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GLOBALISATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF POLISH MEDIA LANDSCAPE: CASE STUDIES OF NK.PL VS. FACEBOOK AND ALLEGRO VS. AMAZON

Globalizacja w perspektywie polskiego środowiska medialnego: studia przypadków NK.pl a Facebook i Allegro a Amazon

ABSTRACT

The author focuses on presenting the phenomenon of globalisation in the context of Polish social media and e-commerce markets. The main objective is to find correlations between the deactivation of the Polish social network NK.pl (Nasza-klasa.pl; eng. Our-class.pl) vs. the development of globalisation, as well as the maintenance of the leading position by the online sales platform Allegro vs. the partial “failure” of the examined phenomenon. The considerations, embedded in broader theoretical inquiries, are conducted on the basis of case studies, a literature review, and desk research. The paper refers to the Polish online media environment. The author focuses on the cases of NK.pl vs. Facebook and Allegro vs. Amazon. The results indicate that globalisation is not “universal” in the media sphere in Poland. The author characterises the factors that influence the scope of impact of global solutions in the local market. In the paper, the author also draws attention to the importance of preserving brand identity, following the expectations and habits of the audience group and promoting culture, all of which can contribute to maintaining a robust position in the industry. The article is significant due to the continuous development of globalisation processes and the search by local companies for strategies to compete with global giants.

KEYWORDS: GLOBALISATION, NK.PL, FACEBOOK, ALLEGRO, AMAZON, SOCIAL MEDIA

ABSTRAKT

Autorka skupia się na przedstawieniu zjawiska globalizacji w ujęciu rynku mediów społecznościowych oraz rynku e-commerce w Polsce. Głównym celem jest znalezienie korelacji między wyłączeniem polskiego serwisu społecznościowego NK.pl (Nasza-Klasa.pl) a rozwojem globalizacji oraz utrzymywaniem wiodącej pozycji przez platformę sprzedaży online Allegro a częściową „porażką” omawianego zjawiska. Rozważania, osadzone w szerszych dociekaniach teoretycznych, prowadzone są w oparciu o studia przypadków, przegląd literatury oraz analizę danych zastanych. W pracy odwołano się do polskiego środowiska mediów internetowych. Autorka skupia się na przypadkach NK.pl a Facebook oraz Allegro a Amazon. Wyniki wskazują, że globalizacja nie jest „uniwersalna” w sferze mediów w Polsce. Autorka charakteryzuje czynniki, które mają wpływ na zakres oddziaływania globalnych rozwiązań na lokalnym rynku. W pracy zwraca również uwagę na istotę zachowania tożsamości marki, podążanie za oczekiwaniami i przyzwyczajeniami grupy odbiorczej oraz kwestię promowania kultury, które mogą mieć wpływ na utrzymanie silnej pozycji w branży. Artykuł jest ważny z uwagi na nieustanny rozwój procesów globalizacyjnych oraz poszukiwania przez firmy o charakterze lokalnym strategii umożliwiających konkurowanie z globalnymi gigantami.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: GLOBALIZACJA, NK.PL, FACEBOOK, ALLEGRO, AMAZON, MEDIA SPOŁECZNOŚCIOWE

INTRODUCTION

The article continues the reflections from the Understanding Global Media MECM20010 subject at The University of Melbourne, Australia.

The author analyses the concept of globalisation, defined as “the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (Robertson, 1992, p. 8). Robert W. McChesney (2001) claims that “in conventional parlance, the current era in history is generally characterized as one of globalization, technological revolution, and democratization” (p. 1).

Manfred B. Steger (2003) describes globalisation as a “multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant” (Steger, 2003, p. 9–13).

