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Tsvetkova, Milena

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Tsvetkova Milena Ivanova,
Assoc. Prof., PhD in Sociology
Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria
Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication
Department of Press Journalism and Book Publishing
E-mail: milenaic@uni-sofia.bg

READING OF EMPTY MEDIA

Abstract: The research is dedicated to two questions: whether the media bearers without text, the books without letters and the entirely emtpty book could be called books and whether they could be readable. The medialogical analysis is oriented to the creative decisions for transformation of the emptiness or the silence into media, when the emptiness of the media body represents a metamessage about reading without eyes. It is made a systematical survey of a maximum wide spectrum of empty media — empty fine art, empty musical compositions, empty literary works, empty books, empty newspapers, empty pages. There were discovered 13 reasons about the existence of a total or partial emptiness in media.

Keywords: empty media, empty book, reading of sillens, white space, media studies, design challenges.

The empty medium — „body" without „soul"

An empty book is like an infant's soul,
in which anything may be written.
It is capable of all things, but containeth nothing.
I have a mind to fill this with profitable wonders.

Thomas Traherne (1637–1674)[1]

A challenge about the undertaking of the present research became the collison between the presence of empty (non-letter) media and their incompatibility with the legitimate definitions of media. For instance the empty books don't correspond to the normative definitions about book. UNESCO classifies the book from semiotic point of view as follows: "The book is a text edition where the information is fixed through a phonetic code system (an alphabet) or through a digital code." (Recommendation concerning the International Standardization of Statistics Relating to Book Production and Periodicals. UNESCO, 19th of November 1964). But the understanding about a book is already irrelevant about the actual media situation because it brings the book to a semantic system, designed for reliance only by the visual analyser. It is true that as an exception are shown the books about blind people, those Braille fonts are figured through the tactile senses (the sense of touch), but where is the place of the audiobooks, the multimedia books, the books with the completed reality? If the book is only "a text edition"and if about text we have to

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[1] Traherne, Thomas. Centuries of Meditations: First Century. sect.1, 1672. 1st ed. 1908.

understand only written text, where are categorized the children's picture and visiual books, the coloring books for adults and the empty books, the books without text?

We will use the concept of the book as media as a theoretical basis of the present thesis about the legitimation of the empty books. We will make an attempt to explain the research subject "empty media" with the phenomenon "empty book" — a book without text, "dumb" or "silent book.

According to the media theory of the book, as the oldest inorganic media, in the book is rooted by nature the dialectical unity of "soul" and "body" (a text and a bearer). With the metaphor "soul" we indicate the media content, the text itself, which brings the meaning and announces the information. And on the pole of the corporality are situated the material and the media frame, the book as an object.

The empty media, expressed metaphorically as "body without soul" can be examined and explained in the context of the philosophical, anthropological, psychological, semiotical and art crititic theories for the corporality. The philosophical theories give a rich basis about the research of the media body: in the physicomechanical modes of the body — a motion and a peace[1], in the ontological moduses of the body — a life, an excess, a community, an actuality[2], in the antropotechnical modes of the body — the prosthesises of the human organs and functions[3], in the modes of the body accordingly to the organoprojection — the extensions of the human organs and functions in the world of the technics[4]. The productivity of the indicated philosophical theories to the explanation of the phenomenon „empty media" consists in the possibility to prove, that the mediabearer („the body") and the mediatext („the soul") can exist in an autonomous way. This means that on the strength of the dialectical nature of the media — body and soul, shape and content, every media can exist in incomplete mode. On one side **„text without body"** (the virtual media) can exist, on the other — **„body without text"** (the empty media).

According to the indicated theories avout the corporality the body also has a language, the body also is readable.

Spectrum of the empty media

The subject of the empty media is accepted and interpreted in a most successful way in the fantasy literature and movies. We could use as examples the Tom Riddle's self-writing diary with function of „horcrux" in the novel „Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" (1998, filming 2002), the empty diary of the Wizard with self-disappearing text in the series „Happy Town" (2010, season 1, episode 3), the stolen book of the evil „Necronomicon", which is keeping the key for the world mystical power in the movie „Cast a Deadly Spell" (1991), the empty angel book, which is helping in the fight with the powers of the evil in the series „Ángel o demonio" (2011) etc. The successful integration of the „esoteric" motif of the empty media in this art genre is comprehensible in view of its primordially high requirements to the imagination of the recipient.

But today, in a reality, where text and images glut us from everywhere, the empty pages can attract the attention even better than the multi-coloured pitures, the screaming headlines and the computer effects. Empty book, empty newspaper, empty label, poster or billboard, empty first page of print media, empty cover of book without neither one letter, empty (white or black) screen of electronic media, empty (white or black) homepage of web site, empty page in a book without letter or visual information — these are post-writing practises with strong communicative effect.

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[1] Deskartes, René. Principles of Philosophy//Deskartes, René. Selected philosophic works. Sofia: Science and Art Publishing House, 1978. P. 736.

[2] Manchev, Boyan. The body – Metamorphosis. Sofia: Altera, 2007. P. 248.

[3] Theory of the protetica by Peter Sloterdijk (Sloterdijk, Peter. Rules for the human zoo: A response to the letter of Heidegger „About humanism"//Sociological problems, 2006, № 1–2. P. 20–45).

[4] The theory of the organ-projection by Ernst Kapp, proposed in 1877 in his labour „Principles of a philosophy of technology" (Kapp, Ernst. Grundlinien einer Philosophie der Technik: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Cultur aus neuen Gesichtspunkten. Braunschweig: Westermann, 1877. XVI. 360 S.).

The analized examples of „empty media" are literal. A subject of the present medialogical interest among the „empty media" are the objectless and monochrome pictures in the fine art, the silent musical arts, the white and the black pages in the literary works and in the press.

