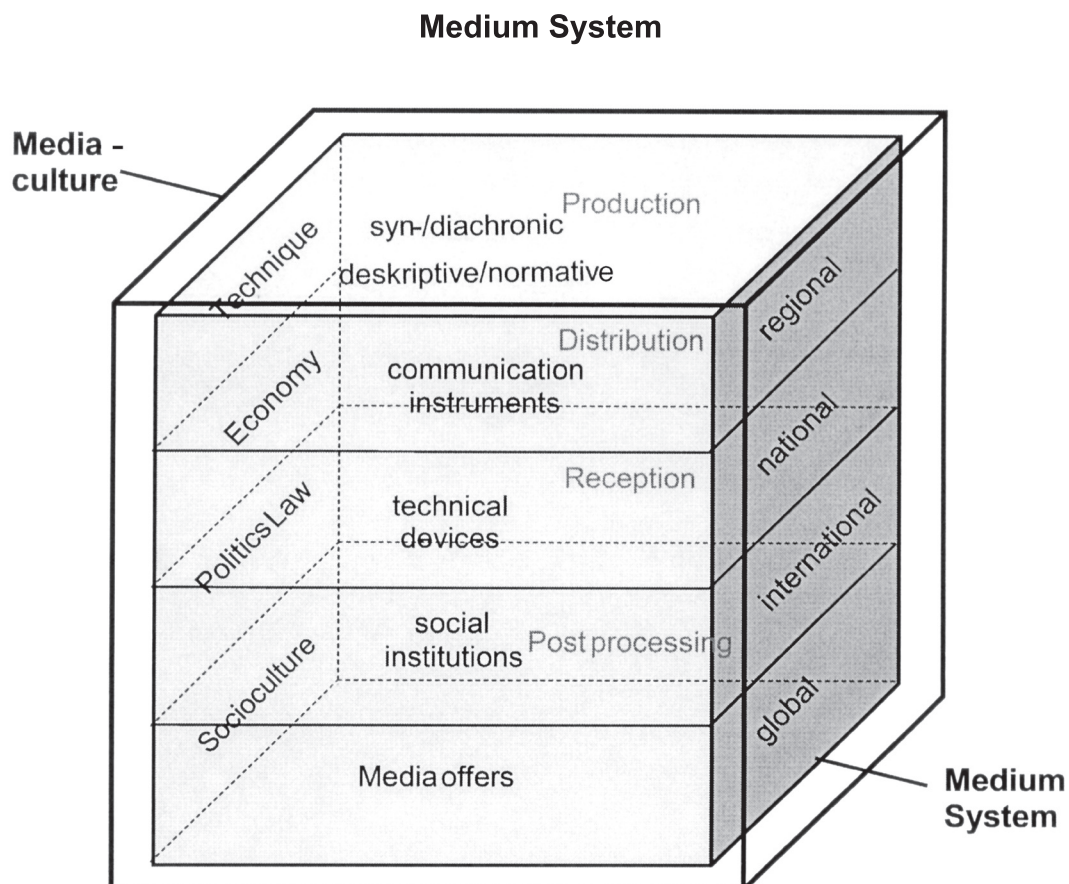
The systemic interplay of the four components named above, I call *medium system*. Examples for medium systems are the print system, the broadcasting system, the television system or the film system. The entirety of all medium systems available in a society I call the *total media system* of a society.

In the various medium systems different *action domains* have arisen

which mutually constitute each other. Generally, four of these domains can be observed, viz. the production, distribution, reception and post processing[4] of media offers. In these domains different *action roles* have been developed which in course of history have been professionalised and differentiated in order to support a division of labour, so e. g. the role of the author, the player, the art director or the media agent. These action roles can be implemented either by individual or by collective role takers such as teams or target groups.

It is in the ordered cooperation of actions and communications that media offers are fabricated. Therefore, they have to be regarded as system-specific *results of processes* and not as autonomous identities—an argument which significantly bears on all kinds of analysis, interpretation and evaluation of media offers.

The concept of action roles has the advantage that it can be applied to all medium systems. It enables exact observations of the differences between the medium systems and stimulates synchronical as well as diachronical research. In addition it is strictly systems-oriented, enables an empirical analysis of media offers and claims the differentiation between self-observation and other-observation (or observation from outside).

