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Mediatization of war. The state of the research field in the period 2018–2022*

Abstract

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The mediatization of war represents one of many fields of mediatization research. In the face of numerous military crises and the dynamic development of media and digital technologies, the mediatization of armed conflicts is a key research area. At the same time, the relationship between media and war has been described as highly under-researched and in need of considerable investment in terms of concept development and empirical research. Also, the mediatization of war as a field of study is sometimes criticized. The aim of this research is to determine the state of the mediatization of war studies in the last five years.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: The questions guiding the research were: 1) What is being specifically researched in the field?; 2) What are the main research questions and objectives of this research? A meta-analysis of publications from 2018–2022 available on Google Scholar was performed.

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Using strict selection criteria, 90 peer-reviewed publications from this period were extracted, coded and analyzed.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: The geographical coverage of the examined issues and the places of research were defined. The specifics of research on the mediatization of war and methods used in this research field were determined.

RESEARCH RESULTS: The results indicate that indexed contemporary studies that deal with the mediatization of war are highly interdisciplinary. At the same time, they are focused on specific parts of the world, on a peculiar catalog of problems, and they are dominated by qualitative methodology.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: War is an area in which key sub-processes are diagnosed, both those comprising mediatization in the broadest sense (*included processes*) and those generated by mediatization (*induced processes*). These sub-processes determine the extent and transformative power of the mediatization taking place.

Keywords:

mediatization of war, mediatization of military, mediatization studies, meta-analysis, systematic review

INTRODUCTION

The study of mediatization encompasses many fields of research: sport, culture, art, daily life, politics, economy, fashion, environment, business (Kopecka-Piech & Bolin, 2023). Conflict, crises and war are also important elements of mediatization (Horbyk, 2023). The modern world, as well as the not-so-distant twentieth-century history, has been fraught with numerous armed conflicts on a global and local scale, as well as civil wars and internal unrest. In the era of the development of the first mass media and then digital and personal media, political, armed and diplomatic events have been subject to their impact (Caspi & Rubinstein, 2018; Pamment, 2014). This has happened on an institutional level (Nohrstedt, 2016), but also on a content level (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015). Increasingly, it is also happening at the technological level as phones or amateur drones are now viable weapons (Horbyk, 2022).

The media are also being transformed. With wars, media institutions are changing (including some disappearing completely) (Lystvak et al.,

forthcoming). The pages of the press as well as radio and screen time are devoted to war-related news, reports and documentaries. Changes are also being forced at the level of social media platforms (such as protection from inappropriate content). Content and product changes are being generated and, for example, a new category of applications to combat disinformation is emerging (Chang et al., 2022). Thus, mediatization is also becoming a two-sided process in this sphere.

Previous review studies of achievements in the field point to numerous shortcomings and research gaps (McQuail, 2006; Horbyk, 2023). In contrast, an analysis of key publications from the past few years shows that the field is developing rapidly: new conceptualizations are being proposed, and approaches to the role of media and their users in war processes are being revolutionized.

The last five years have also been fraught with numerous armed crises and, in parallel, mediatization research has seen rapid development (Horbyk, 2023). Given the importance of the issues and the number of cognitive and practical challenges, it was decided to examine how the field of war mediatization research has evolved in the last five years. In order to determine the relevance and specificity of this research field, a series of research questions were posed regarding the specificity of the research problems, the objectives and methods, and the results achieved. This was intended to determine the state of the research field: methodological and thematic innovation, scope of issues studied, as well as the cognitive and practical dimensions.

STATE OF THE ART

The mediatization of war has gradually gained attention from scholars since the intensified development of mediatization theory since the turn of the millennium. In this state-of-the-art review, we conduct a meta-synthesis of two existing literature reviews on mediatization of war by McQuail (2006) and Horbyk (2023), and we examine how scholars have responded to the increased academic needs in the intervening time period.