Empty fine art

Still in 1893 is shown the entirely black work of the French journalist and satirist Alphonse Allais, entitled „Combat de nègres dans une cave, pendant la nuit"[1]. As member of the leadership of the famous masonic cabaret in Paris "Chat Noir" he exposes just there for the first time his monochrome paintings. The first in the series of the art provocations of Alphonse Allais becomes this entirely black canvas. After that Allais shows a virginal white sheet of Bristol paper, entitled „Première Communion de jeunes filles chlorotiques par un temps de neige" (1893). After some months appears the third painting of Alphonse Allais, which were perceived as „coloristic explosion". The rectangular landscape „Récolte de la tomate sur le bord de la mer Rouge par des cardinaux apoplectiques" (1894) represents vermilion monochrome painting without any symptoms of figure. The eccentric Alphonse Allais doesn't proclaim his pictorial art nor as innovation, neither as significant philosophical concept. But from contemporary position we must to admit that the black square at black bachground, the white rectangle on white background and the red canvas are actually the heralds of three important tendencies in the art — the suprematism, the constructivism and the conceptualism.

Twenty years after Allais in the art of Russia appears the vanguard tendency named „suprematism" (lat. supremus — supreme). The Latin root „supreme" marks the domination, the supremacy of the color over all the rest means of expression of the paintings. The color in the „objectless" canvas, by the words of the founder Kazimir Malevich, for the first time is liberated from its subordinate role, from the serving to other goals — the suprematic paintings are the first step towards the „pure creation", one act leveling the creative forces of the man and the Nature (God). The suprematism in the Russian vanguard begins with one „objectless" piece of art, when in 1915 is shown the painting „*The Black Square*" of Malevich. „The Black Square" is thick black field on white background. The square is feeling and the white space is the emptiness behing this feeling, as the painter himself explains his concept. Later in 1923 his students include the same „Black Square" in triptych of the „blackness", where are included „The Black Circle" and „The Black Cross". Today the triptych is preserved in the National Russian Museum in Sankt Peterburg. Malevich is painting two more basic about the suprematism squares — red and white. The painting „*The Red Square*" features „a woman in two dimensions" (by the inscription at the back side) and it is created during the same year — 1915. In 1917 comes „*The White Square*" („white over white") — the third „objectless" pice of art of Kazimir Malevich. This is how Malevich defines his art-philosophical triad: „The three suprematic squares illustrate definite philosophies and moods: the black as a sign for economy, the red as a signal for revolution and the white as pure action"[2].

Empty musical compositions

Again Alphonse Allais introduces his historical contribution in the „empty" musical art. In 1897 he writes and passes for performance „Marche funèbre pour les funérailles d'un grand homme sourd", which didn't consists neither one note[3]. Only silence as a sign for respect to the death and rationalization of the principle, that the big griefs are dumb, they don't stand nor vanity, neither sounds. Like this the musical score of this march, containing one empty music sheet with „unheard music", makes Alphonse Allais author of the firts minimalistic musical composition in the history[4].

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[1] Satie, Erik. Ecrits. Paris: Editions Gerard Lebovici, 1990. C. 242; Alphonse Allais: Album Primo-Avrilesque. Paris: Ollendorf, 1897; Riout, Denys. La peinture monochrome. Histoire et archéologie d'un genre. Édition revue et augmentée. Paris: Gallimard, 2006.

[2] Malevich, K. S. Selected works: In t. 5: T. 1. Moscow: Gileya, 1995. P. 187–188.

[3] Satie, Erik. Ecrits. Paris: Editions Gerard Lebovici, 1990. P. 242, 285.

[4] List of the silent musical compositions, where Alphonse Allais is called „the grandfather of silent pieces", look in: Dworkin, Craig. Unheard Music//Context, 2011, № 23. P. 18–19.

Some decades later appears „the silence" of the Czech composer Erwin Schulhoff with his „silent" play for piano „*In futurum*" (1919), composite entirely of „breaks" as part of his composition „Fünf Stücke für Streichquartett". There are following the famous minimalistic musical „silent pieces" of the American composer John Cage, the most famous from which is the piece for piano „*4′33*" from 1952. It consists of 4 minutes and 33 seconds silence. The piece of music isn't nonfunctional, because today in its modern reading „Cage Against The Machine" by the project of Eddie Temple-Morris it is actually performed by symphonic orchestra.

Empty literary works

The empty literary works are published in books with entirely white pages, without any visible content and we can qualify them as anti-books. But there exist works only with an accent of emptiness — with separate empty pages, with „empty" from letters covers[1], with „missing" letters in the text[2] etc.

At the beginning of the story about the empty book is namely one entirely black page — the black square of Robert Fludd (1574–1637). It is initiated with the idea about optical compression of important content in his tractate from 1617 „*Utriusque Cosmi, Maioris scilicet et Minoris, metaphysica, physica, atque technica Historia*" (Metaphisical, phisical and technical history of the two worlds, and namely the bigger and the smaller). In the fields of the four sides of the square is written „Et sic in infinitum" („Ans so on to infinity"). With the black square the alchemist Robert Fludd is featuring the primary matter or Mysterium Magnum of Paracelsus, The Great Darkness (tenebra, lucis absentia), the universe before the Creation and the base, on which are built the big and the small worlds[3].

One hundred and fifty years later one work of art also appears with two strategical empty pages — one is black and the other is white. It is speaking of the book „The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman" (1759–1767) from Laurence Sterne, defined as one real pleasure about the physical reading. The novel is well-known with the *extravagant approach toward the linearity*. The author selected the shape, the paper, the position and the type of the novel by faddy and precise way. The preface is situated at 25th page, the numbering of the chapters is purposely mixed and there are used tactical pauses and hints with dashes with different sizes, asterisks, curved lines, big intervals between the letters and the words etc. There are pages which are painted with a hand with different nuances. There is parallel text in English and Latin. There are missing chapters, which startle the reader, when he finds them in a scattered way in the through the book, written by hand. Often the novel is hold up as *the first example for hypertext*, because it allows to the reader to participate in „the visual achievement" of the book.