Medium System

The systematisation of aspects and operations in media systems (called media processes) which could and should be observed and described in media analyses refer to:

- the components of medium systems (communication instruments, technical devices, social organisations, media offers)
- action roles (production, distribution, reception, post processing)
- reference systems (technique, economy, politics, law, socioculture)
- reaches (regional, national, international, global)
- directions of observation (diachronical, synchronical)
- kinds of observation (descriptive, normative).

All processes ongoing in a medium system are oriented by those subsystems of the culture of a society (= media culture) which shape media processes.

The argumentation presented so far leads to the following hypothesis:

The evolution of the total media system of modern media-culture societies from writing to the Internet has fundamentally changed our relation to the world and our modes of communication. This change can be described as transition from communicativity to mediality.[5]

4. Influences, efficiencies, causalities: What does 'mediality' mean?

In the discussion about the mediality of our relation to the world various positions compete with one another. The range of hypotheses ranks from "man dominates the media" to "man has become a function of media-techniques".[6] This discussion suffers from a remarkable ambiguity of crucial terms like 'influence', 'efficiency' or 'causality'. Regarding this situation, let me remind of some plausible trivialities.

(a) Even the most developed semiconductor driven systems are (still?) produced by men no matter what is hidden behind the user's interface. If nobody uses these technical systems they are worthless, and so far men (still?) decide upon the meaning of these uses and not (yet?) the technical systems themselves. One of the aficionados of the primacy of technique, Rudolf Maresch, quite recently remarked that the machines lack what defines men: imagination, subconsciousness and emotionality of experience. "Information might be collected, stored and transferred in computer centres, but only in humans' brains which operate them, information becomes knowledge."

(2006:5; my translation)

(b) I fully subscribe to Maresch's position. On the other hand it should not be overlooked that technical devices are not at all neutral components of media systems. Since Marshall McLuhan, many scholars have emphasised that medium systems exercise structural effects on the users which are independent from the effects semantic contents of media offers can trigger.

Knuth Hickethier has summed up such structural effects:

- construction and standardisation of our time concepts and our time experience
- insight into the semiotic nature of our relation to the world
- steering of attention
- shaping of emotions
- ranking of important and unimportant things
- presentation of kinds of behaviour
- orientation of socialisation and social adaptation (2003:230 ff.).

(c) Both communication instruments and all media since the emergence of writing have on the one hand expanded our forms of perception and on the other hand disciplined them in relation to the various medium-specific conditions of perception and use. This explains why there are literates and illiterates for every medium.

(d) Therefore, media offers are not independent objects but results of rather complex production, distribution and presentation processes following the economic, social and technical conditions of the respective medium systems. In other words: medium systems are necessarily conditioned by their systems-specific logic. This also proves true for media actors' concepts of events, persons, data or objects *beyond* the respective medium system. By media processes such events, persons etc. are transformed into *media facts* which result from medium-specific references to reasonable and relevant presuppositions of all activities in the respective medium system. Accordingly, medium systems create and distribute *media facts* and not representations of facts or events in "the reality". It is worth while to keep that in mind in any discussion about media and reality.[7]

(e) As already mentioned linear causal interventions into cognitive or social systems are not possible because these systems can only operate following their systems- specific presuppositions and working conditions. Therefore, it is implausible to apply models of *linear* causality to the analysis of the relation between men ad media systems. More than 30 years of rather unsuccessful research in media effects underpin this view.

The assumption that media provide actors and societies with objective information and knowledge neglects the constitutive and strictly complementary role of the recipients. Media offers do not transport knowledge, meanings and values; instead, they offer actors well structured semiotic materials which can then be used by actors for the production of meaning, knowledge or evaluation in their respective biographical and social situation—herein, an account for our sparse knowledge about the actual effectiveness of media offers might be endued.

Therefore, applying models of *co-evolution* and *enabling conditions* seems to be plausible. The history of media reveals that new technologies have only succeeded if a relevant number of users made use of those. Only then new needs of communication could isochronously be developed and served, thus necessarily changing the relation to the world of users as well as of non-users of the new medium. Wilhelm Ong and Eric Havelock have provided evidence for this hypothesis, Elisabeth Eisenstein as well as Michael Giesecke specified that for the printing press. They all show that the development and the success of a new medium system can be regarded as creation as well as formation of new societal needs. For this reason, I propose to work with models of *circular causality* which sufficiently respect the reflexivity of all conditions of the emergence and the acceptance of new media and their applications, including the observation of structural as well as semantic effects.