The creations of both non-territorial identity and society of *homo sapiens globalus* (Rybiński, 2007, p. 48), in which *homo sapiens globalus* is conceptualised as a person who operates in a transnational economy with a single global market for products, services, labour, finance, and knowledge (p. 3), are covered by the empirical and the normative aspects of globalisation. The normative aspect points to transformations that affect the spread of mass consumption, the redefinition of “political and symbolic power” (Flew & Iosifidis, 2020, p. 9), the change of culture, and the modification of “lifestyle, identity and sense of belonging” (Wang, personal communication, 24 July, 2023). The empirical approach refers to measurable as well as „identifiable trends in global interactions” (Flew & Iosifidis, 2020, p. 9), such as the distribution of goods, data, information and capital; technological integration; internet access; population migrations; and the operations of transnational corporations. In the slides for Understanding Global Media MECM20010, Wilfred Wang (personal communication, 24 July, 2023) refers to Manfred B. Steger (2002) and describes the ideological paradigm assumptions, such as “the production and manifestation of certain value systems and norms of meaning-making”. With the development of electronic media, the standardisation of the abovementioned value systems, including social, economic, cultural and political patterns, is unlimited in time and location. The phenomenon also concerns the Polish media environment. Terry Flew and Silvio Waisbord (2015) refer to Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004) and describe globalisation “as a force that could promote greater homogenization among European media systems” (p. 626). Additionally, Anthony Giddens (1990) defines globalisation as “the intensification of worldwide social relations

which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (p. 60) and refers to the concept of global village. Nowadays, a global village (McLuhan, 1965, p. 196), functioning on the basis of the interconnection network, is displaced by “global cities”. The increase in importance of “global cities”, such as San Jose and Silicon Valley, occurs in relation to the development of transnational platforms and corporations (Goban-Klas, 2005, p. 174).

Tech Giants, including GAFA (Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple), adopt the strategy of global market dominance and aim at the concentration of financial and cultural factors (McChesney, 2001, p. 30). The vision of neo-liberal and unified reality competes with the attitude of local and regional companies, such as Polish NK.pl and Allegro. The businesses retain their individuality and find a way to stay on the market or “fold under pressure” of global giants and disappear from the industry. Although Terry Flew and Petros Iosifidis (2020) explain:

Rather than seeing global communication technologies as leading to an increasingly homogeneous global culture, globalisation theorists stressed how new forms of interconnectedness across boundaries enabled transformations in media, culture and politics. [...] [G]lobalisation enables a pluralisation of cultures and identities, through global media and communication flows, large-scale migration and the formation of diasporic identities. [...] The spread of global media and cultural forms has enabled the rise of non-territorial forms of cultural identity, and the global internet has also provided new ways in which such identities can be developed, shaped, co-ordinated, networked and struggled for (p. 10–11),

Maryam Kheeshadeh (2012) points out that “Except the Positive Aspects, Globalization Has Some Negative Aspects Which Have Undermined the Role of the Media” (p. 1755). The author highlights the effects of the process, such as: “cultural imperialism, global capitalism, digital colonisation” (Wang, personal communication, 24 July, 2023), “global media market ([...] uneven globalization in terms of economy and digital divide)” (Kheeshadeh, 2012, p. 1755), creation of McWorld (see Barber, 1995), concentration of (media) ownership, and domination of (media) conglomerate.

The issues of globalisation and the factors that allow local brands to build (or lose) a position in the industry are analysed through the prism of the Polish social media and e-commerce markets.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The study is based on case studies, which allow for a discussion of specific issues and a description of the “individual situation and course of action” (see Filanowski, 2021). A case study is a social science method for an “in-depth examination of a single instance of some social phenomenon” (Babbie, 2005, p. 631). The activities undertaken within the analysis focus on sourcing research material from desk research (secondary research), which is understood as a review of available reports, statistical data and industry articles. The considerations are embedded in broader theoretical reflections from a literature review in the arts, humanities and social sciences. A non-probabilistic sampling includes abovementioned Polish platforms (NK.pl and Allegro) and two Tech Giants (two out of four from GAFA) – Facebook and Amazon. NK.pl and Allegro were launched in the Polish online media market earlier than their global competitors. In Poland, NK.pl has been excluded from the market in favour of Facebook, but global Amazon (.com and .pl) has been surpassed by Allegro. References to examples from the Polish online media environment allow the author to formulate the research questions: Q1: “Is globalisation universally reflected in the Polish media landscape?”; Q2: “What are the factors behind the partial “failure” of globalisation in the Polish e-commerce industry?”; Q3: “What has contributed to the development of globalisation in the Polish social media market?”.