The white and the black page in the novel „Tristram Shandy" are the most origianal author's typographic experiment. Sterne often manipulates the page: a typical example is the empty page (volume VI, p. 147), where the reader is invited to interact with the book and to prepare an own portrait of the widow Wadman. The cunning of the empty page is applied for the second time (volume IX, ch. 18–19), but here the fuction is different: the emptiness is oriented toward the story.

The black page (volume I, ch. 12) is right after the episode with the death of the hero — pastor Yorick and the epithaph on his tomb: "Alas, poor YORICK!. Besides about the inscription are used the

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[1] Books with covers without words are all the books of the publishing project Domino Project (2010–2011), managed by the marketologist Seth Godin, as the novel „Lullaby" by Chuck Palahniuk, published by Doubleday in 2002 (the bg issue has letters on the cover: Palahniuk, Chuck Lillaby. Sofia: Era, 2004. P. 256).

[2] The book with invisible letters „Silenc" (2012) – a typographic project of Dutch artists and designers from Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design, dedicated to the so-called „silent" letters that can be written, but can't be readable. In series of print collections with stories and short novels by Hans Christian Andersen at different languages the letters, those by rule aren't readable, are in red and become „invisible", when the reader puts the special filter, accompanying the book.

[3] Fludd, Robert. Utriusque cosmi maioris scilicet et minoris metaphysica, physica atque technica historia: [Tractatus secundus de naturae simia seu technica macrocosmi historia.]. Oppenheim: Aere J. T. de Bry, typ. H. Galleri, 1617–18, Tract. I, Lib. I. P. 26.

words of Hamlet towards the skull of the clown. The death and the time are „black pages", which reminds, that in such a moment the wisdom of the earth is unable to work. The experiment with the black page became an occasion for demonstration of the continuity between the two media — a book and a movie. The black frame in the filming of „Tristram Shandy"[1], lasting one second, is installed just at the place of the black page in the plot of the novel.

The black page of Laurence Sterne refers to the white map of Lewis Carroll, which is originated an interesting photographic and and literary game[2]. The empty page of Lewis Carroll is *The Map of the Ocean* in his poem „*The Hunting of the Snark*" (or „The hunting of the Zmiula"), issued in 1876[3]. According to the ship's company the map is „perfectly and absolutely white", it is the same also according to the original illustration of Henry Holiday in the first edition.
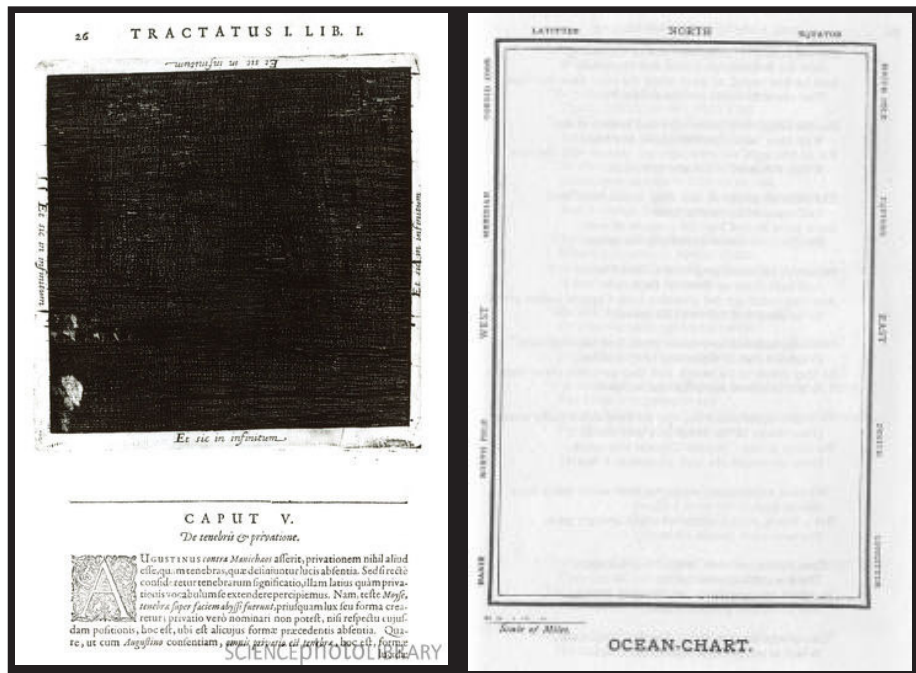
Ill. 1. The black page in the tractate of Robert Fludd (1617)[4]

Ill. 4. Empty page in „The Hunting of the Snark" of Lewis Carroll (1876)[5]

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[1] A Cock and Bull Story (aka Tristram Shandy). Director Michael Winterbottom. Great Britain, 2005.

[2] Mavor, Carol. Alicious Objects: Believing in six impossible things before breakfast; or reading Alice nostologically//Photographies, Vol. 4, 2011, № 1. P. 45–66.

[3] Carroll, Lewis. The hunting of the snark: an agony, in eight fits. Ill. by Henry Holiday. London, Macmillan and Co., 1876. 52 p.

[4] Fludd, Robert. Tractatus secundus de naturae simia seu technica macrocosmi historia. // Royal Astronomical Society/Science Photo Library. Available at: http://www.sciencephoto.com/media/364265/enlarge