So far, my considerations regarding *'mediality'*, can be summed up as follows.

By their activities in media systems men create media-worlds (or media-realities) which compete with one another. Media systems work as observing and describing systems which do not start from "the reality" but from former descriptions of reality which accordingly are transformed into or followed by new descriptions. On this note, the description of reality and the reality of description coincide. This argument resolves the tedious question regarding the relation of media and reality. Due to their system-specific logic media cannot *represent* an extra medial reality in an objective way. Instead, they can only produce and present medium- specific realities.

In this view we can observe a threefold observing constellation:

- Recipients of media offers observe what medium systems observe and how this observation is realised and presented. In other words, they (can) develop a competence of second order observation by observing observers. This second order competence necessarily reveals the contingency[8] of all observations and descriptions: other things could have been de-

scribed and the descriptions could have been different.

- Reflexivity of observation and description also holds true for the medium systems themselves, which observe and describe one another regarding the media offers produced as well as regarding interests and modes of observation and description.
- Media observe and describe the society, but in turn society observes the running of the media. Here the question arises how much second-order observation both sides can endure and if and how they can make use of it in a creative way.

The insight into the mediality of our relation to the world gives rise to two basic problems:

- From an epistemological point of view we nowadays are mostly concerned with realities adopted from the media, normally without considering the system's logic, i.e. the conditions of production and reception of the respective medium system.
- From a socio-political point of view we have to respect the power medium systems consciously or unconsciously (still?) put into effect upon the recipients due to their sovereignty of public observation and description. Television e.g. still disposes an important factor of influencing or even defining central categories of our social orientation such as democracy and freedom, terrorism and resistance or power and violence, but also emotion and taste, appearance and property, gender and partnership. We know from various empirical studies how many young people use the daily TV-soaps as instruments for orienting their own lives. Accordingly, programme makers bear a heavy load of responsibility which they must either accept or publicly reject—for what kind of reason so ever.[9] (Events like the publication of amateur photographs showing the maltreatment of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib in the Internet make us realise how important the sheer disposing of pictures can be in a medium system which is globally accessible and (not yet?) censored—even the US-Senate had to accept these pictures as pieces of evidence.)

The discussion about the mediality of our relation to the world has quasi automatically provoked a debate between epistemological realists and constructivists (sometimes far away of argumentative fairness) about the relation between reality and representation. In the following I shall therefore shortly comment on this debate, *nota bene* not with the intention to solve this problem but to *resolve* it.[10]

5. Media and reality, or:
On the seduction by unobserved dualisms

In the last years some philosophers, first of all Josef Mitterer[11], have argued that the history of European philosophy has been and still is widely dominated by the postulation of seemingly evident dualisms such as language/reality, subject/object, media/reality, description/object of description, facts/statements or perception/object of perception. In 1998, Martin Seel once again propagated the resolution of the opposition realism/constructivism in the framework of his "philosophical realism"—which, unfortunately, is based itself upon a basic dualism. I quote: "Only because there are objects which exist independently of our knowledge media can have a recognizing access to objects." (1998:352; my translation) In opposition to this seemingly irrefutable argument, Josef Mitterer has claimed that the dualism of object and description must and can be resolved, because the description and the object of description are one and the same. In our discourses—and that is the domain of our living, acting, and communicating—we fabricate descriptions of objects *so far* which serve as starting point for further descriptions *from now on*.

This argument can be reformulated in use of another terminology. Let us take as an example the processes of perception or description. An actor performs a perception process in the course and as a result of which he perceives something *as* something. In a process of description an actor describes something which appears as an object of this description. In other words, these are three-part processes in which no single component is independent: perceiver, perception process and perceived are mutually self-constituting.

This analysis reveals that all events and actions relating to human consciousness are systems-specific since they are tied to context-specific operations of actors. In other words, talk of objects can only mean talk of objects-of-perception or objects-of-description. The actor must not be disregarded, and actors consist of bodies and brains. Objects, as Werner Heisenberg once said, are *relations*, references or posited reference.