THE “SUCCESS” OF GLOBALISATION: NK.PL VS FACEBOOK

NK.pl (<https://nk.pl/>), previously Nasza-klasa.pl (eng. Our-class.pl; until 2010), was launched in 2006 (Grzywińska, 2011, p. 136). Polish social networking service was modelled on American Classmates.com (from 1995; Grzywińska, 2011, p. 136) and aimed at searching for schoolmates. Users were offered access features such as creating profiles, posting photos, sharing comments, and contacting friends. On the one hand, the inclusion of the Nasza-klasa.pl service, which has become an equivalent of a foreign platform, can be regarded as a result of globalisation. On the other hand, the author emphasises the importance of NK.pl in the online media market in Poland and its role in shaping the identity of the Polish internet user. Andrzej

Tarnowski (2020) states that the service with a family-friendly atmosphere offered an innovative feature for setting up class pages. Ilona Grzywińska (2011) claims that among the audience of Nasza-Klasa.pl (NK.pl) there were older people who did not use other social networks, were attached to the Polish platform, and often started using the Internet to access the portal (p. 137–138). The introduction of the platform “made the Internet a place not only used by the youngest” (Grzywińska, 2011, p. 138). At launch, the service complemented the needs of the growing information society of Polish users. In 2006, 36% of Polish households had access to the Internet (Wirtualnedia.pl, 2006); in 2008 – 48% (IAB Poland, 2009). In 2008, when the number of monthly active users of NK.pl was over 12,5 million (IAB Poland, 2009), Facebook was launched in Poland (Wirtualnedia.pl, 2018). American portal (<https://www.facebook.com/>) has entered the growing internet communication market and has competed with the local platform, well known to Polish users. In 2008, NK.pl started cooperation with the Polish e-commerce leader – Allegro (Małek, 2008). Furthermore, even at the beginning of its activity, NK.pl was discussed in the news service “Panorama” on the second channel of Polish Television (Telewizja Polska; TVP2) (Gil, 2011, p. 243). The performance referred to the value of the public media approval. In 2008–2009, TVP2 ranked second in television market share in the 4+ group, with 16,71% in 2008 and 15,20% in 2009 (Wirtualnedia.pl, 2010). In the target group for commercial stations (16–49), TVP2 was in the fourth position – 15,58% in 2008 and 14,21% in 2009 (Wirtualnedia.pl, 2010). Alina Gil (2011) adds that Nasza-klasa.pl was also mentioned by the magazines “Wprost”, “Newsweek”, and the TV station TVN (InterNET24) (p. 243). The abovementioned forms of support for the Polish platform may have increased confidence in NK.pl. As a result, the service attracted more Polish users than Facebook. Mediapanel data reveals that in December 2010, the number of real users of Nasza-Klasa Group was 12253764 (an increase of 1359138 users compared to December 2009), and of Facebook – 9582619 (an increase of 6460210 users compared to December 2009) (Wojtas, 2011). In September 2011, Facebook, with 11725425 real users and 62.32% reach, overtook the NK.pl Group with 11628873 real users and 61.81% reach (Pająk, 2011). Facebook then became the most popular social media site in Poland.

The decline of NK.pl was caused – among other things, including “its transformation into a microgaming service” (see Radkowski, 2021) and the reaction of users to the changes in regulations – by the introduction of functionalities of the American counterparts. On NK.pl, there were options, such as *śledzik* allowing Twitter-like publishing brief posts; NKtalk similar

to Messenger; games along the lines of Facebook; and micropayments in the form of so-called *Euroqabki*. Polish social networking service required quick adaptation to changes and, at the same time, lost its “initial nature”. On 22 June 2010, the *nasza-klasa.pl* (*Nasza-klasa.pl*) was transformed into *nk.pl* (*NK.pl*). Andrzej Tarnowski (2020) emphasises: “Such a move was somewhat caused by a change in the nature of the service, when finding friends from school years was replaced by a multi-level communication platform”.

Despite the increasing number of Polish social media users during the first, second, and third waves of COVID-19 in 2020–2021, the situation of *NK.pl* worsened (see Table 1). In January 2019, the number of active social networks users in general was 18 million; in 2020 – 19 million; in 2021 – 25.9 million (Sas, 2023). In comparison, in August 2019, the number of real users of *NK.pl* was 1274930; in 2020 – 1076469 (Wirtualnemedi.pl, 2020). In August 2019, the number of Polish Facebook users was 16070000 (NapoleonCat, 2019); in 2020 – 19710000 (NapoleonCat, 2020); in 2021 – 22040000 (NapoleonCat, 2021). On 27 July 2021, *NK.pl* was defuncted.