The first literature review, *On the mediatization of war* by McQuail (2006), includes publications discussing war–media relationships in different contexts. In the review, McQuail outlines that, from World

War II onwards, wars have been of a smaller scale in contrast to the preceding eras of total wars and have been fought under a new order characterized by global ideological antagonisms. McQuail (2006, p. 108) points out that this new order requires "more support in public opinion than past warfare and that the media are the key to obtaining this support". McQuail (2006, p. 114) argues, however, that research on war-media relationships in the early 2000s largely undertheorized the role of the public, and that "Western 'communication science' does not offer any clear framework for collecting and interpreting observations and information about contemporary war situations".

In response to this need, Cottle (2006) made a groundbreaking effort to develop a theory concerning the role of the media in contemporary warfare. Cottle (2006, p. 9) argues that media do not just communicate and disseminate, i.e., mediate, events of war, but they have an "active performative involvement and constitutive role" in war and conflicts. For that reason, mediatization, according to Cottle, is an overarching framework that is better suited to studying the interdependent relationships among the media, political and military institutions, and the public.

Following Cottle's argumentation, Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010, p. 5) state that "the planning, waging and consequences of warfare do not reside outside of the media", therefore communication should be seen as an inseparable part of contemporary warfare. Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010, p. 3) suggest that since the turn of the millennium there has been "a new paradigm of war in which (i) the mediatization of war (ii) makes possible more diffuse causal relations between action and effect, (iii) creating greater uncertainty for policymakers in the conduct of war". They argue that the advent of Web 2.0 and the participatory media ecology have changed the power dynamics between governments, military and public, thus causing a loss of control over dissemination of information about war. A few years later, Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2015) continued to develop their theory by adding yet another paradigm to the mediatization of war. In this phase, starting from 2010s, legacy media "rather than being challenged by mediatization, instead harnesses it for its own ends", meaning they take back the products of participatory media ecology (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015, p. 1322).

The work of these scholars has predominantly answered McQuail's (2006) call for theorization of war–media relationships. Additionally, there are a number of contextualized studies that have widened the conceptualization and provided empirical evidence on the mediatization of war. For example, Horten (2011) exemplifies how mediatization accelerated over previous decades by comparing media coverage of the Vietnam and Iraq wars. Horten puts forward an argument that the media have become the fourth branch of military operations – alongside the army, navy and air force – and further argues that this transformation is due to the emergence of digital media and global news networks, and the professionalization of military information strategies.

Furthermore, Maltby (2012) studies mediatization of the military in the UK context and concludes that British military engagement with the media is a strategic proactive practice. Maltby (2012, p. 256) argues that the army is clearly mediatized because "the military's interaction with those in and beyond their own institution increasingly take places through and via the media in a manner that submits to, and is dependent on, the media and their logic". Also, Crosbie (2015) in the US context writes about military mediatization in relation to the public. Crosbie (2015, p. 102) argues that

> the feedback received by militaries and the feedforward produced in response to feedback constitute an important strand of the mediatization of the military and its warfighting.

Other aspects of empirically studied mediatization of war include Mortensen's (2015) research on the eyewitnessing of conflict, which today is mediated by digital technologies. Mortensen argues that eyewitness images are situated in relations between the media and conflicts, therefore conflict deaths have become mediatized. Also, in their study of the mediatization of Gaza and the Palestinian question, Siapera et al. (2015, p. 1316) point out the

> a new category of communicators, the witnesses, who are experiencing and communicating the war as it happens…[and] coexist alongside more traditional communicators, including, governments, militaries, activists and media.

As shown above, not just theoretical but also empirical studies have turned their attention to the role of the public (as active agents) in mediatized warfare. A recent literature review, *Mediatisation of war and the military* by Horbyk (2023), provides an even more comprehensive view on applied studies in the field, many of which focus on the participatory media ecology. Horbyk's (2023, p. 123) criticism of the existing literature is directed towards the lack of dialogue with other fields of study, lack of conceptual clarity, and a failure to "harness the full potential of mediatization theory". Horbyk (2023, p. 123) continues that many studies are "preoccupied with only one element in the triangle between the military, the media and the audiences". Interestingly, Horbyk's criticism echoes McQuail's writings from 2006, thus conclusively indicating that mediatization of war has been rigidly theorized by a few academics in the past fifteen years, but these efforts have not been as rigidly adopted by all scholars attempting to study mediatized warfare. Still, all the aforementioned scholars have studied media-war relationships and recognize the media's heightened embeddedness in and penetration of contemporary war and conflicts.