In the light of these considerations I propose to switch deliberately from the description of (identical) objects to the analysis of (complex) processes. Accordingly, I do no longer ask whether or not an object X exists or whether our perception and description of X is true or false. Instead, I ask which process is running under which conditions and presuppositions, who performs this process and what kind of results arise for the actors involved in this process.

Following this argumentation Seel's seemingly clear argument can be resolved. To quote Seel: "Although the objects of recognition cannot be *given* to the perceiver in a language-independent way, they can *exist* independently from all perceiving. The earth has existed long before any thought about the shape of the earth." (1998:36; Seel's emphasis, my translation) As a counter-argument let me quote from (the non-constructivist thinker) Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker: "Whenever we speak seriously of reality, *we* speak of reality, if nobody speaks of reality, *reality* is not talked about." (1980:42; my translation)—The interesting point here is that von Weizsäcker does neither assert nor deny the *existence* of reality. Instead, he points to the insight that without someone referring to reality reality is not part of a *discourse*; but only in discourses can we talk about the existence or non-existence of reality or what else. Both, Mitterer and von Weizsäcker, emphasise that we—as human beings—can only act in place (here and now) of discourses. *In* these discourses we can aver the existence of all and everything in a beyond of discourses—statements *we* make here and now by reference to statements or descriptions which have been produced so far.

This argumentation can be backed by the following consideration[12]: Whatever we do, we do it in the gestalt of a positing or supposition ("Setzung"). We do this (something), not that (something else), although we could have done it. A supposition always takes a certain gestalt for us as well—should we be under observation—as for the others: it is a supposition of type A and not type B, C, M or X.

As far as we can judge within a lifetime, every single supposition that we are making here and now has been preceded by other suppositions to which we (can) relate as presuppositions ("Voraussetzungen") more or less consciously. All our suppositions to date therefore form a context of suppositions in given concrete situations. We can refer to this context by way of memories and narratives now. This context of suppositions comprises the totality of our prior life experiences that will, in turn, affect our future experiences in terms of expectations in every concrete situation.

Every supposition makes at least one presupposition. As a rule, however, many presuppositions are made or drawn upon by a supposition. The nexus between supposition and presupposition is auto-constitutive as neither can be meaningfully envisaged without the other. Therefore, supposition and presupposition are strictly *complementary*. The presupposition of a supposition can only be observed in the reflexive reference to the supposition. If one accepts the auto-constitution of supposition and presupposition, then one also accepts that there can be no beginning exempt from a presupposition. The only possible beginning is—to make a supposition.

Whether we perceive or describe something, ponder something or become consciously aware of something *as* something particular, we are always executing a serious game of distinctions. We (and not anyone else) describe (and do not explain) something as that particular something (and not as something else). In doing so we make use of linguistic resources whose semantic potential and social acceptance is tacitly presumed and, at the same time, by this very use confirmed as "viable" (i.e. as manageable or successful in the understanding of E. von Glasersfeld). All this is realised (meaning nothing but: all this we can envisage or think in this way only, not in any other) as a happening in a particular situation at a particular point in time, i.e. in a context of suppositions.

Suppositions constitute *contingency*, because they must be selective regarding other options. As selections they are decisions, and only *qua* decisions do they make contingency *observable*. This means that selection and contingency must be envisaged jointly, they constitute each other, they are strictly complementary.

Let me recapitulate: All our cognitive and communicative processes are suppositions which rely on presuppositions. The most important presuppositions in this respect are language and media, modelled in terms of frameworks of interactive dependencies which interrelate materialities and possible semantic contents in a systemic way, followed by collective cultural knowledge as the basis and outcome of socialisation. Due to this cultural knowledge which opens up the range of reflexivity in terms of expected expectations and imputed imputations cognitive autonomous individuals are able to cooperate and to communicate with one another. By culture, I understand the problem-solving programme of societies which orients the activities of actors and is in turn confirmed and stabilised by these oriented activities.

Discourses function via the co-presence of materiality and meaning construction processes. This contemporarity defines the mediality of our relation to the world. Language is inseparably bound to materialities; media are necessarily bound to technicality. For this reason there is no withdrawal of communicativity and mediality. Therefore, I consider it plausible to coin media-oriented societies as *media-culture societies* which deserve a thorough analysis in the framework of media-cultural studies—however they will be entitled in future times.