[5] Carroll, Lewis. The Hunting of the Snark. An Agony in Eight Fits. With nine illustrations by Henry Holiday. First published by Macmillan in 1876. The University of Adelaide Library, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 2007. Available at: http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/c/carroll/lewis/snark/images/chart.jpg.
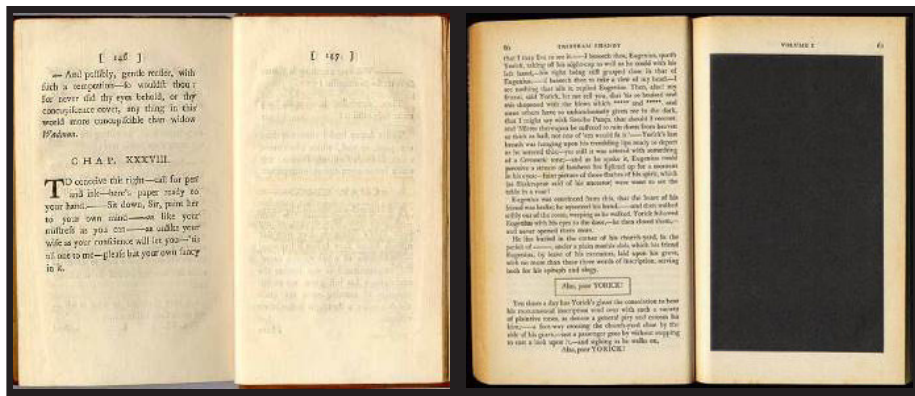
Ill. 2. White page in „The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman" (1759–1767) [1]

Ill. 3. Black page in „ The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman" (1759–1767) [2]

This whiteness and invisibility becomes an appropriate argument in the attempt of Wolfgang Iser to map the universe of the human imagination. Often the imagination is the impossible to be said or to be drawn. The emptiness in a frame could be interpreted aesthetically and hermeneutically as unsuccess of the attempts to be named or defined every strange hybrid and unnatural creature (as the Zmiula, snake-shark) or phenomenon, being put in a cell or in a familiar matrix. It is true that by presumption the emptinesses, the white fields, the unfilled spaces do not tolerate passive recipient, they stimulate the imagination and activate the creative reaction. But I think that Lewis Carroll doesn't have such a purpose. „The nothing in a frame" is ersatz map, where there is no land, but only water: „On our's, as in the sea, only azure. This is a map — you can readit it without difficulty!". In the context of the genre nonsense (as Lewis Carroll defines it by herself) the empty map is the typical instument of the *demagogy*, the same universal map, on which every demagogue points to everybody the direction where to swim. As a whole this universality of the chieftains is characteristic to the *absurd* as human phenomenon. This is what the absurd combinations of incompatible opposites are talking about: the road forward becomes a road backwards, the lack of reference points is a reference point for the captain bell, the captain gives an order „turn right, but keep the bow left" etc. The dumbness in white — the dumb sea captain's map is an irony to the final degree of the imagination — *the phantasmagoria, the unrealizable, the pathiological utopian*. And sarcasm to the crowds, fanatically believing in the ill ambitions and in the absurd tools of the demagogic leaders.

Empty books

The completely empty books are the popular ironical and playful sexist messages of the type what knows the one sex about the other or what can make the one sex without the other. In all the cases the answer is „nothing", but expressed by dozens, even by hundreds bound pages without text. All the authors of nothing-works declare (usually at the back cover), that the publishing of this „work" is preceded by research activity of many years. During the first print every copy is sold in a sealed plastic bag. The books are snatched up and their authors become very popular. Later, even though people know that inside there is nothing to read, they continue to buy them as a gift or as a souvenir.

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[1] Sterne, Laurence. The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman: 2 V. Ill. T.M Cleland. New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1935. P. 146–147. Available at: http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/oct2000.html

[2] The Works of Laurence Sterne. In Ten Volumes Complete. London, 1793. P. 56–57. Available at: http://instruct.uwo.ca/english/234e/site/supplmts/blckpg.html

The world's first completely empty book was issued in 1974 in USA — „*The nothing book*" by the author Bruce Harris[1]. (In Bulgaria the first local empty book is figured the humorous-satirical „novel-epopee" „That way" by Georgi K. Spasov and Alexander Yotov (1. ed. 1993, 2. ed. 1994; luxury edition 2005). This book declared by their authors as book-parody is composed of 6 pages with text „Preface" and 200 empty pages). And the empty book, which originates the unabating till today obsession with sexist teases with gift books, was published in 1988 r. under the title „*Everyhting men knows about women*" by the author the psychologist Dr Alan Francis, pseudonym of Cindy Cashman[2]. An empty book with the same title, but by the author Knott Mutch issued also in 2001[3]. And in 2002 in USA, State of Oregon, was presented the enriched replica of the previous empty books. The unconventional novel with 96 completely white pages is „Everything Men Knew About Taking Care of Themselves Before Women Came Along", and authors are the husbands Jordan and Lindy Schweiger. For bigger prestige Jordan and Lindy Schweiger decided to sign with the authoritative pseudonym and they have chosen Dr. Ever E. Mann. The book is with a cover shaped by all the rules and it is equipped by advertising text on the back. The unconventional reading is dedicated only for men. With this book the husbands openly are mocking with the representatives of the strong sex, but doing this they signal, that this topic is a problem. The family intends to endow the incomes from the sellings of the book to a center, helping the victims of domestic violence. In 2011 the Britain Sheridan Simove publishes new answer of sexist topic, but this time as a self-irony — „*What every man thinks about apart from sex*"[4], an edition with 200 empty sheets without no one word. Despite the absence of text, the book quickly became popular among the students, because it takes the function of notebook during the lectures. The emptiness in the case with this book has shown that, that it can be converted in the actual digital formats. Right after the print edition was published empty homonymous digital book (for Kindle, 208 KB), moreover for free. In addition it was published an empty audiobook with duration 4:33 minutes, the duration of the piece „4'33" of the American composer John Cage from 1952 (4 minutes and 33 seconds silence) — a successful replica of the prototype.

One creative empty book in 2011 came with the message, that „the completeness" is achieved with alchemy. It is speaking of cookery book, which has to be cooked before to be read. Its title is „Well Done" and it is created by the Croatian design studio „Bruketa & Zinic" especially for the producer of foods „Podravka"[5]. The book functions by the following „alchemic algorithm":

    i.   The book with recipes can't be read uncooked.
    ii.   Initially the pages of the book are completely white.
    iii.   The book has to be well baked in order the recipes to be readable.
    iv.   The book is wrapped in foil and it has to be put for 25 minutes in an oven, warmed up to 100 degrees.
    v.   The inks are warmed up and this way they become visible.
    vi.   The text is readable, until the pages are warm.
    vii.   The illustrations are visible, until they are still warm.

