‘Blogging Sometimes Leads to Dementia, Doesn’t It?’ The Roman Catholic Church in Times of Deep Mediatization

Kerstin Radde-Antweiler, Hannah Grüenthal and Sina Gogolok

11.1 INTRODUCTION

In June 2016, a wedding of German celebrities was broadcast on television with great media attention. For the preparation of this TV wedding, the bridal couple used a new online portal ‘MeineTrauKirche’,¹ a service run by the archdiocese of Cologne. The wedding itself was conducted by a Roman Catholic priest who gave interviews on the occasion.

K. Radde-Antweiler (✉) · H. Grüenthal · S. Gogolok
Zentrum für Medien-, Kommunikations- und Informationsforschung
(ZeMKI), University of Bremen, Linzer Str. 4, 28359 Bremen, Germany
e-mail: radde@uni-bremen.de

H. Grüenthal
e-mail: gruenenthal@uni-bremen.de

Questioned on the necessity of such a broadcasting of belief which was often perceived as inappropriate, he stressed that '(i)t is important to bring things together, things that have nothing to do with each other at first sight, because God wants to be everywhere. And if the world does not go to church, then the Church has to go to the world.'² This priest is a youth priest with an active Facebook profile. He preaches and gives film reviews on local radio, publishes his own songs and preaches sermons on his YouTube channel. There are other examples which suggest that social media are an integral part of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany; for example, the organization for clerical professions and ecclesiastical services of the German bishop conference [Zentrum für Berufungspastoral der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz] started the project 'ValerieundderPriester' in 2016,³ in which a young non-religious female journalist accompanies a priest and publishes her observations on different media formats such as blogs, Facebook, and YouTube. And even some of the German bishops themselves have begun to tweet.

At first glance, social media seem to have arrived in the world of religious organizations: namely the Church. Nevertheless, religious organizations—and the Catholic Church in particular—are said to be more reluctant to accept change than many other organizations. And furthermore, people seem to have different expectations of how the Catholic Church has to deal and interact with media: one example is the response to the aforementioned wedding, where reactions—in magazines, television, newspapers as well as in social media—ranged widely, from statements such as 'Finally a Catholic priest who speaks casually and touches my heart!' to responses such as 'Not a Church for pagans but a Church of pagans!' And within the religious organization itself, we can observe quite critical remarks regarding digital media: for example, the leader of the German bishop conference, Cardinal Marx, who stressed during a press conference in 2015 that 'blogging sometimes leads to dementia, doesn't it?'.⁴

So, the crucial question remains: how exactly does the Roman Catholic Church act and react towards media? Depending on their perspective, academic studies emphasize either a high mediatization or a low mediatization of religious organizations with resistance to media change. What is the reason for such contradicting evaluations concerning religious organizations and how can they be explained? In this article, we analyze an exemplary religious organization, namely the Roman Catholic Church, and ask for specific resistance to media change. As religious organizations are not monolithic entities but have their own inner dynamics, we call

for a necessary distinction between different actors and especially religious authority figures involved within the religious organization. By taking a figurational point of view, it is possible to make those inner dynamics visible and thus explain the aforementioned contradictions.

11.2 CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH

There are divergent research positions concerning the transformation of religious organizations in times of deep mediatization. Dawson and Cowan (2004), for example, stressed that the change of media equalizes different actors and positions and that such richness of communication tools was believed to open and disseminate many stocks of knowledge, as well as to prevent a control of their interpretation through traditional authorities. Furthermore, Possamai and Turner state that 'global information technologies undermine traditional forms of religious authority because they expand conventional modes of communication, open up new opportunities for debate and dispute, and create alternative visions of what religion is, how it should operate, and how it should answer to the larger society' (Possamai and Turner 2012: 199). The invention of modern mass media, and then of the internet, was from the very beginning seen as a threat to established authorities. The thesis that mass media are a danger to traditional organizations is based on the assumption that a low-threshold access to information and a massive distribution of knowledge implies a loss of control for the established authorities. Eickelman and Anderson (1999), for example, believe that new media technologies challenge established authorities within organizations such as the Catholic Church, and in some cases even replace them. They state that through the development and the widespread accessibility of new communicational technologies, individuals are able to interpret their religious texts autonomously from established organizations. The consequences of such an actor-specific ascription would be a loss of interpretational sovereignty for the established Churches as well as new constructions of religious authority (Hjarvard 2008, 2013; Lövheim 2011; Lundby 2013).