6. Media science or media philosophy?

In their extensive research report, Christian Filk et al. (2004) have described the different approaches towards "a" media philosophy. As already mentioned in the beginning, rather controversial arguments have been issued. Some authors claim that philosophy has always been media philosophy *avant la lettre* which is simply to be prolonged into the future. Others call for the establishing of a new neo-pragmatist discipline which is able to solve practical problems in our society (Sandbothe 2001). F. Hartmann, on the other hand, recommends organising media philosophy as an interdisciplinary *research platform* and not as an academic discipline.

A short look at the long lasting efforts to install a new discipline called *Kulturwissenschaft* immediately reduces the attractivity of the idea of founding a new academic discipline called "media philosophy". It is well known that inner disciplinary conflicts, the permanent fight for a reasonable distribution of money, personal rivalry etc. frequently destroy creativity and engagement in social organisations like academic disciplines.

In addition, the subject "media & mediality" is of such importance that we must not be afraid that it might fall into oblivion when nobody administrates it *ex officio*.

These considerations recommend an interdisciplinary approach to media problems in the organisational context of a *research programme*.[13] In such a context the observation and description of all aspects of mediality from the perspectives of various disciplines can be organised according to the problems arising via the development of the total media system of our society. The media development does not wait for a media philosophy which notoriously runs late. Neither the established media- and communication sciences nor a philosophy which integrates the media into their research programme should take over the full responsibility for the topic "mediality", anymore since both are still deeply rooted in their dualistic epistemological traditions and still maintain old-fashioned quasi-alternatives like theoretical/empirical or empirical/hermeneutic.

Prospectively, we need extensive empirical research onto the full range of aspects of media processes on the basis of explicit theories, concepts and methods which allow for second order observations and legitimate itself via consequential results. Such results concern all kinds of participation in media processes in the cognitive as well as in the social domain. They should help us to extend our critical and creative use of media.

Media research must become aware of its *autological* character, which is to say that media can only be studied in media and the results must be pre-

sented in media, too. This insight has not been realised in those philosophies and sciences which have been determined by writing and books. As soon as we realise that there are no contents outside the media we have to accept that research in media has to invest deliberately all possibilities of observation and description offered by *all* media. In the times to come new concepts of science and aesthetics, of rationality and creativity should and will for sure be developed in order to serve the needs of a media research programme we can only imagine today.

Historical research has revealed the co-evolution of medium systems, societies and individuals since the invention of language and writing. This development and its impact on the full complexity of our living in media-culture societies should be the grand subject of media research including all its cognitive, emotional, moral and social aspects.

Of course it should not be forgotten that all kinds of media research need active researchers and financial resources. So the question arises whether or not well established scholars will be able and ready to orient their research interest towards aspects of mediality (which is difficult to believe regarding the teaching load in times of the Bologna process), whether or not new academic positions will be created for this specific research topic (which is not very likely regarding the economic situation of the universities). The best solution would be to establish coordinators to organise the interdisciplinary media research—but this issue is foremost a political one.

However these questions will be answered we face the following situation: If it is true that any society gets the media system deserved (just because the media are social constructions for the construction of societies and their realities) then we need a system of observations and descriptions of all media which is capable to solve this societal problem. We are just starting to develop such a system. Nevertheless, I am sure that the solution of this problem belongs to the most crucial tasks of our media-culture societies.

Notes

1. See e. g. Margreiter 2007.
2. See Schmidt 2007.
3. See Schmidt 2000.
4. ‚Post processing' covers all processes in which media offers are transposed into new media offers, e. g. screen adaptations of novels, the scientific analysis of daily soaps or all kinds of media critique.

5. See Krämer 1998 or Margreiter 2007:17.—This transition also concerns face-to-face communication which can only be described in contrast to communication mediated by media and their impact upon direct communication.

6. See Maresch 2006.—In communication studies this alternative has been discussed since Blumler & Katz 1974 who coined the famous questions: "What do people do with the media?" And "What do media do with the people?"

7. See Schmidt 2005a and Pörksen 2006.

8. According to the philosophical tradition everything which is neither necessary nor impossible is called ‚contingent'.

9. See Schmidt 2005.

10. See the details in Schmidt 2007, 2007 a.

11. See Mitterer 1992, 2001.

12. Schmidt 2007.

13. The same proposal has been published by the German Wissenschaftsrat in May 2007.

Literature

Blumler, J. G. & E. Katz: The Uses of Mass Communication. Current Perspectives in Gratifcation Research. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications 1974.