METHODS

Data collection and selection of the material

In this study, publications published between 2018 and 2022 and indexed in Google Scholar as concerning the mediatization of war were analyzed. The choice of this search engine was motivated by the free access it provides and its inclusiveness of various publishers. Google Scholar search engine's widespread use and accessibility to all accounts for its inclusiveness and potential openness for researchers.

First, a search in Google Scholar publications from 2018–2022 was realized, using the keywords "mediatization of war" and "mediatization of war". This yielded 152 search results (101 for 'mediatization of war, and 51 for 'mediatisation of war'). Erroneous results were then eliminated. These included texts that were not in any way related to mediatization and/or war (but, for example, to sport), texts published in languages other than English (e.g., Arabic, Chinese) and

duplicate publications. This left 105 results in the corpus. 15 of them were non-peer-reviewed papers (e.g. BA theses) that were eliminated from the corpus.

The remaining 90 publications were analyzed based on the titles, abstracts and keywords. In 14 cases, the entire text was analyzed because these publications did not contain an abstract. 76 of the publications were downloadable, hence it was possible to use the entire text to verify the content of the abstract. Those papers that were not open access or accessible through dedicated databases were obtained from their authors.

Instruments and modes of analysis

Spreadsheets were used to facilitate the analysis and organize the collected material. Work on this part of the study was conducted in May and June 2023. Three researchers coded the material independently, followed by a fourth researcher to proofread and meta-check the coding.

The analysis grid contained the following items: 1) title of the paper, 2) year of the publication, 3) abstract [yes/no + the content], 4) keywords, 5. country of affiliation(s) of the author(s), 6) reviewed [yes/no], 7) type of publication, 8) academic discipline(s), 9) topics and subtopics present in the paper, 10) analyzed media, 11) context of the study, 12) research question(s), 13) research aim(s), 14) research method(s) [qualitative / quantitative / mixed], 15) used method(s), tool(s) and procedure(s), 16) research result(s), 17) other important information.

The material thus grouped was then analyzed with the aim of answering the following questions: 1) What was being specifically researched in the field in the period 2018–2022?; 2) What were the main research questions and objectives of the research? This made it possible for us to determine the specifics of the mediatization of war field. By answering these questions, we aimed to determine the condition of the research field, namely the methodological and thematic innovation, the scope of issues studied, and the cognitive and practical dimensions.

RESULTS

Quantitative analysis

Interdisciplinarity

Most of the texts analyzed were interdisciplinary, covering more than one scientific discipline, according to the OECD classification (2007). Only 26 of the publications were not interdisciplinary.

The main interdisciplinary research fields dominating in the corpus were war studies, military studies, conflict studies and security studies. Disciplines other than media and communication studies (including journalism studies and media and socio-cultural communication) that dominated in the corpus were social sciences disciplines: political science (including international relations), history, sociology (including gender studies), law, humanities and art studies (including visual arts, film studies, music studies).

Other disciplines present in the sample included social sciences, i.e., psychology and anthropology (including ethnography), economy and business (including management studies), and humanities: philosophy (including rhetorics), literary studies, culture studies. Other established interdisciplinary research fields were represented by feminist studies, fan studies, games studies, and memory studies. Also present were medical sciences in the form of public health, and natural sciences were present in the form of geography (specifically, cartography).

The national contexts in which the studies presented in the publications were located was analyzed. Where this context was given (37 publications), the American (16), British (10), Swedish (6), Ukrainian (6), Russian (5) and Syrian (5) contexts predominated. The majority of countries were analyzed only once. In recent decades, most of the analyzed countries have faced armed conflicts, external or internal, or they are facing them now.