In the established Christian Churches, ecclesiastical structures such as office and theological knowledge were perceived as particularly vulnerable owing to privatization and secularization (Norris and Inglehart 2004; Turner 2007; Knoblauch 2008, 2009). Therefore, most studies in the field of church sociology emphasize the influence of new

media technologies as a weakening of religious authorities. For example, Gabriel (1999) notes a crisis of Western European Churches which is caused by individualization and, as a result of that, an explosion of diversity within the Church. The church members' attitude towards the Church changed from their commitment to a value community organization to a simple binding to the Church as an organization (Gabriel 1999: 33). But the public accessibility of religious knowledge is not seen as the only way in which new media question religious authorities. Hepp, for example, deduces from his research of Catholicism as a non-territorial community, among other things that mediatization makes visible the plurality of individual beliefs within the Catholic discourse (Hepp 2009, cf. also Knoblauch 2014). As an example, he evaluated the coverage of the World Youth Day in 2005, where a heterogeneous image of Catholicism is depicted that is quite opposite to the homogeneous value horizon often postulated by the Catholic Church. The mediatized coverage produced a public sphere in which different actors—not only officials—were visible and therefore had the possibility to negotiate their respective values of faith (cf. also Gebhardt et al. 2007 and Dorsch-Jungsberger 2014). According to Hepp, another consequence of mediatization is the establishment of translocal media communication, which can hardly be controlled by the Church and consequently leads to a changing social construction of reality. Thus, the different religious organizations have to position themselves and their concepts of meaning and compete within the media. As a consequence, Hepp diagnosed a branding of religion for Catholicism. Religious authority figures such as the pope have to follow the rules of the recent media-society to be perceived in the public sphere. Such a staging of the pope as a 'celebrity' and 'brand' of Catholicism results in a changing papal office in general (cf. Gabriel 2008).

In contrast to that, other studies, supported among others by Campbell (2010, 2013), are based on the assumption that the changing media environment, and particularly the possibilities of the new media technologies, strengthens and confirms the structures of established organizations at the same time. Not only individual actors, but in particular representatives of the Churches, use the new social space as a platform to communicate and position themselves (e.g. Arasa et al. 2010). These changing media environments offer manifold possibilities to spread legitimate recommendations and prohibitions concerning the religious value system. For instance, a pope who is tweeting is able

to address a completely new audience, irrespective of place and time. Hence, the intensified online activities of the established authorities have the effect of consolidating and confirming existing hierarchies and religious organizations. Barzilai-Nahon and Barzilai show how established authorities raise and enforce their claims. They describe ultra-orthodox Jewish elites in Israel, who monitor and censor online information with the aim of stabilizing the hierarchical order within their community, the so-called forming or cultural shaping of the internet (Barzilai-Nahon and Barzilai 2005). Campbell also refers to a similar interdependence and demonstrates with regard to the Vatican's website and its YouTube channel how the Catholic Church is trying to keep control of the new media by reducing interactive tools such as the ranking or comment features.

Regarding the results of those studies, both aspects—the stabilization and confirmation of authority in religious organizations as well as its destabilization and challenge—can be observed in line with a changing media environment. So it is not surprising that besides studies which follow one of the two outlined perspectives there is an increasing number of studies that point out that modern mass media have the potential both to threaten and to support established religious organizations. This means that the two perspectives need not exclude each other but can be combined. One prominent example is the analysis by Pauline Cheong. Based on an analysis of the influence on new media on the authority of Protestant pastors in Singapore, she develops a theory of 'dialectics and paradox' (Cheong et al. 2011: 82–84): Representatives of the established religious organizations try to preserve the existing structure of power by communicating via new media, attain public visibility in this new social space and offensively make a stand for their claim of authority. While participating in this public discourse they are simultaneously becoming more vulnerable. Therefore, according to Cheong, they run the risk of being understood as ordinary and approachable. She states that epistemic authority is threatened because communication structures are changing and traditional norms are no longer sufficient. It is also threatened because 'the nature of epistemic function and thereby authority relationships' (Cheong et al. 2011: 944) are questioned. Because people have access to different theological sources and religious knowledge, pastors have to justify their point of view to their followers. Cheong observes among her interviewees the perception that 'the pastoral profession has become proletarianised and de-professionalised' (Cheong et al. 2011: 949). She concludes

that on the one hand the established authorities have to participate in the public negotiating processes, if they don't want to completely lose their influence. On the other hand, their status is up for public discussion at the same time. Thus, the new variety of religious voices in public discourse indicates shifts in the conventional criteria of religious authority. Furthermore, criteria such as charisma, which can be represented most plausibly within the new media, become more important (Horsfield 2012).