Table 1. The Number of Active Facebook and *NK.pl* Users in Poland in 2019–2021.

Service	Date	Number of active users in Poland (in millions)
Facebook	August 2019	16.07
	August 2020	19.71
	August 2021	22.04
<i>NK.pl</i>	August 2019	1.27
	August 2020	1.08
	–	–
Social networks in general	January 2019	18.0
	January 2020	19.0
	January 2021	25.9

Source: Own elaboration based on NapoleonCat. (2019). *Facebook users in Poland*. <https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-poland/2019/08/>; NapoleonCat. (2020). *Facebook users in Poland*. <https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-poland/2020/08/>; NapoleonCat. (2021). *Facebook users in Poland*, <https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-poland/2021/08/>; Sas, A. (2023), *Number of social media users in Poland from 2014 to 2022* [Data set]. Kepios. [https://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/arttykul/rosnie-popularnosc-platform-spoecznościowych-liderem-wzrostow-tiktok-w-dol-wykop-fotka-mobile-i-nk-pl](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1296079/poland-number-of-social-media-users/?fbclid=IwAR36hiyTE9HYHCN7kdQLGDMIHLFmgtxLFbRhFfN0s3kwjZeiklDdpPk_w_cU; Wirtualnemedi.pl. (2020, September 28). <i>Rośnie popularność platform społecznościowych. Liderem wzrostów TikTok, w dół Wykop, Fotka mobile i NK.pl</i> [Social media platforms are growing in popularity. TikTok is the leader, Wykop, Fotka mobile and NK.pl are in decline]. <a href=)

Progressive globalisation did not omit *NK.pl*. The phenomenon led to the broadly understood integration with a global reach. Polish platform

implemented Western standards and changed its character. As a result, Polish users have trusted the inclusive narrative of the transnational giant. In doing so, they found friendly communication space. Facebook, which ranks first in the “Most Visited Social Media Networks Websites in Poland” ranking (Similarweb, 2023b), has referred to the statement that it has been a “community of more than one billion people”¹ (West, 2018, p. 4367; Facebook, 2016). It has influenced rationalising the unified lifestyle of Polish social media users, who can be seen as members of the abovementioned *homo sapiens globalus* society.

On the other hand, Tomasz Goban-Klas (2005) notices a turn to retain local and regional cultural identity (p. 176). The intensified aspirations to monopolise standards and control the mass audience meet resistance from individuals, local companies, and governments. The increase in the importance of a cosmopolitan worldview is opposed not only to extreme fundamentalist reactions (Flew & Iosifidis, 2020, p. 9) but also to actions in favour of “glocalization”. “Glocalization” refers to the hybridisation of the “global” with the “local” (Robertson, 1995, p. 28). An example of a service that uses global solutions to maintain and present its “local” perspective is the Polish e-commerce service “Allegro”.

THE PARTIAL “FAILURE” OF GLOBALISATION: ALLEGRO VS. AMAZON

Allegro (<https://allegro.pl/>), the Polish online e-commerce platform, was launched in 1999. Since the creation of the service, its functionalities have been extended with solutions, such as online payments, sales manager, and instalment trade. According to Anna Sroczyńska-Baron (2015), the instalment trade system awarded the “Product of the Year” title has been introduced in Poland for the first time (p. 450).

Initially, Allegro targeted the Polish e-commerce environment. Currently, the platform takes on a regional character and expands its activity to customers from six Central and Eastern European countries – Poland, Czech

¹ As of March 2024, the developers of Facebook claim that it is “a service for more than 2 billion people to freely express themselves across countries and cultures and in dozens of languages” (Facebook, n.d.).

Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Slovenia. The service allows both companies and individuals to sell items. In addition, Allegro also has a service called “Allegro Lokalnie” [eng. Allegro Locally], which is aimed at occasional sellers and buyers.