Contexts explored

The quantitative analysis showed that the majority of authors are affiliated with European universities (77), with fewer from North

America (30) or Asia (10). The fewest authors were affiliated with Australian (6), African (4) and South American (1) universities. In terms of the locations of the universities with which these publications (mostly multi-authored) were affiliated, out of the 30 countries represented, the corpus was dominated by British (21 affiliations), German (13) and American (12) universities. Almost half of the countries (14) could only show one publication.

Table. 1. Affiliations of authors (co-authorship occurred)

Europe	77
North America	30
Asia	10
Australia	6
Africa	4
South America	1
UK	21
Germany	13
USA	12
Italy	9
Netherlands	8
Australia	6
Sweden	6
Denmark	4
China	4
France	2
Finland	2
Poland	2
Lithuania	2
France	2
Ukraine	2
Kenya	2
Israel	1
Belgium	1
Canada	1
Israel	1
Turkey	1
Brazil	1
Japan	1
India	1
Pakistan	1
Austria	1
Spain	1
Malaysia	1
Nigeria	1
Uganda	1

Table 2. National context studied (if delivered)

USA	16
UK	10
Sweden	6
Ukraine	6
Russia	5
Syria	5
Iraq	4
Japan	4
China	4
Germany	3
Afghanistan	3
Italy	3
Islamic State	3
Denmark	2
Kenya	2
Israel	2
North Korea	2
Romania	2
Pakistan	2
Nigeria	2
Czech Republic	1
Slovakia	1
Hungary	1
Poland	1
Iran	1
Tunisia	1
Egypt	1
Turkey	1
Libya	1
Bosnia	1
Canada	1
India	1
Vietnam	1
Australia	1
Uganda	1
Caribbean	1
South Korea	1

Types of publications and methods used

The analyzed corpus was dominated by articles (52). Book chapters (21) and books (12) were significantly fewer. Of marginal importance were doctoral dissertations (4) and other publications, specifically a collection of abstracts (1).

Table 3. Types of publication

Journal articles	52
Book chapters	21
Books	12
PhD thesis	4
Other	1

Among the research methods used, qualitative methods (52 publications) dominated over mixed methods (12). None of the analyzed publications indicated a pure quantitative method as being used in the research. No methods were indicated in 26 publications, these being mainly theoretical and conceptual studies.

The qualitative methodology was dominated by content analysis (63 papers), of which four specific types were identified: textual, visual, audiovisual and narrative. In 25 cases, the type of content analyzed was not specified. 13 publications were based on literature review, 7 on interviews, and 6 on ethnographic methods (including netnography).

Table 4. Methods uses

Content analysis	63
- Not specified content analysis	25
- Textual content analysis	16
- Audiovisual analysis	9
- Visual analysis	12
- Narrative analysis	1
Interviews	7
- Focus group interviews	1
Literature review	13
Discourse analysis	4
Ethnography (including netnography)	6
- Observations	2
Case studies	3
Theoretical analysis	2
Critical analysis	1
Platform analysis	1
Games analysis	1
Cluster analysis	1
Rythm analysis	1
Practice-based research	1

Table 5. Types of content analyzed

Analyzed content
Social media content
Correspondence
Literature (including pamphlets)
Movies
News
Maps
Visual content (including book illustrations and photographs)
Satires
Comedies
Press content (newspapers, journals, magazines)
Video games
Posters
Postcards
Radio content
Short Messages (SMS)
Books (including comic books)
Cartoons
TV programmes
Websites content
Brochures
Music (including songs)
Videos
Academic publications

The 22 types of media content shown in the table were analyzed.

Qualitative analysis

Research aims and problems

In the analysis we found three categories of explored research problems, two categories of research perspectives, and three methodological categories. The research problems included 1) specific issues of war, such as digital warfare; 2) specific historical events (e.g., World War I); and 3) war-related institutions (e.g., NATO). The research perspectives included 1) ideological assumptions (e.g., nationalism) and 2) research context (e.g., biopolitical). The methodological categories

distinguished included 1) the type of communication studied, 2) the type of object/process studied, and 3) the theoretical and conceptual framework used. The scope of each category is shown in the tables below.