But does this media-related changing religious authority have consequences for the religious organization as such? Chang (2003) as well as Tracey (2012) stressed the fact that despite the increasing relevance of religious organizations especially in Europe, research on the intersection between religion and organizations plays a minor role; furthermore, the relation to media is nearly neglected. However, the question remains as to whether the transformation of religious organizations in times of deep mediatization can be critically analyzed sufficiently without considering the role of a changing media environment. Regarding the current state of research, our hypothesis is that even if the changing media environment in times of deep mediatization does not dissolve religious authority within religious organizations, one can observe multi-level transformation in them. But to answer this question, we first have to clarify the term 'organization' in the sense of a communicative figurations model.

11.3 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS AN ORGANIZATION

The definition of religious communities as organizations is not without problems (Tyrell 2008; Tracey 2012). Even though Luhmann (1972) pointed early on to the relevance of the three levels of interaction, organizations and society, the sociology of religion was primarily dominated by the discussions on church-sect typology (Kehrer 1988: 8; Tyrell 2005: 32f.). Nevertheless, Beyer stresses that '(m)ore than any of the other forms, it is organizations that give religions the concrete presence that is at issue here' (Beyer 2003: 54). In line with Gabriel (1992), we can speak of different social forms of aggregations which we can assume for Christianity in recent society: ecclesiastical-institutional forms, non-ecclesiastical-social forms and personal, individual forms. Today, research on religious organizations is mostly done by practical theology or church sociology (e.g. Beyer 2006; Daiber 2008) that define Church as a hybrid between institution, organization and movement

(Hauschildt and Pohl-Patalong 2013: 218), which stands in contrast to the community of faith (Hermelink 2011: 110f.). As opposed to religious sociology's focus on individualization, privatization, and migration, research into changes in religious organizations is mostly done by organization sociologists (e.g. Etzioni 1975), although in times of deep mediatization change is pending. With regard to Etzioni (1961), religious organizations differ from other organizations in the means of compliance; that is, the power to influence the behaviour of members (coercive, remunerative or normative) and the latter's involvement (alienative, calculative and moral). A religious organization can be identified as a mainly normative organization, which relies on normative power and controls through the distribution of intrinsic rewards, such as symbolic capital or the additional benefit for society. The interesting question, however, is whether a changing media environment leads to a change of these two variables, which are no longer congruent.

Schimank states that organizations, although acting as one formal organization, consist of different actors who realize the organizations' plans individually. He therefore speaks of organizations as 'supra-individual actors' (Schimank 2010: 327), which are constructed in an everlasting process of 'organizing and organized sense-making' (Weick et al. 2005: 410) via communicative practices. Williams also emphasizes that '(w)hile organizational names, logos, and chains-of-command are meant to provide both the reality and image of unity, that unity should not be assumed' (Williams 2003: 328). In the case of the Catholic Church, it seems particularly natural to assume this unity, as the narrative of the unity is already in the name itself (Greek καθολικός (katholikós): universal). Still, as an organization communicatively constructed by those who are in it, and also by the society in which it exists, it is not enough to analyze the official statements of the Church's representatives. In general, we have to distinguish between the outside (e.g. the representation of the specific organization in the public discourse) and the inside (e.g. the ascription of meaning by the involved actors to the organization as such) of organizations. Both elements are part of the transformation processes of the organization. Therefore, it is important to analyze how different actors are involved in this twofold communicative construction of the organization and whether there are differences which hint to internal dynamics.