Allegro.com ranks first in the “Most Visited Marketplace Websites in Poland” ranking (Similarweb, 2023a), whereas Amazon, a leader in the global market (Similarweb, 2023), is in the fifth position of the same classification (data as of 2023, August 1). The Polish version of Amazon (amazon.pl) was launched in March 2021. The abovementioned version of the American service was introduced when the popularity of online shopping in Poland peaked (at that time) and then dropped (see Table 2). In 2019, the number of online shoppers in general in Poland was 62% of Internet users (\approx 19.8 million) (Polish Internet Research, 2019); in 2020 – 73% (\approx 23.8 million) (Polish Internet Research, 2020); in 2021 – 77% (\approx 25.7 million) (Polish Internet Research, 2021) and in 2022 – 77% (\approx 23.1 million) (Polish Internet Research, 2022). In November 2019, the number of active users of Allegro in Poland was 17.4 million (Gemius, 2019); in 2020 – 19.6 million (Gemius, 2020); in 2021 – 18.6 million (Gemius, 2021) and in 2022 – 18.5 million (Gemius, 2022). In comparison, in November 2021, the number of active users of Amazon in Poland was 6.3 million and in 2022 – 9.1 million (Wojtas, 2023).

Arkadiusz Zbigniew Wójtowicz and Marek Miłosz (2021) carried out a survey with a sample of 169 respondents and indicated that for 100% of respondents – Allegro is “known”; for 97% – Amazon is “known” (for 3% – Amazon is “unknown”) (p. 244). “87.6% of respondents declare that they do not shop on Amazon at all” (10.1% of interviewees make purchases less than once a month; 1.2% – 1–3 times per month; 0.6% – 4–6 times per month; 0.6% – more than seven times per month), 4.1% of respondents “do not make purchases on” Allegro (56.2% of respondents make purchases less than once a month; 30.8% – 1–3 times per month; 5.9% – 4–6 times per month; 3% – more than seven times per month) (Wójtowicz & Miłosz, 2021, p. 245). Furthermore, users declared “how many times [they] bought products and never received them” (see Wójtowicz & Miłosz, 2021, p. 245). Respondents also “rated the ease of navigating the shop” (Amazon: “1” – 4.9%; “2” – 9.2%; “3” – 47.2%; “4” – 26.1%; “5” – 12.7%; Allegro: “1” – 0.6%; “2” – 1.8%; “3” – 4.1%; “4” – 27.8%; “5” – 65.7%) and the “overall appearance of the interface” (Amazon: “1” – 3.4%; “2” – 8.1%; “3” – 50.7%; “4” – 28.4%; “5” – 9.5%; Allegro: “1” – 0%; “2” – 1.2%; “3” – 7.7%; “4” – 46.2%; “5” – 48.5%) on a scale of 1–5 (where “1” was conceptualised as “bad” and “5” as “good”) (see Wójtowicz & Miłosz, 2021, p. 245).

Table 2. The Number of Active Allegro and Amazon Users in Poland in 2019–2022.

Service	Date	Number of active users in Poland (in millions)
Allegro	November 2019	17.4
	November 2020	19.6
	November 2021	18.6
	November 2022	18.5
Amazon	November 2019	-
	November 2020	-
	November 2021	6.3
	November 2022	9.1
Online shoppers in general	2019	62% of Internet users ≈ 19.8
	2020	73% of Internet users ≈ 23.8
	2021	77% of Internet users ≈ 25.7
	2022	77% of Internet users* ≈ 23.1

Note. *The number of Internet users refers to data from specific year. For example, in 2021 it was approximately 33,3 million users, and in 2022 – 30 million.

Source: Own elaboration based on Gemius. (2019). *E-commerce w Polsce 2019* [E-commerce in Poland in 2019]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/raport-e-commerce.html>; Gemius. (2020). *E-commerce w Polsce 2020* [E-commerce in Poland in 2020]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/e-commerce-w-polsce-2020.html>; Gemius. (2021). *E-commerce w Polsce 2021* [E-commerce in Poland in 2021]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/raport-e-commerce-w-polsce-2021.html>; Gemius. (2022). *E-commerce w Polsce 2022* [E-commerce in Poland in 2022]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/raport-e-commerce-2022-juz-dostepny.html>; Wojtas, T. (2023, March 27). *Amazon od dwóch lat w Polsce. "Jesteśmy maratończykami, a nie sprinterami"* [Amazon has been in Poland for two years. "We are marathon runners, not sprinters"]. <https://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/artykul/amazon-sklep-w-polsce-cena-promocje-jak-zalozyc-konto>; Polish Internet Research. (2019, December 11), *Polski internet w listopadzie 2019* [Polish Internet in November 2019]. <https://pbi.org.pl/badanie-gemius-pbi/polski-internet-w-listopadzie-2019/>; Polish Internet Research. (2020, December 4), *Wyniki badania Mediapanel za listopad 2020* [Mediapanel research results for November 2020]. <https://pbi.org.pl/badanie-mediapanel/wyniki-badania-mediapanel-za-listopad-2020/>; Polish Internet Research. (2021, December 10), *Wyniki badania Mediapanel za listopad 2021* [Mediapanel research results for November 2021]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/wyniki-badania-mediapanel-za-listopad-2021.html>; Polish Internet Research. (2022, December 6), *Wyniki badania Mediapanel za listopad 2022* [Mediapanel research results for November 2022]. <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/wyniki-badania-mediapanel-za-listopad-2022.html>