Table 6. Categories of research problems

War issues investigated	Analyzed events	Institution studied
digital war	World War I	NATO
terrorism	scandals	US Army
war technologies	Kenyan peace activism	Swedish Armed Forces
warfare	Arab Spring	Amnesty International
armed intervention	cold war	German Armed Forces
war press work	the fall of the Berlin wall	
war presentation	Holocaust	
war anticipation	Ukraine-Russian conflict	
humanitarian crisis	Islamic State	
cyberattacks/cyberterrorism	war on terror	
veterans		
trolling		
civil-military relations		
torture		
military service		
PMSC		
public demonstrations		

Table 7. Categories of research perspectives

Context of the research	Ideological assumptions
history	nationalism
environment	socialism (including soviet)
politics (including biopolitics)	colonialism
law	liberalism
psychology	neoliberalism
international relations	democracy
economy	feminism

Table 8. Methodological categories

Research objects and processes analyzed	The theoretical and conceptual framework used	Communication type studied
imagery	actor-network theory	Visual communication
collective memory	mediatization	Mass communication
stereotypes	memorialization	Civil communication
imperial process	media framing	narration
propaganda	media power	representation
disinformation	platformization	online interaction
gender (including gender equity)	branding	conspiracy communication
information management	public relations	strategic communication
press freedom	constructionism	military communication
performativity	corporate identity	audio-visual communication
feminists	critical discourse	hate speech
masculinity	Schutz theories	fake news
violence	Herman's and Chomsk's theories	
body	media systems	
wellness	militarization	
security	globalization	
safety	mass culture	
censorship (including self-censorship)	Machiavelli theory	
death (including death taboo)		
queer and LGBT		
sexuality		
inclusivity		
trauma		
citizenship		
crowdfunding		

In general, it was possible to divide the research problems present in the surveyed corpus into categories relating strictly to conflict: wars, crises, terrorism, military. A large part of the corpus was devoted to the role of media in wars and crises (causes, course, effects). It was also possible to distinguish particular perspectives on the study of the role of media in war, including legal, social, cultural, ideological, (international) political and economic aspects. A distinction was also made between the importance of specific actors in mediatized war: individuals as well as institutions and organizations. Due to the predominant use of qualitative methods (e.g., content analysis), the corpus was dominated by the presentation of war discourses, representations and imagines.

The role of media in war

The status of media in the mediatization of war studies varied widely. Researchers adopted different definitions and conceptions of media. The varied roles that media play in war were explored and the mediatization complexity was conceptualized in different ways.

The mediatization of war studies examined media in all its variants: new media, mass media, social media, private/mobile media, other digital technologies (e.g., drones). Also, the level and scale of fragmentation of the analyzed media elements varied from media platforms, technologies and content to media elements (e.g., visuals). Hence, the corpus shows that the definition of media is expanding considerably to include, for example, (fiction) literature, art, cinema and songs.

It was possible to distinguish several roles that, in the light of the research, the media play during war. The first division is classical in nature. On one hand, depending on the research perspective, the media perform cultural, social, political, ideological or military functions. On the other hand, from a media effects perspective, it can be said that during conflicts the media can be a *covering transmitter* when they convey content in as neutral and objectified a way as possible, or a *creative constructor*. The creative function of the media can refer to the discursive shaping of the public agenda, including the manipulation of public opinion, the construction of an audience

imaginary, or even participation as a party in the conflict, in which case the media are seen as a warfare tool, or possibly a negotiating actor with peaceful potential. The media, in the light of the research, also have an archiving function (media as *commemorating archive*).

The essential research category in the study of the mediatization of war was, of course, the military. In the corpus, the military was identified as having a special status in research on the mediatization of war, while at the same time being defined in diverse ways, such as a warfare tool, industry, service, political or diplomatic tool or cultural text, object or symbol. The studied corpus included many publications about the image of the military, analyzed from different perspectives such as the images created by the media, the army or media users, or images used by other stakeholders.

The specificity of mediatization of war research

The analyzed corpus allowed us to identify those elements of war that are subject to mediatization in a particular way. These include events (e.g., battles), images (e.g., images of soldiers), processes (e.g., disinformation sharing), relationships (e.g., relations between conflict stakeholders), actions (e.g., peacekeeping activities), and anticipations (predictions of political and war events).