11.3.1 *The Communicative Figuration of the Roman Catholic Church*

Taking a figurational approach, we are able to describe the aforementioned communicative construction of organization in a differentiated way. We conducted qualitative empirical research from 2013 to 2015 in the Archbishopric of Cologne, Germany. It was our aim to explore the religious organizations' communicative figurations in times of deep mediatization related to religious authority. Hence, in a first step we analyzed the specific *actor constellations*, *communicative practices* and the character of the *frames of relevance*.

As we argue throughout this volume, each figuration has three features: frames of relevance, constellation of actors and communicative practices. In the case of the Roman Catholic Church as a communicative figuration, the frames of relevance comprise shared beliefs and a shared recognition of hierarchical structures which constitute the organization's practices. The actor's constellation of the Catholic Church is in a wider sense everybody who is baptized. Still, there are people who are more involved in the organization, those who are an active part of it and thus actively shape the organization as such. But next to holders of structurally implemented offices or consecrated priests, there are laypeople and volunteers who fulfil different tasks and duties in the parishes as well.

As the examples at the beginning of this chapter as well as the aforementioned academic studies suggest, the Catholic Church is highly mediatized at the scope of the translocal public discourse: the pope's media presence is professional. There are international events, such as the world youth day, at which a branding of religion becomes obvious. But is that true for the organization as a whole? In this chapter, we will focus on the priests as religious authorities, who serve as representatives and local key persons in the organization of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. To gain a better understanding of the communicative figuration of the Catholic Church, we will look at a certain actors' constellation, which is the 'local scope' of parishes and their authority construction: namely the priests. In contrast to religious authority figures with a 'translocal scope'—who dominate the public discourse (e.g. the pope or cardinals)—the priests are engaged in the people's religious practices in everyday life. While the public discourse and therefore the translocal representatives of religious authority are by no means irrelevant for the religious actors, we looked for the local communicative

practices entangled with media. By gathering the local priests' communicative practices and contextualizing them in the broader picture of the organization's media ensemble, we will differentiate between the various kinds of media practices in the Catholic Church.

11.4 METHODS

The sample selected for this chapter presents only a small part of the study and is focused on priests as local religious authorities. As part of the Creative Unit, we conducted an exploratory pilot study for communicative figurations of religious authorities in Germany, focusing on the archdiocese of Cologne. The media appropriation was explored at the levels of the religious institution, different religious groups within and beyond the religious institution (for example, 'We Are Church e.V.' Cologne, Benedictine Cologne) and three selected municipalities of the Cologne diocese. For this, we conducted 58 interviews with 26 different actors: parish priests and special priests, laypeople of different age and gender, parishes in areas with a majority and a minority of Catholics in relation to Protestants, monks and nuns, members of Catholic groups and secular institutes, and laypeople with an office in the Catholic Church.

The selected sample, however, focuses on the religious authority figures at a local level, namely six priests in the archdiocese of Cologne: three congregation priests, of whom two served in areas with a majority of Catholics and the other one in an area of a Catholic minority; one priest in a monastery, one priest in a leading position in the diocese, and one priest who works in the diocese without a specific parish. As they are all ordained as a priest they themselves are authorities in the organization of the Catholic Church and in the Catholic field. On the other hand, they are still involved in the structures of the Church.

We interviewed each person twice, at an interval of around one year. The first interview was an episodic interview (Flick 2011: 238ff.), in which we focused on semantic and narrative knowledge on authority—in general as well as in special cases, for example regarding the pope, the Bible or personal (religious) role models. We then conducted media questionnaires in order to collect information on their media repertoire (Hasebrink and Popp 2006). The second interview included a photo elicitation (Moser 2005) to trigger narratives and spontaneous reactions (Harper 2002) to visual discourse fragments that emerged in the first interview as well as media-related topics. It also included a networking

card (Hepp et al. 2016) with which the participants portrayed their media use in a specific self-chosen scenario. At the end, open questions were discussed.