Filk, Chr., Grampp, S. & K. Kirchmann: „Was ist ‚Medienphilosophie' und wer braucht sie womöglich dringender: die Philosophie oder die Medienwissenschaft? Ein kritisches Forschungsreferat." In: Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie H. 29/1, 2004: 39-65.

Hartmann, F.: Medienphilosophie. Wien 2000.

Hartmann, F.: Mediologie. Ansätze einer Medientheorie der Kulturwissenschaften. Wien: WUV 2003.

Hickethier, K: Einführung in die Medienwissenschaft. Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 2003.

Janich, P.: Kultur und Methode. Philosophie in einer wissenschaftlich geprägten Welt. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 2006.

Krämer, S.: „Das Medium als Spur und als Apparat." In: S. Krämer (Hrsg.), Medien, Computer, Realität. Wirklichkeitsvorstellungen und Neue Medien. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1998, 73-94.

Luhmann, N.: Die Realität der Massenmedien. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2. Auflg. 1996.

Maresch, R.: Medienwissenschaft statt Philosophie? Die medienwissenschaftliche Revolution in Deutschland entlässt ihre Meisterschüler. http://www.heise.de/bin/tp/issue/r4/dl-artikel2.cgi? Abruf 21.12.2006.

Margreiter, R.: Medienphilosophie. Eine Einführung. Berlin: PARERGA 2007.

Mitterer, J. : Das Jenseits der Philosophie: wider das dualistische Erkenntnisprinzip. Wien: Passagen-Verlag 1992.

Mitterer, J.: Die Flucht aus der Beliebigkeit. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer 2001.

Münker, St.: „After the medial turn. Sieben Thesen zur Medienphilosophie.” In: Münker, St., Roesler, A. & M. Sandbothe (Hrsg.), Medienphilosophie. Beiträge zur Klärung eines Begriffs. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer 2003, 16-26.

Pörksen, B.: Die Beobachtung des Beobachters. Eine Erkenntnistheorie der Journalistik. Konstanz: UVK 2006.

Sandbothe, M.: Pragmatische Medienphilosophie: Grundlegung einer neuen Disziplin im Zeitalter des Internet. Weilerswist: Velbrück 2001.

Schlosser, G., Einheit der Welt und Einheitswissenschaft. Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Systemtheorie. Braunschweig-Wiesbaden: Vieweg 1993.

Schmidt, S. J.: Kalte Faszination. Medien, Kultur, Wissenschaft in der Mediengesellschaft. Weilerswist: Velbrück Wissenschaft 2000.

Schmidt, S. J.: „Medienentwicklung und gesellschaftlicher Wandel.“ In: M. Behner et al. (Hrsg.): Medienentwicklung und gesellschaftlicher Wandel: Beiträge zu einer theoretischen und empirischen Herausforderung. Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag 2003: 135-150.

Schmidt, S. J.: Kognitive Autonomie und soziale Orientierung. 3. Aufl., Münster: LIT 2004.

Schmidt, S. J. (Hrsg.), Medien und Emotionen. Münster: LIT 2005.

Schmidt, S. J.: „Fernsehwirklichkeiten: Eine systematisch verzerrte Debatte.“ In: P. Chr. Hall (Hrsg.), Info ohne -tainment? Orientierung durch Fernsehen: Kompetenz, Relevanz, Akzeptanz. Mainz: ZDF 2005 a, 19-31.

Schmidt, S. J., Histories & Discourses. Rewriting Constructivism. Exeter: Imprint Academic 2007.

Schmidt, S. J.: Beobachtungsmanagement. Über die Endgültigkeit der Vorläufigkeit. Audio-CD, 80 Minuten + Booklet 8 S. Köln: supposé 2007 a.

Seel, M.: „Bestimmen und Bestimmenlassen. Anfänge einer medialen Erkenntnis theorie.“ In: DZPhil, Berlin 46 1998) 3, 351-365.

Weizsäcker, Chr.. Fr.: Der Garten des Menschlichen. Beiträge zur geschichtlichen Anthropologie. München: Hanser 1980.

Zierold, M.: Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung. Eine medienkulturwissenschaftliche Perspektive. Berlin: de Gruyter 2006.