It is not difficult to guess, that the ink, with which are made the drawings and the text in the unique book with recipes, is thermosensible and it appears at a special temperature. So the cooking must be done literally on hot tracks — yet, until the pages are getting cold, the text evaporates bit by bit.

Empty newspaper and empty first page

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[1] Harris, Bruce. The Nothing Book: Wanna Make Something of It?. Crown Pub, 1974. 160 p.

[2] Francis, Alan Dr. Everything men knows about women. Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1995. 120 p.

[3] Mutch, Knott. Everything men know about women. Studio 9 Books & Music, 2001. 144 p.

[4] Simove, Sheridan. What every man thinks about apart from sex. The Talent Shed, 2011. 200 p.

[5] Well Done. Bruketa&Žinić OM, 05.02.2011. Available at: http://bruketa-zinic.com/2011/02/05/4136.

As stated form of *protest against the information pollution* were born the newspapers without news, the newspapers without text. „The news are important, but they oversaturate the world to burst" — said 18 years ago Hans Bosman, publisher and editor-in-chief of the first „empty newspaper" — „Dagblad Zonder Nieuws". The newspaper with 16 entirely empty pages begins to issue every Wednesday at Amsterdam in 1998. The concept of Bosman is: without letters, without stress. After his initiative receives a support, Bosman plans to issue the newspaper also in German[1]. Together with this the publisher wanted 1st of June to be announced as International day without news and addresses his appeal to all the print and digital media.

But the empty cover or first page of media by tradition is a symbol of *censorship*. This way in Iran was expurgated one issue of „National Geographic" from 2006 with embraced couple on the cover, illustrating the central article about love. In 2010 in four countries appeared empty first pages of print media as an expression of *protest against new laws, concerning the freedon of the media*: newspaper „La Repubblica" (Italy, 11.06.2010) against the restrictions of the right for information; the newspapers „La Prensa de Bolivia", "Los Tiempos", "El Dia" (Bolivia, 7.10.2010) against the restrictions of the freedom of the speech; the magazine „Magyar Narancs" (Hungary, 2.12.2010) against the total control; the newspapers „Postimees", „Ohtuleht", „Äripäev" (Estonia, 18.03.2010) against the law, restricting the defence of the journalistic sources. In 2007 two American newspapers — „USA Today" and „San Francisco Chronicle" issued with empty first page. A protest in style of „empty" or „dumb" media was accomplished twice in 2012 and also in Internet. At 18th of January 2012 the homepage of the English version of the open encyclopedia Wikipedia „blacken" for 24 hours as a sign of a protest against the both antipirat bills in USA — SOPA and PIPA, threatening the right of information. A new approach for use of the „empty black" as Internet „silence" have given corrections in the Russian law „About the information", when at 10th of July 2012 also the homepage of the Russian verison of Wikipedia „blackened" for 24 hours as a kind of protest against the threat of extrajudicial censorship over the whole Internet in Russia.

An interview without words — this phenomenon from the category „anti-publication" represents one more evidence about the meaning of the emptiness. On 11th of January 2008 the Bulgarian party newspaper „Duma" published unrealized journalistic interview with Petar Mratzkov, a deputy form the socialist „Coalition for Bulgaria", in the form of 17 questions and 17 white fields instead of answers[2]. The issue of an interview in a format „questions without answers" is rare practice in the world media, executed also in Bulgaria as an act of „information frustration".

Emptiness vs Information deluge

„White" pages and „empty" editions appear during the second half of the XXth — the beginning of the XXIth century as journalistic and typographic *resistance against „the information deluge"*. The emptiness is sent to the audience as *invitation for rest, stop, shadow, silence, peace*– all this with the conotations of the recreation and the pauses of the everlasting.

The exponential groth of the information started during the second half of the XXth century. During the 70s of the XXth century Franz Loeser, in his research „How to read rationally" makes the following analysis of the information situation: in the whole world around 6 millions of scientific publications are issued annually; more than two thousand print pages in a minute are unleashed over the scientists[3]. The latest reasearches are showing are showing, that over 90% form the collective scientific information today is produced by the humanity only for the last 70 years; the information deluge increases with 12–13% every year, as in 2000 it was 30 times bigger than in 1950; towards the 70s of the XXth century the information doubles on every 5–7 years, and by the beginning of the 90s doubles annually. Every scientist needs to know at least 55 foreign languages, in order to embrace the whole information deluge

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[1] Ohne Worte: leserfreundlich. Von Judka Strittmatter//Berliner Zeitung, 07.04.1997. Available at: https://www.berlinonline.de/berliner-zeitung/archiv/.bin/dump.fcgi/1998/0407/none/0076/index.htm

[2] Empty place for useless thoughts//Duma, 11.01.2008. P. 21.

[3] Loeser, Franz. How to read rationally. Sofia: Technika, 1973. P. 11–14.

and to leave behind its "advance in age". Today if one specialist isn't familiar with the whole flow of scientific information, after 10 years he will possess only 30% from the knowledge in his field, and after 15 years he can entirely disqualify him self[1].

It is known the fact, that the admission phisiological possibilities of the human are too limited:

• The technical parameters of the computer technics repeadedly surpass the characteristics of the human brain: the capacity of the human memory is 17 GB (17 milliard of neurons), the capacity of one CD is 700 MB, the capacity of one DVD is 4,7 GB, so the human memory can be put on around 24 CD's or at 3,6 DVDs; the speed of the human brain is 10–20 reactions/sec, and the speed of one CCD camera is 80 millions of images/sec.

• The quantity of data, signals and massages, which today is entering in the human brain is minimum 100 thousand bits in a second, but actually it can realize and use between 25 and 100 bits in a second[2].