While the first step of analysis took place in between the first and the second interview, the main analysis was made including the full data. We first triangulated the data from the qualitative interviews that referred to media use, with the answers in the media questionnaire to reconstruct the priests' media appropriation (Ayaß and Gerhardt 2012). In general, we gathered data on the interviewees' media appropriation on three levels. We asked them about their attitude towards media and their media use in episodic interviews, they filled out a media questionnaire on their media use, and we made networking cards in which the priests' media use in one specific situation was collected. As we analyzed the material, we found inconsistencies between these levels. As Juliane Klein, Michael Walter and Uwe Schimank point out in Chap. 15 in this volume, there is a difficulty in investigating latent media usage by qualitative interviews. They suggest that people do not reflect on every practice, but master a lot of their daily life without even reflecting on it—as long as there is no problem, they do not even notice that they are using media to perform certain tasks. We observed the same in our context. When we first contacted people and asked them for an interview, they often gave responses like 'Media? Oh, I barely ever use media. I think you have to look for someone else.' Later, it became obvious that these people do in fact use media. This self-understanding as a minor or non-media user was not limited to priests: we observed the same processes within the Catholic laypeople sample. It seems that the Catholic Church encourages a media-critical attitude and that people who are—and work—in this context, think of themselves as non-media users.

In a second step, we analyzed the qualitative interviews with *in vivo* coding with focus on the priests' constructions of authority. We generated *in vivo* codes from the first six interviews until no further categories were found. After that, the *in vivo* categories were systematized and structured for the purpose of axial coding. Thereafter, we applied the core categories to the whole material. The textual elements related to the core categories were analyzed by means of discourse analysis, for example for speaker position, power relations or self-positioning. In a last step, we combined and compared the findings of those steps. We concentrated on the Catholic priests' attitude towards media, their media appropriation and their self-positioning as authorities in the light of a changing media environment.

11.5 RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR MEDIA ENSEMBLE

The results of the research on media appropriation within the religious organizations were quite striking. In contrast to the—in the press discourse well-presented—social media activities and prominent media tools such as the YouTube channel ‘ask the cardinal’, the majority of the priests interviewed by us show quite different communicative practices entangled with media ensembles. What do we mean by that?

Regarding the media ensemble, the members of the Catholic Church’s organizational elite use a very broad range of media. In official recommendations, workshops, statements and so on, members of the organization are often encouraged to make use of the broad media ensemble that is available for them. Still, as we will show, the local representatives’ media repertoires are usually not as broad as the media environment their organization offers and advises them to make use of. One priest, for example, stated that his ‘media landscape is relatively spartan’ (K8D246150346_1). This gap between the media ensemble that is offered by the organization and the media repertoire that is actually used by its local representatives is also obvious in the local representatives’ communicative practices. Regarding the priests’ media repertoire, it becomes obvious that face-to-face communication, books (and, lower-ranked, emails) are defined as the most important media and the main communicative practices by the interviewed priests, as the networking cards and the media questionnaires showed. All interviewees state to prefer direct personal communication face to face, and assessed contact via email as an alternative in cases when personal contact is not possible: ‘Well, we talk face to face, I am not a person who is much involved—well, I write emails, of course, but I am not very involved in social media’ (BHW262150146_2). That books are seen as most important in order to gather information may be explained by the fact that priests as theologians are used to written texts. Another important medium for communication—which was stressed in nearly all interviews—is interestingly the priests’ own sermons in church. These are seen as a platform to take up themes which matters to the parish and to position themselves on these issues: ‘the sermon, of course, by which I bring amongst people (...) the topics I care about’ (CRS263140126_2). During the sermon the interviewees have the feeling that they can control their words and message and felt therefore explicitly to be religious authority: ‘you

talk, you preach, and try to be true to life, towards the people—and well, that is something. You preach and you are an authority, telling the word of God as a priest, as a man of the Church’ (NKG275140136_1); or ‘I might also be an authority at another point, well, Sunday after Sunday at 12 o’clock and at holidays I am preaching the sermon in the church’ (GRK252140146_1).

In contrast to that, social media seem to be the most problematic medium for them. Only one priest uses social media daily, in this case for private as well as professional communication. For him, media play a very important role in being a priest, but he also mentions that he is an exception: ‘Well, I do notice, I am one of very few (...) priests who for example dare to post their personal opinion publicly on Facebook (...) to put something to discussion’ (NKG275140136_2). But the other priests who either have a Facebook account and do not use it or do not possess an account at all mention social media a lot, although they do so usually to distance themselves from it. Digital media are less integrated in the interviewees’ daily routine than non-digital media. However, the smartphone plays a relevant role for using religious and non-religious apps regularly. Interestingly, this communicative practice doesn’t seem to be obvious to most of the priests, who repeatedly emphasized that they don’t use media at all or at least very little.