The author notes the powerful position of the local service in the Polish market and, in this regard, points to a partial “failure” of globalisation. However, it cannot be described as a mere “failure” of Amazon, which is developing in Poland and whose number of real users (web + app) in February 2024 equalled 5876064 (19.79% reach [internet]; Allegro – 18205236; 61.36% reach [internet]) (Mediapanel, 2024). Traffic share in Poland between allegro.pl and amazon.com is 96.32% (Allegro) to 3.68% (Amazon) (Similarweb, 2023). Traffic share in Poland between allegro.pl and amazon.pl is 95.26% (Allegro)

to 4.74% (Amazon) (Similarweb, 2023a). “Allegro.pl [197.1 million] had more total visits [desktop and mobile] compared to amazon.pl [14 million] in February 2024” (Similarweb, 2023a). Piotr Kwinta claims that “Amazon prepares the solid foundation for the brave expansion in Poland” (Wojtas, 2023). Aleksandra Borycka, head of marketplace Amazon.pl, adds: “At Amazon, we are marathon runners – that is one of the key principles. Two years is still a sprint, and we are looking at the next decades” (Wojtas, 2023). It is worth noting that Amazon (as well) is committed to investing in Poland and supporting local entrepreneurs. Amazon allocated more than PLN 20 billion to development in Poland between 2012 and 2022 (About Amazon Team, 2024). “In 2022, investments [by Amazon] in Poland resulted in over 70000 new direct and indirect jobs” (see About Amazon Team, 2024). Aleksandra Borycka states: “Polish small and medium-sized entrepreneurs are undoubtedly the driving force of sales on Amazon.pl” (Wojtas, 2023). Moreover, the Amazon Prime Video streaming platform is also a significant part of its activities, with 2501766 real users (web + app) in February 2024 (8.43% reach; 4.34% share of time in category [VOD and OTT; Video on Demand and Over The Top]) (Mediapanel, 2024).

Despite the above, Allegro is a strong competitor to Amazon in the Polish market. Arkadiusz Zbigniew Wójtowicz and Marek Miłosz (2021) reported on “the popularity of each online shop” and referred to “the percentage of respondents who choose the surveyed online shop most often”: Allegro – 85.7%; Amazon – 1.2% (p. 245).

Behind the success of Allegro are Polish culture promotion campaigns, activities supporting entrepreneurs, social projects »“Szlachetna Paczka”; eng. the Noble Gift; “The Noble Gift unites Poles in helping. Allegro has accompanied the realisation of this mission for five years” (Allegro, 2022)« and charity actions, such as the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity (GOCC; Allegro, 2023). According to Allegro, during the finale of the GOCC, users can bid for and list items, donate money while online shopping, or transfer funds to eCollection Box. During the 31st Finale of the GOCC, more than PLN 30609661 was collected on 132963 auctions (Allegro, 2023). Tomasz Goban-Klas (2005) uses an example of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity to illustrate “strengthening bonds” with other societies through charitable actions” with a global reach (p. 171). Allegro supports a charity that features a local narrative with an international audience.

Furthermore, the Industrial Development Agency, in cooperation with Allegro, OLX, Polish Development Fund, as well as Kraków Technology Park, has encouraged local companies to digitalise in the “Przeniesz swoją firmę

do internetu. Zarabiaj na e-handlu” [Bring your business online. Earn from e-commerce] campaign. The Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland, the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy Republic of Poland and the Ministry of Development have been the patrons of the campaign. According to the information on the official website of the Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy (2020), the aim of the action has been “to encourage entrepreneurs to work with e-commerce platforms and to raise awareness of the opportunities for developing their own business”.