• The speed of transmission of the neural signal of the human is maximum 30 000 symbols in a second, while the signals in the computer are moving and are processed million times faster[3]. Only during the present 2016 were marked several new world records in the speed of transmisson of data through Internet — first scientists from the college of the London Universuty achieved a speed 1,125 terabits in a second, and later at the international economical forum in Sankt Peterburg was demonstrated a speed of mobile Internet from 1,24 gigabits in a second. Said in another way, all the episodes of the series „Games of thrones" in HD quality can be downloaded „at one breath" for less than 1 second[4].

• The diffusion of the computers is around 4,6 times faster than the diffusion of the steam-electrical engines in the last century. The construction of the telecommunication network in USA was accomplished for 7 years — 6 times faster from the constructiob of railway network in the country[5].

• The period for comprehensiveness (mass character) of the new media is developping in geometrical progression. While the television achieved mass character for around 20 years, the Internet made it only for three years (1993–1996).

• Together with the unbelievable speed, with which the changes in the present are happening, called Big Data, an enormous chaos of data is growing — more than 90% from the created digital content represents unstructured information[6].

In view of the specified circumstances we can separate the informatisation as a key factor for the distribution of the empty media as a therapy of the information depression. The passive information behaviour (the refusal of information) has the potential to revise and to balance not a few objective and subjective conditions, which are already devastating the information balance and are threatening the information health of the individual[7].

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[1] Tsardia, Fedor. Informatisation, knowledge, social management. Kishinev: Shtinca, 1992. P. 64.

[2] Semeniuk, Edward P. Information approach towards the knowledge of the reality. Kiev: Science word, 1988, P. 132.

[3] Eliakov Anatoly. Information glut of people. – In: Sociological studies, 2005, № 5. P. 114–121.

[4] Maher, Robert, Alex Alvarado, Domaniç Lavery & Polina Bayvel. Increasing the information rates of optical communications via coded modulation: a study of transceiver performance. [online]. – In: Scientific Reports, Vol. 6, 11.02.2016. doi:10.1038/srep21278; МегаФон: Будущее: 5G. – In: MegaFon, 16.06.2016. Available at: http://corp.megafon.ru/press/news/federalnye_novosti/20160616–1106.html

[5] Masuda, Y. The Information Society as Post-Industrial Society. Washington: D. C., 1983.

[6] Schubmehl, David and Dan Vesset. The Knowledge Quotient: Unlocking the Hidden Value of Information Using Search and Content Analytics: White Paper. International Data Corporation (IDC), June 2014. 22 p. Available at: http://www.coveo.com/~/media/Files/WhitePapers/Coveo_IDC_Knowledge_Quotient_June2014.ashx

[7] Look more about the factors from the era Web 1.0., disturbing the information balance of the human, in: Tsvetkova, Milena. Information culture: The name of the reading. Sofia: Gaberoff, 2001, P. 124–132.

The objective conditions:

1) the information entropy — the information chaos, the information disorder, the information mess (a term, with which Russell Akoff, the authority on the theory of the orderly mind, designates every complicated situation of changing problems)[1];

2) the information noise;

3) the information attacks, canalization of the interest, of the search and of the information process;

4) the misinformation;

5) the information indocrination, the information manipulation.

The subjective conditions:

1) information frustration;

2) information deprivation;

3) information anxiety;

4) information neuroticism — from the surpluss of information, to the information glut (surfeit);

5) the information burnout;

6) „digital Alzheimer", „digital amnesia"[2];

7) cynical apathy towards the new information order;

7) vulgar phubbing — the antisocial use of the mobile technologies, the preoccupied attention with the smartphone and the display information panorama.

In actual fact the glut itself of the information ambient doesn't threaten with nothing the cognitive and the mental processes of the cognitively healthy and well-balanced intellect. We can remind that in 1694 Henrich Ludolff Benthems expressed his attitude towards the "information deluge": „The beef about the increase of the books seems to me so stupid, that I can't imagine a similar compaint on behalf of the understanding reader. The Israelite kingdom was prospering mostly during the period when his possessor gave possibility to for distribution of thousands of proverbs and songs. Greece was in a best condition, when the country possesses many books, now Greece compains to others about this, because it is controlled by the lack of intelligence, laziness and tyranny. If through the abundance of books, a result of a good science, one nation can be destroyed, so it means that Italy during the domination of August had to be very unhappy, and Germany very happy. Because the first was produced on everyday basis news texts, and the second was filled with so much lack of knowledge, as with forests"[3].

The problem with the glut of information is still searching for its general decision. For instance, the Bularian philosopher prof. Elit Nikolov, successfully defended the thesis, that "the information boom" isn't a glut with information, but an absence of address arranged relations between the subjects in the information ambient. In his opinion, "an information boom" doesn't exist, but it is an "illusionary concept", caused by the lack of a necessary sytem of mediators, which have to determine, to undertake and to send to address the information signals towards the concrete groups of addressees[4].

In this sense, the emptiness as media or the media without content is an *invitation to increase of the personal information hygiene* and of *the sense for measure.* At the time of the information highways the problem isn't consists of how to receive more information, but how to keep less and how to choose[5]. But the distance between detection, perception, transmission, checking and rationalization of digital message is deceased, the necessary time is missing. The tempo is getting faster, as the possibility to think doesn't have to be given to people. The similar is the situation with Winnie the Pooh, who is dragged

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[1] Akoff, Russell. Re-Creating the Corporation. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. P. 13.

[2] Fedorov, Alexander. On Media Education. Moscow: ICOS UNESCO Program Information for All, 2008. 156 c.

[3] Benthems, Henrich Ludolff. Engeländischer Kirch- und Schulen-Staat. Lüneburg: Johann Georg Lipper, 1694. 720 p.

[4] Nikolov, Elit. The third character in the communication//Problems of the culture, 1995, № 70, P. 26.