According to the classic division of mediatization into direct and indirect (Hjarvard, 2008), both might be encountered in research on the mediatization of war. When the presence of media (e.g., technology) directly alters war, then what was previously unmediated becomes mediated (e.g., the ability to track and monitor the enemy on national territory). In the second case, the media influence, for example, the course of the war, if only through their coverage by shaping the discourse and transforming the perceptions of the different stakeholders of the situation.

In our corpus, we noted the presence of all the classic paradigms of mediatization research (Bolin, 2016). The institutional paradigm had a dual use. Research was concerned with the instrumental use of media in war (*instrumental use of media*) as well as the creative use of media (*creative force of media*). In the technological paradigm, media as a means of action was of peculiar importance. This is particularly

the case in analyses of mobile or social media. Within the constructivist paradigm, the presentation and shaped representation of war was analyzed in textual, visual, audio or audio-visual terms.

Additionally, in our corpus we could identify subprocesses that acted as key elements of the study of mediatization of war. The first category consists of subprocesses included within mediatization (*included process*), which comprise digitization, platformization, visualization and narrativization. These are the processes on which mediatization is based, and their nature is to intersect with media processes and interweave them. They belong to different levels: content, technological, business and socio-cultural. Some of the *included processes*, such as digitization and platformization, condition contemporary mediatization to a certain extent, giving them a framework and enabling functionalities. Others complement this and construct media structures and content through, for example, visualization and narrativization.

The second category consists of subprocesses induced through mediatization (*induced processes*), such as memorialization, popularization, weaponization, militarization or camouflaging. These are processes that greatly transform the socio-cultural sphere, including the ideological, historical, identity and political-economic sphere. *Induced processes* are involved in the mutual transformation of the media and war, which are interconnected vessels that, through sub-processes, act as a feedback loop. *Induced processes* and *included processes* determine the strength of the media transformation that the armed conflict undergoes, with the media adapting to the circumstances of war, either benefiting from it or becoming victims of it.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the theoretical extensions of the mediatization approach that could be distinguished in the studied corpus. Absorption of the existing concepts or the theories of, for example, Herman, Chomsky, and Machiavelli appeared as something natural in media and communication studies. What particularly drew our attention was the comprehensive extension of concepts, frameworks and approaches. This included not only the combination of multiple scientific disciplines at the level of research methods and theories (e.g., security studies, law), but also the extension of mediatization studies through the use of completely different research perspectives (such as the use of temporal and spatial theories). Finally,

we observed extensions of paradigms which dealt specifically with the adaptation of the arts to the social sciences. In the corpus surveyed, these included visual arts, music, film and literature. Among the publications surveyed, there were also some that proposed completely new concepts (such as post-digital war), thus contributing to the development of the academic media studies discourse in the broadest sense.

DISCUSSION

We begin the discussion by comparing our findings with Horbyk's recent review on the mediatization of war (2023), in which previous studies were criticized for their lack of discussion with other disciplines and their failure to make use of mediatization theory. Our systematic analysis shows that the majority of the mediatization texts were interdisciplinary and crossed over into war and conflict studies and military and security studies. Also other social sciences and humanities disciplines were present in our corpus. However, in the context of the rapid development of technology in the past five years, more studies using the background of computer science and science in general would have been expected. Furthermore, the lack of dialogue with overlapping fields may be true when viewed from the other direction: as Horbyk (2023) states, other fields of study could be enriched with a better use and understanding of the potential of mediatization theory.

We could also observe that the studies included in our corpus employed mediatization theory to varying degrees. A lack of conceptual clarity and a lack of use of the full potential of mediatization theory, as criticized by Horbyk (2023), were seen in our systematic analysis on mediatization of war studies. In our corpus, researchers adopted different definitions of media, attached different weights to mediatization theory, and conceptualized the complexity of media in relation to individuals, organizations and institutions in different ways. This shows that although mediatization of war theory has been developed over the last decade (e.g., by Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2015), the majority of (empirical) studies do not employ it holistically or critically. These studies often treat mediatization theory in a rather

arbitrary and somewhat instrumental way, without contributing to its development.