This matches with the priests’ understanding of communication in relation to ‘media’. Most of the interviewees referred primarily to reciprocal or direct communication (Krotz 2007). Mutual communication via media of personal communication (such as telephone, email, Skype, etc.) as well as standardized media communication referring to mass media played a minor role; virtualized media communication was never used. In addition, the priests often distinguish between media as a tool of communication in contrast to ‘the media’ as journalistic media with somehow ‘standardized’ contents. Their media critiques often referred to the latter, for example when one priest pointed out: ‘In what derogatory ways some media have written about the time and work of our Cardinal, how he was apostrophized, that does not only hurt me, but it is just a distortion of reality’ (GRK252140146_1). The interviewees’ main concern was a presumed danger for the organization to be overruled by the press media in choosing specific topics, discussions and positions (and others not), and, moreover, lose its own profile. One priest, who explicitly told us that from time to time he gives interviews for local television or radio, also told us: ‘When there is a call, a television

or radio interview, I usually do answer; but usually I don't pick up the topic, because I think you always have to be careful not to have the media set the agenda and dictate the topics' (BHW262150146_2). They fear a kind of powerful influence or patronizing by journalists, so that the media will gain the power to define Church topics, discussions and positions. One priest said: I think we do not have to hide. Just, there is this knockout argument: You postulate moral standards, so you have to live up to them, so you must not do this, and must not do that either ... that is difficult. Because I think that there will always be people who make mistakes (...) but still, as Church, we can talk about certain things (...) that are not mainstream. (...) And this is where I sometimes would like to ask the media to keep a sense of proportion. (CRS263140126_1) With such a process—so is the priests' presumption—the Church has to adapt to specific media rules and lose its own profile and genuine mode of operation. In addition, they fear that they may lose control over content. The interviewees often stressed that from their perspective journalistic coverage about the Catholic Church is often incorrect. Thus, they are concerned that information is simplified or incorrect, or both, and therefore the public image of the Church is endangered by media rules and habits. In addition, media as the press discourse is often criticized because—often implicitly referred to—media is seen as something that makes things visible—even if they should have stayed invisible: 'Well, that's how media work: they reveal things—in the Church, but also elsewhere—that would otherwise be concealed. That is a service they offer, but the way they do it—I mean, that one bishop [i.e. Cardinal Tebartz-van Elst] dominates the headlines for a whole week, that's something I didn't understand' (JGK2571601246_1). In times of deep mediatization, communicative processes of constructing religious authority extend beyond the borders and classic hierarchies of religious organizations. With deep mediatization, such processes of construction extend beyond the locations and spaces dominated and controlled by religious organizations (churches, parish halls, religious media, etc.) into the public media. Thus, it is not surprising that we can observe reduced communicative practices owing to a limited application of the organization's media environment and, in addition, a very controlled relation to media, whether in the use of non-interactive media or in the refusal to be part of the press discourse.

Interestingly, at the same time we can observe quite different perspectives on media on the part of the priests when it comes to public figures

of religious authority. While the majority of the interviewees refuse to be an active part of the media discourse (e.g. active in social media or giving interviews to journalists), all interviews emphasized the importance of social media. Social media is judged as a chance for the Catholic Church to reach people they would not reach otherwise: ‘but if you want to reach people you have not reached before, then you have to walk new paths (...) find new paths which you haven’t tried yet. And that can be done by using media’ (NKG275140136_2). However, the majority referred to the level that we can call translocal scope. For example, the interviewees often approve the Catholic participation in public debates by referring to figures such as the chairman of the German Bishops’ Conference or Pope Francis. Media is seen as a possibility for those representatives in translocal positions to communicate via a strong Catholic voice in the public. When one priest was asked about his opinion on Cardinal Marx, he said: ‘All the others are very reserved. However, it needs people who have the courage to go there [in talkshows, *the authors*] and to do it and I think Marx can do that. He is very communicative’ (K8D246150346_1). We can observe similar arguments when it comes to media coverage on Pope Francis. For example, one priest stressed the outstanding media-related characteristics of the pope: ‘He was so good. Protestant colleagues envy us a little ... because suddenly you are the subject of debate for a few days’ (K8D246150346_1). Being active in media seems to be a necessary criterion for being part of the public discourse—and therefore abilities and character traits that are seen as compatible to the media are well appreciated in persons of a translocal authority position.