What is more, in 2023, Polish service Allegro gets involved in the “Szkoła Pionierów Polskiego Funduszu Rozwoju” [Polish Development Fund School of Pioneer] action, which focuses on business and technological development (Polish Development Fund, 2023). These actions suggest that the platform supports activities to foster the development of budding entrepreneurs and technology enthusiasts in the Polish market. By doing so, Allegro and Polish authorities counter the expansion of global competitors. Although it does not refer to the regulatory issues of legislation, it concerns the promotion and support for Polish products. As the Buy Locally Index shows, Poland ranks second in the European Union in consumer patriotism (Business Insider, 2021). Allegro appears to be responding to the preferences for the “localness” of its target group of consumers and building its action strategy on this basis. In this way, the platform is successfully building its position in the market.

In addition, in 2015–2016, Allegro cooperated with director Tomasz Bagiński as well as Platige Image and implemented the “Legendy Polskie” [Polish Legends] series (<https://allegro.pl/legenda>; Allegro, n.d). The project included ebooks, an audiobook, clips and short films that reached millions of views on YouTube. The playlist called “LEGENDY POLSKIE” [POLISH LEGENDS] on the official Allegro channel on YouTube contains 27 materials²

² Legendy Polskie. Film SMOK. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film DRAGON. Allegro] – 6058823 views; Legendy Polskie. Film TWARDOWSKY. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film TWARDOWSKY. Allegro] – 7493337 views; Legendy Polskie. Film TWARDOWSKY 2.0. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film TWARDOWSKY 2.0. Allegro] – 6317351 views; Legendy Polskie. Film Operacja Bazyliżek. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film Operation: Bazyliżek. Allegro] – 9740222 views; Legendy Polskie. Film Jaga. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film Jaga. Allegro] – 8867467; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu SMOK. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film trailer DRAGON. Allegro] – 457965 views; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu TWARDOWSKY. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film trailer TWARDOWSKY. Allegro] – 464090 views; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu SMOK. Allegro [Polish Legends. Film trailer DRAGON. Allegro] – 104827 views; Legendy Polskie. Kulisy projektu [Polish Legends. Behind-the-scenes of the project] – 314701 views; Legendy Polskie. Making of. [Polish Legends. Making Of] – 487404 views; Wywiad

(data as of 2023, August 31). Their number of views exceeds the number of regular subscribers and indicates a broad interest in the project. In the material “Legendy Polskie. Kulisy projektu” [Polish Legends. Behind-the-scenes of the project] Marcin Dyczak, marketing director of Allegro from 2012–2020, explains that the project allowed to create excitement around the Allegro brand. The company was thus to promote “cultural excerpts” and told Polish tales in an innovative way, adapted to a modern audience. The aims of the project were to engage consumers, build an emotional bond of the public with the Allegro brand, as well as “to tell about the things we as a company [Allegro] believe in – that Poles are brave, strong, ambitious, resourceful, proud, empathetic” (Wirtualnemedi.pl, 2017). According to data from 30 November 2015 to 31 August 2016, “the number of positive reviews of the publication was 64060 (95.8 per cent of all reviews) and there were around 1100 press,