Furthermore, when approaching mediatization of war from Horbyk's (2023) triadic perspective, in our analysis we could see that empirical studies on mediatization of war focus on the media and not on the audience or the military as an institution. Hence, a strong media-centric, truncated perspective is found in mediatization of war studies. The studies neither show bilateral transformations of media and war, nor do they complete the perspective of the key contexts of war. In conclusion, the studies generally seem fragmented and unholistic.

Additionally, we observed extensions of existing paradigms. These extensions dealt with the adaptation of the arts to the social sciences. Publications from 2018–2022 indexed in Google Scholar as dealing with the mediatization of war are more firmly oriented towards art. Film, video, photography, literature, music are considered by researchers as media that not only inform about war but also transform it by constructing discourse, history and identity. It is interesting, then, that the subject of war folds into thinking about both the role of art in war, and art as a tool of mediatization. This trend is worth noting and is not necessarily signaled in other fields of mediatization research.

Relating to paradigms, in our analysis we could identify two types of subprocesses that were prevalent in the mediatization of war studies. First, we could see that there were subprocesses *included within* mediatization (theory), such as digitization or platformization. These processes are determining the course of mediatization. Second, we recognized subprocesses that were *induced through* mediatization (theory), such as militarization or memorialization. Both types of processes are involved in the mutual transformation of the media and war: they are the driving force and the structure of the mediatization of war on the one hand and its effect on the other, intertwining and mutually conditioning it. Ultimately, *inclusive and inductive subprocesses* affect the course of mediatization. They are therefore analyzed in each of the available paradigms and in relation to the core question of media studies: what does the media transform and how? From our corpus we could conclude that mediatized war is not only a thoroughly hybrid and convergent

phenomenon but also a dynamically changing one. Therefore, it seems that analysis of subprocesses is a key task also for future mediatization research.

Finally, we would like to critically reflect upon the context of the mediatization of war studies. As our analysis shows, mainly authors affiliated with Western European or Northern American universities publish studies on mediatization of war mainly in the American and European study contexts. It is difficult to give a clear interpretation of this state of affairs. On the one hand, the locations of the ongoing conflicts – their nature, involvement and scale – determine researchers' interest in them. On the other hand, however, the global media studies discourse is dominated by Western researchers, and the global south still only aspires to present research results outside its local academic circuit. The study of the mediatization of war appears to be another field where greater inclusivity of publications from diverse regions should be postulated.

CONCLUSIONS

Concluding, we reviewed 90 scientific publications indexed as being about mediatization of war. The conducted research provides evidence that war is a highly mediatized phenomenon – it is a multidimensional, complex and at the same time dynamically changing environment. The results of the study, on one hand, highlight the importance and scale of the media's influence; on the other hand, they show the growing need to deepen media analysis with new technologies and expand interdisciplinary analysis to science, such as computer science.

The analysis of the collected material made it possible to characterize the interdisciplinarity of the interests of mediatization researchers, which, while fitting into all paradigms of research on the phenomenon, simultaneously incorporate a wide variety of theories and concepts. This wide-ranging multidisciplinarity allows one to look at the vast array of paradigms that are related to, for example, the adaptation of art to the social sciences. It also allows us to shed light on new concepts such as post-digital warfare that may influence the development of academic media studies discourse.

The collected data also prompts us to note the clear dominance of qualitative research. There are also many theoretical and conceptual studies. At the same time, it should be noted that researchers examine each of the classic elements of media studies: producer, message and audience. Methodologically, however, content studies dominate, which may indicate a focus on messages and less on institutions and audiences.

Finally, we emphasize that the choice of search engine (Google Scholar) was motivated by its free access model and the fact that it includes various publishers. Taking all this into account, it therefore seems reasonable to try to extend the study to other databases, as well as to earlier time periods, which would consequently show a much wider scope and could potentially extend the obtained results, especially taking into account the dynamism of changes that occur in this area.

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