[5] Todorov, Tsvetan. The abuses with the memory//Literature, 1996, № 12. P. 3–14.

at the stairs by Christopher Robin, his head is hitting the stairs, and he sais to himself — oh, if only I had time to think, to stop. (Let's remember the popular musical in England "Stop the world, I want to get off"). The acceleration isn't the most comfortable state of the humanity. We know from the physics, that the excessive speed is deforming. Why everything, which is valid today, is invented in the antiquity? Because at that time people had the time to think about the human, about the matter, about the light, about the stars, about the soul. Hence, „the emptyness" in contemporary media format can be also *a portal to the timelessness.*

Can we read the empty media?

When Mozart was asked what is the most important in his music, he answered: *the pauses.* Is it possible for our letter-centric reader's consciousness to read the emptiness of the pages (the intervals, the indentations, the line spacings, the white fields) and to explain it as Mozart with words? That is to say, is it possible the reader to behave in an anti-reader's way (according to the stereotype for reading)? It is possible. It might be found that the influence of these "white holes" upon our reader's perceptions is no way inferior to wealth of the influence of the written word by itself.

The tandem „emptiness — reader's imagination" is explained in a very laconic and persuasive way by Gianni Rodari. When he distinguishes the benefit of reading comics, he wrote: „It is necessary an active presence of the imagination, in order to be filled the emptinesses between two pictures. At the cinema or in front of the TV screen the images are following in continuous sequence, as they are describing step by step the course of the action. In the comic strip the action may begin in the first piture and it may end in the next, jumping over all the intermediate transitions. The hero, who is standing prodly on a hourse in the first picture, in the second picture is lying in the dust. The fall itself is pure imagination. Something more, from a gesture can be seen the final effect, but not the development. The objects are changing their location; we have to imagine how each of them is passing from the initial location to the new one. All this work is entrusted to the reader's mind. If the cinema is text, the comics is stenography, from which we have to extract the text."[1]

The emptiness is primordial characteristic of the book, convinces us the receptive aesthetics. Irrevocable and unroundabout function of the book as media is its *transparency for anticipation and „finishing" of the started*. A specific communicative strategy of the written text is the presence of „empty", *white places* in it (Roman Ingarden). This isn't some kind of a weakness or a flaw, but an essential advantage in front of the live or audiovisual work, which translates as completely finished, completed product, which doesn't allow interpretations, semantic variations and co-creation. The aesthetics of the influence (Wolfgang Iser) understands the text's emptinesses as *„unobjective" places* in the featured „objectiveness", through which is possible the most complete (paradoxically) and the strictly individual specification of the author's intention. Just these „emptinesses" allow to the reader to refer „the fictitious" world of the Other towards his own. In his book „Moderne Literatur lesen" Horst Steinmetz explains why the written expression suggests the actions and the pictures in fragmented mode, as series of uncertainities and ambiguities. He believes that as detail extends the writer in his narration, trying to recreate heroes, situations or landscapes, could not reach comprehensiveness due to the limitations of the language he uses. The open places in the text are completed, they gain „reticence" not until in the process of the reader's concretization[2]. This act is performed with the help of the whole reader's "mneme" (a term of Nicolas A. Roubakine) — not only through the arsenal of the individual reader's experience, but also through the intuition and through the insight in the spectrum of the reader's anticipation. The literally nonpronounced becomes individually pronounced only at the appearance of „co-composing" on the reader's behalf.

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[1] Rodari, Gianni. Grammar of the fantasy: Preface in the art of inventing stories. Transl. from Italian Borislav Ivanchev, Liliana Naydenova. 2. Sofia: Science and Art Publishing House, 1986. P. 244.

[2] Steinmetz, Horst. Moderne Literatur lesen. Eine Einfuhring. Munchen: Verlag. C. H. Beck., 1966.

The written text is condemned also to *sensory emptiness.* In contrast to it the image is seeking to compensate the lack of sensivity, but the viewer, relieved from additional tension of the thought and of the imagination, remains a passive observer. Since in the image the whole effective power is falling down on the eye, it occurs an overloading of the sences, an external tension and fatigue. The sensory emptiness of the written text has its counterpoint in the sensory repleteness of the audiovisual text.

Etherology of the „empty" media

Etherology of the text — this is the scientific field, which can read and can explain in adequate way the emptinesses or „the white fields" in the mediasphere. This discipline was proposed and developed by Mikhail Epshtein, Professor of Cultural Theory and Russian Literature, Emory University. The etherology of the text is an addition to the study of „the semiosphere"[1]. Because where there is a „sphere", it exists an ether — the transparent, the pure strata, which are filling the space between the semiotic objects. At ancient Greek the term „ether" was meaning the higher, the most transparent and pure strata in the air, inhabited by the gods. In the history of the philosophy and physics „the ether" is the idea for the unaccessible for sensory observation weightless substance, the finest ambient of the first substances. According to the etherology it can't exist absolutely empty space, devoid of any physical or logical properties, and so far as it exists in it semantic significance, it must be studied also as a sign, and as a significance[2].

There was a time, when „the emptiness", postponed in the periphery of the text, marginal by place and significance, wasn't interesting for studying. But now, when this out-of-text space is put inside the media text (interval, pause, indentation, line spacing, white fields), when sometimes replaces the whole text, it began to be perceived by the law of the media. „The emptiness" is already realized as media-sign, whose significance could be equalized to the summary significance of all the other signs, as far as their general condition for existence — „the first-word", which denotes the prior all essences and it is present in all of them, as explained it Martin Heidegger. A summary of the reasons about the design interest towards „the air" or „the emptiness" in the contemporary business communications provides a consultation with 54 creatives directors of leading advertising agencies in Canada and in the Unated States. The connotations, with which is linked „the air" in the ads, are showing why they prefer the white space as strategic tool for influence on his audience. It is found that the white space influences the consumer perception in all the desired directions — it is associated with dignity, prestige, trust, leadership, calmness and low risk[3]. In other words, the air in the modern corporate brand adds to the practical comfort about reading also metasignals for metareading. The statement of the designer Mario Garcia is in also in this direction: „The white space is important. As the punctuation in the sentence, it allows to the thoughts to flow without cannon into each other."[4] These are serious reasons the whiteness and the visually „open" spaces to be imposed as integral part in the corporate visual communications.