z Borutą. Seria Legendy Polskie. Rozmowa z autorami. [Interview with Boruta. Polish Legends series. Interview with the authors] – 419932 views; Wywiad z Borutą. Seria Legendy Polskie. Allegro. Teaser [Interview with Boruta. Polish Legends series. Allegro. Teaser] – 562806 views; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu Twardowsky 2.0 [Polish Legends. Film trailer Twardowsky 2.0] – 653474 views; Legendy Polskie. Relacja z planu filmu Twardowsky 2.0 [Polish Legends. Report from the set of the film Twardowsky 2.0] – 90826 views; Aleja Gwiazd – Cover. Matheo & Anna Karwan. Legendy Polskie [Aleja Gwiazd – Cover. Matheo & Anna Karwan. Polish Legends] – 11698865 views; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu Operacja Bazyliiszek. [Polish Legends. Film trailer Operation: Bazyliiszek] – 589068 views; Legendy Polskie. Making of filmu TWARDOWSKY 2.0 [Polish Legends. Making Of of the film TWARDOWSKY 2.0] – 475402 views; Legendy Polskie. Relacja z planu filmu Operacja Bazyliiszek [Polish Legends. Report from the set of the film Operation: Bazyliiszek] – 152102 views; Mój jest ten kawałek podłogi – Cover. Matheo & Andrzej Donarski. Legendy Polskie. [Mój jest ten kawałek podłogi – Cover. Matheo & Andrzej Donarski. Polish Legends] – 4156761 views; Legendy Polskie. Zwiastun filmu JAGA [Polish Legends. Film trailer JAGA] – 883274 views; Legendy Polskie. Making of filmu Operacja Bazyliiszek [Polish Legends. Making Of of the film Operation: Bazyliiszek] – 310983 views; Legendy Polskie. Relacja z planu filmu Jaga. Allegro [Polish Legends. Report from the set of the film Jaga. Allegro] – 203472 views; Jaskółka uwięziona – Cover. Atanas Valkov&Georgina Tarasiuk. Legendy Polskie [Jaskółka uwięziona – Cover. Atanas Valkov&Georgina Tarasiuk. Polish Legends] – 9736761 views; Legendy Polskie. Making of filmu JAGA. Allegro [Polish Legends. Making Of of the film JAGA. Allegro] – 504331 views; Cichosza – Cover. Marcin Macuk & Krzysztof Zalewski. Legendy Polskie [Cichosza – Cover. Marcin Macuk & Krzysztof Zalewski. Polish Legends] – 4157719 views; Jezu jak się cieszę – Cover. Atanas Valkov & Skubas. Legendy Polskie [Jezu jak się cieszę – Cover. Atanas Valkov & Skubas. Polish Legends] – 2796719 views; Kocham wolność – Cover. Matheo & Damian Ukeje. Legendy Polskie [Kocham wolność – Cover. Matheo & Damian Ukeje. Polish Legends] – 5584245 views.

TV and radio publications about the project” (Wirtualnemedi.pl, 2017). The activities of Allegro were appreciated by both audiences and industry experts (see Wirtualnemedi.pl, 2015).

The narrative that has built the uniqueness, individuality and identity of the Polish e-commerce platform was disseminated through the global YouTube. The online video-sharing website (YT) is owned by the conglomerate and holding company Alphabet Inc.(Google). Communication strategy of Allegro indicates a desire to communicate its local vision to the broadest possible range of users. To this end, the service used the tool with a global reach. Its users are considered members of a transnational online community. According to Wirtualnemedi.pl (2017), the creators of the project were “aware that YouTube is a place where the user decides what content to watch and what content to share or comment on. [They] wanted to create something unique”.

Polish platform demonstrates that cultivating traditional values, nurturing of origin, following “their” narration and using world-class technology meet the needs of users with multilayered identities (Straubhaar, 2008, p. 22). Joseph D. Straubhaar (2008) argues that “the movement from traditional local life to modern interaction with mass media has produced identities that are already multilayered with cultural geographic elements that are local, regional (subnational but larger than the very local), transnational based on cultural-linguistic regions, and national” (p. 22; Anderson, 1983).

CONCLUSION

The case studies of Allegro and NK.pl show that globalisation in the Polish media landscape may both “succeed” and partially “fail”. Despite the index score of 80.83 in the “Globalization Index” in Poland (Statista Research Department, 2023) and the exclusion of NK.pl, Allegro still surpasses Amazon (data as of 2023, August 1 and 2024, February). In response to the question: “Is globalisation universally reflected in the Polish media landscape?”, the considerations confirm that globalisation in the perspective of the Polish media environment is not universal. The case study of Allegro demonstrates that the focus on the targeted audience, involvement in actions supporting entrepreneurs, and independent movements promoting culture are ways of fighting the unification of Western standards in Poland and factors which

may be seen as the reasons for the partial “failure” of globalisation in the Polish e-commerce industry. In turn, as the case of NK.pl proves, the sudden implementation of functionalities of the American counterparts, the omission of local values, requirements to adapt to solutions to which users are not accustomed, as well as changes in the strategy, nature and purpose of the platform may result in a loss of individuality, and thus interest from the public. At a time when globalisation is a continuous and progressive process, companies competing with the transnational giants should refer to their identity, assumptions, as well as the expectations, lifestyles and values of their audience. The solution is to follow global standards in the highest possible quality of products and services while keeping an indigenous character. The harnessing of global technological opportunities can contribute to the development of glocality and the significance of local narratives. Nonetheless, this must be done while preserving local visions and values.

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