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REPORTING ON REFUGEES IN ONLINE ALTERNATIVE AND MAINSTREAM MEDIA IN ROMANIA

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ABSTRACT

At its peak in 2015, the refugee crisis made the front page of mainstream media all over Europe, dividing opinions regarding its causes, ways of managing the crisis and possible outcomes. Reporting ranged from framing the issue as a source of intra-EU disagreement to the potential security threats it posed or the humanitarian aspects of the crisis. While a number of studies deal with how European media reported on refugees, most focus solely on mainstream media channels. The current research aims to bring alternative media into the discussion, by proposing a comparative analysis of how the most popular online news platform in Romania, Adevarul, and one of the country's first online independent journalistic projects, Casa Jurnalistului, covered the refugee crisis. The content analysis of articles (N=169) published in September 2015 focuses on the media frames used by the two and on how these frames are enacted via use of primary and secondary sources, choice of journalistic genre and visual support for the text. The findings point to the fact that the mainstream news portal often adopted uncritically the frames proposed by official sources or by international media and news agencies, while the alternative media project grounded its frames on eyewitness accounts and on-the-scene reporting. Therefore, the two work well in complementing one another, but taken separately only offer a limited perspective on the crisis.

Keywords: alternative media ▪ refugee crisis ▪ media framing ▪ Romanian media

1. INTRODUCTION

Around one million people arrived as migrants and refugees in the EU throughout the year 2015, leading to “a record number of 1.82 million detections of illegal border crossings reported by EU Member States” (Frontex, 2016, para. 1), which is more than six times higher than the previous record set in 2014. All over Europe, what Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, called an “unprecedented refugee

and migrant crisis” reached a main position on public agendas (McGreal, 2015). The refugee crisis divided opinions among Europeans in association with its causes, the best way to manage it and its possible outcomes. European media both mirrored and fuelled these opinions. While there have been a number of studies that deal with how mainstream media in Europe framed the refugee crisis (see among others Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017) or how Romanian media in particular have approached the topic (see Corbu et al., 2017; Durach et al., 2017), few have addressed alternative media as well. This study aims to fill this gap by analysing articles published on the topic of refugees during September 2015, i.e. the peak of the crisis, on *Adevarul*, the most widely read online news platform in Romania (see SATI, 2019), and *Casa Jurnalistului*, one of the first investigative independent journalistic projects in the country’s online media. More specifically, the study tries to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What were the media frames used to present the refugee crisis by *Adevarul*, Romania’s most read mainstream news portal, compared to those used by *Casa Jurnalistului*, one of the first alternative journalism websites?

RQ2: How were the media frames enacted through the choice of journalistic genre, use of primary and secondary sources, and visual support for the text?

Researching how the refugee crisis was covered in Romanian media – both mainstream and alternative – is relevant, because the country functioned as a stopover on the route of refugees further in Europe, having a transition and placement centre for refugees established by the UNHCR in Timisoara, near the Serbian and Hungarian borders. Hence, the media in Romania were significantly preoccupied with the topic, analysing it from several angles, particularly at the peak of the refugee crisis in 2015. In what follows, I will review a selection of reports and academic studies on how the media reported on refugees during the 2015 crisis and after it. For a better understanding of the local media context, I will then provide an overview of the main challenges affecting Romanian media at the moment, and assess the increasing appeal of alternative media. The theoretical setting of my research – media framing theory – will then be discussed as a viable tool for assessing how mainstream and alternative media reported on refugees, together with the methodology used in my study. The research findings show that *Adevarul* was more inclined to present refugees as a source of intra-EU disagreement, economic or logistical problems, and as a threat to security, whereas *Casa jurnalistului* focused extensively on the humanitarian aspects of the crisis. Moreover, the journalistic practices of the two outlets differed significantly: most *Adevarul* articles were not based on reporting on-the-scene, but on statements from public officials and institutions or on secondary sources such as news agencies or other media channels, whereas all articles posted on *Casa Jurnalistului* were based on fieldwork.

2. THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN EUROPEAN MEDIA

A study on how the media covered the issue in 8 European countries (the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Serbia and the UK) showed that although stark differences were observed between Eastern and Western member states and between receiving and non-receiving countries, “overall, new arrivals were seen as outsiders and different to Europeans: either as vulnerable outsiders or as dangerous outsiders” (Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017, p. 5). The study also observed that there was a noticeable change in the tone of reporting from the summer of 2015, when many countries framed the arrival of migrants and refugees in sympathetic terms, to the autumn of the same year, when they were presented in more and more suspicious or even hostile terms. The report identified three different stages that describe the general attitude towards migrants and refugees in the European media throughout 2015: the first was one of “careful tolerance” (July) following the mass drownings from the Mediterranean that happened in the spring and the decision of the Hungarian government to build a physical barrier along its Serbian border (announced on 13 July); the second was one of “ecstatic humanitarianism” (September) after the extensive mediatisation of 3-year old Aylan Kurdi’s death by drowning in the Mediterranean, when the arrivals were mostly framed in positive terms; finally, late autumn marked the appearance of the “fear and securitisation” stage (November), after the series of coordinated terrorist attacks in Paris, with detailed negative consequences of the crisis explained in the media and almost no voice granted to migrants or refugees (Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017).