So in the context of the etherology the empty media and the empty page are acquiring a significance of *semiotic ether*[5]. The white spaces in the visual rhetoric, the white fields around the text, the whiteness of the clean sheet of paper can be perceived as semantic tense absence of signs, as anti-text ambient of unspeakable with human resources potential signs. The empty sheep is the media of the potential

[1] Semiosphere – the semiotics, studying the system of signs. The term is introduced by Urii Lotman by analogy with atmosphere, biosphere, noosphere and comprises the sphere of the signs and the sign behaviour, that in their completeness form the artificial wrapper of the planet.

[2] Epshtein Mihail. „Study towards the ecology of text"//Comments, 1997, № 13. P. 3–41.

[3] Pracejus, J. W., G. Douglas Olsen, & T. O'Guinn. How Nothing Became Something: White Space, Rhetoric, History, and Meaning. In: The University of Chicago Press, Journal of Consumer Research. Vol. 33, № 1, June 2006, p. 86. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/504138

[4] Garcia, Mario. Pure Design. St. Petersburg: Miller Media, 2002. P. 154.

[5] Epshtein Mihail. „Study towards the ecology of text"//Comments, 1997, № 13. P. 3–41.

speech, of the words, which aren't still recorded and which doesn't have to be recorded, which are requiring reading and at the same time can't be fixed with eyes. The empty flat sheet or screen even can receive voluminosity and depth, if the contemplating eyes of the writing or of the reading perceive it as „white hole"[1].

The emptinesses in the text can be rationalized as *intervals* and *„white holes"*. The sign for inverval (blank space) is a model of emptiness, which can't be featured and articulated, unles it is enclosed. This clean area of the literacy received different names: „background", „encirclement", „field", „nameless", „pause", „purity", „emptiness", „silence" etc. The interval is the most used tool in the written corpus of all cultures and any single letter in any language can't overjump it by frequency of its use[2]. It is found that the interval isn't just emptiness, but an enclosed emptiness, salient, becoming an object of reflexion and means of communication.

The emptinesses in the text can be understood also as eye-catching *white squares in the crossword*, and also as *dots, seeking the rhythm*. They expect creative commitment, a sense for authorship, to identify the read as an individual experience. This sense for „allience" in the creative bipolar act adds the half-expressed, pre-semantizes the dots, left consciousnessly or not in the text, and it colours „the white fields". They on their part give space for individual creative freedom. The reader has the right to fill freely these fields with whatever he wants. The concept, that namely these emptinesses are shaping the reader, also offers the freedom to him to succumb or not to the shaping or to land a back to a partial shaping only through a part of the „white fields"[3].

The media without text is a bearer of the concept, that the empty body by itself can be used as a point of reference and in it to be addressed *an invitation towards „the reader" to express as an author*. The smell of the paper by itself can prompt the owner of the empty book seal the white sheets. A reading of an empty book doesn't require so many time, but if you want to insert something inside, that won't transform it into another scratchy piece of paper, requires an effort. Once everything that the appropriator of the idea had decided is written, the book body becomes a complete media — the body obtains also a text.

However the media with white sheets represents something like *closed book*, although it is open. When we say, that the face of the human is an „open book", it is clear, that this is only a metaphor — we can't be sure neither what is hidden behind the „wrapper", nor, for instance, what kind of book he is reading. The empty media is a field for reading only for „clairvoyant" reader, for a reader-X-ray, of a reader of future content.

Conclusion

The empty pages can accompany every standard print media, as they improve its functionality, providing a space for the reader to take notes. But the medialogical analysis here was directed towards creative decisions for conscious transformation of the emptiness or the silence in media — when the emptiness of the media body is a metamessage for „reading without eyes".

The reasons about the existence of total or partial emptiness in the media are the following: 1) creative typographic experiment; 2) a game with the manipulative possibilities of the new photo and pint technologies; 3) a stimulus for the imagination in creative communications; 4) an invitation for an authorship; 5) an invitation for a co-creation, for a co-composition, for a game; 6) an art method for embedding of subtext; 7) an art signal for uncertainty or for inexpressibility, helplessness in front of the words; 8) an information blackout or censorship; 9) self-censorship; a protest through a silence; 10) an act of information deprivation or information frustration; 11) a resistance against the limitations of the

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[1] „The white hole" in the text is semantic analogue of the physical black holes, where „disappears" the cosmic matter.

[2] Epshtein Mihail. „[sign of the emptiness]"//Projective philosophic dictionnary. Sankt Peterburg: Aleteya, 2003. P. 512.

[3] Karanov, Konstantin. Reading and freedom//Philosophical thought, 1990, № 10. P. 51.

freedom of the speech and the right to information; 12) a resistance against the information glut; 13) an invitation for increasing of the personal information hygiene and of the sense of measure.

The basic idea, revealed by the survey, is that the completeness is coming with alchemy and this is the secret of the reading. If we want to learn to read in the full sense of the word, we should know how to read the locked in the potentiality of the writing, but and only in the actuality of writing. The reading, in contrast to the spelling or the examination, has to deal with characters, not with their material expression. Hence, the emptiness of the media sould be perceived not as piece grey newspaper or colour glossy paper, but *as a significant absence of signs*, as *semiotic nothing*, as invisible mark, provoking the reader's glance[1]. This means, that we do not have just to stare in the book and in the emptiness of the page or of the screen, but we must also offer for reading „uncomplete media", in order to form different and creative recipients. This is like this because this emptiness will be always a different emptiness, entirely dependent on the „mneme" of the reader. As Marshall McLuhan warned, if you are watching, you are listening and you are feeling carefully, you will perceive correctly. A study of the „semiotic ether" even in the empty body of the media — this is the most difficult task for the reader.

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[1] Epshtein Mihail. „ " Study towards the ecology of text//Comments, 1997, № 13. P. 3–41.