At this point, we can observe a distinction between the different religious figures and roles within the organization and their relation to media. Whereas certain media skills are seen as a necessary characteristic for a translocal figure of authority, the same is not characteristic for local authorities. As one priest put it: ‘Well, I think it is important to say: we have to be active [in Facebook], as a parish. But that does not mean that I, as the priest, also have to do that, right?’ Even if they stress the necessity for the Catholic Church to reach people outside the classical parishes, social media are not seen as the right tool for that within a local scope. Most of the priests see their area of influence as limited to their parish and try to hold up a local profile: ‘I cannot reach the public from Flensburg to Munich, but let’s say it like that: sometimes I’m glad that we are different here in situ’ (K8D246150346_2).

11.6 CONCLUSION

What do our research results mean for a better understanding of the transformation of religious organizations in times of deep mediatization? There are several points we want to highlight. It became clear, that—in contrast to other organizations (cf. Chaps. 9 and 13 in this volume)—media change and media appropriation is seen in very different ways within the organization of the Catholic Church. We can observe that the priests use only a specific part of the organization's media environment. As a consequence, the organization's media environment isn't used by local authorities in its entirety. Therefore, the communicative practices with a local scope are less entangled with media than the activities with a translocal one. In contrast to public figures such as the pope or some of the bishops, the priests as local authorities show quite different communicative practices related to media. Even if the usage of new media technology is advertized in the public discourse, in the everyday life practices of the local religious authorities in the religious organization these technologies are not part of the priests' media repertoires with respect to the Church's media ensembles and therefore have no further relevance for the communicative practices of the Church's organizational elite. Sometimes new media practices, but also 'traditional' journalistic media, are judged critically. In contrast to social media activities on the part of the globalized, translocal elite in the religious organization, on a local level representatives of the Church are far more conservative and hold on to more traditional and less digital communicative practices. We even observed a broad tendency to try to ignore communicative practices related to social media.

Hepp diagnosed the invention of translocal media communication as a consequence of mediatization and—as a consequence of that—observed the necessity of religious organizations to position themselves within the media (Hepp 2009). However, it seems that such a 'branding of religion' refers only to religious authority figures—religious celebrities, for example the pope—with a translocal scope. From a figurational point of view, we are able to distinguish between different levels of actors' constellation and can critically analyze their specific communicative practices as well as their relation to the organization's media ensemble. Based on the distinction between the outside and the inside of organizations, it seems that deep mediatization affects both levels in quite different ways. Referring to the research discourse, the different results and hypothesis

concerning religious organizations can be better understood by the different foci. Even if—and the examples at the beginning show this quite well—social media are an integral part of the organization's media ensemble within a translocal, globalized scope (a very 'deep' degree of mediatization), within the much more local scope of the parishes, the organizations can show resistance to media change at the same time (a much 'less deep' degree of mediatization). And furthermore, it seems that for both scopes there are different requirements for integrating digital media on the part of the religious authorities.

New possibilities for media use are not always chosen. Therefore, while the term mediatization grasps manifold interrelations between the change of media and communication on the one hand, and the changes in culture and society on the other, we also should take contrary movements into consideration when analyzing this process (cf. Hepp and Röser 2014: 165). By distinguishing a translocal and local scope, on the one hand and different forms of authority constructions on the other, we are able to critically analyze that the organization of the Catholic Church transforms in a more differentiated way when it comes to media: as other research shows, there are, for example, tendencies of 'branding' and 'professionalization' on a translocal level. Locally, however, we can observe quite different processes: a reluctant appropriation of the organization's media ensemble by the local authorities even though media-related communication is considered as necessary for translocal authority figures such as the pope or bishops. Regarding the religious organization, we can observe a tension between a 'deep' degree of mediatization in regard to a translocal scope in contrast to a 'less deep' degree of mediatization within a local scope. An interesting follow-up question and part of our own future research is how such different degrees of mediatization produce different tempi of transformations: a slower transformation process on a local level in contrast to a faster transformation process on a translocal level, the tensions that emerge and the negotiations that have to be made—not only between translocal and local, but between different localities worldwide.

NOTES

1. <http://www.meinetraukirche.de>. Accessed: 30 March 2017.
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