In the particular case of Romania, the analysis of media coverage shows somewhat different results. A study on how the refugee crisis was framed in online media, covering four mainstream media outlets between April 2015 and February 2016, identified accountability as the dominating frame, while conflict, morality, economic consequences and human interest functioned as secondary frames (Corbu et al., 2017). In other words, Romanian journalists were mostly interested in establishing who is responsible for the crisis and for finding solutions in dealing with it, both at the national and EU level. The analysis found little variation in terms of framing the issue throughout the scrutinized mainstream media outlets, which were selected for being the top four news websites in terms of unique visitors.

Responsibility was also established as the dominant frame in another study on how mainstream media portrayed the refugee crisis, covering articles on the topic published in September 2015 in two leading news portals and two leading news agencies in Romania. The authors of the study explained this finding in association with the “blaming games” theory, which can serve as driving mechanism for journalistic practice: “media is often inclined to frame sensitive topics in terms of ‘finding the guilty ones’ or ‘scapegoating’, even in the case of events with profound humanistic implications” (Durach et al., 2017).

The manner in which European media reported on refugees was linked by several

researchers with the larger context of current journalistic practice. For example, an international report covering how migration and the refugee crisis was reflected in media from 14 countries showed that journalists often do not succeed in offering an in-depth image of the situation and are prone to falling into propaganda traps laid by politicians. While acknowledging that news stories on this topic do sometimes adopt a balanced and well-informed perspective, in many cases reporting is characterized by (i) missed opportunities – with, for example, journalists failing to foresee the magnitude of the crisis before it began, although sufficient signs were available, (ii) reproducing hate-speech statements of high-profile politicians, (iii) falling standards in reporting on the crisis, mostly due to poor editorial resources, and (iv) an inclination toward sensationalism, with little attention to relevant details such as the difference between “migrants”, “refugees” and “asylum-seekers” (White, 2015).

A report commissioned by the UNHCR on how the refugee and migrant crisis was covered also shows significant differences throughout the EU. Journalists in Germany and Sweden tend to make more use of the word “refugee” or “asylum-seeker”, whereas the media in UK, Italy and Spain uses the word “migrant” or “immigrant” more frequently. Differences can be found as well in terms of approaches to the topic and the overall positive/negative tone of the article. “Right-wing media” in the UK, for example, undertook unprecedented campaigns against migration, whereas Italian and Swedish media favoured more the humanitarian aspects of the refugee crisis (UNHCR, 2015). Also, Italian and Spanish media focused more on proposing solutions for the crisis, as opposed to Sweden and Germany where more attention was granted to presenting facts. One of the common themes throughout the studied countries was Euro-scepticism: “the European Union’s response to the crisis was widely seen as inadequate, yet it was still defined as the key institution responsible for solving the crisis” (UNHCR, 2015, p. 10). The interchangeable and arbitrary use of terms like “refugees”, “migrants” and “illegal migrants” was documented in journalistic reports on the topic from several other Central European countries as well (see Datalyrics, 2019).

The connection between the quality of reporting and how the refugee crisis was framed represented the subject of a study on how media from both sides of the Mediterranean covered the topic of migration. The report looked at 17 countries and highlighted issues connected to the economic and political vulnerability of media institutions. Conclusions stated that:

Everywhere the study paints a picture of journalists and journalism under pressure: of under-resourced media unable to provide the time and money needed to tell the story in context; of poorly trained journalists uninformed about the complex nature of the migration narrative; of newsrooms vulnerable to pressure and manipulation by voices of hate, whether from political elites or social networks (ICMPD, 2016, p. 2).

Reporting on migration as an indicator of wider trends in journalism practice has been of interest in a number of scholarly articles. For example, a research on Austrian media during the refugee crisis, with a focus on how frames might change over time and differ between quality and tabloid media, showed that journalists tend to use predictable, stereotyped narratives in their assessment of the issue, without going very much in depth of the issue. Stories tend to focus on security issues, economical aspects and, to a lesser extent, the humanitarian angle (Greussing & Boomgaarden, 2017). This might be associated with a well-established tendency of focusing on “bad news”, i.e. associating migrants with criminal or terrorist activity, or with the availability of relevant sources in documenting articles. Since refugees did not function at the time as a permanent topic on the agenda, journalists might not have a well-developed network of sources and/or might not be willing to devote the required time and energy to respect the rule of thumb that reporters have to talk to people who are directly involved (Gemi et al., 2012). This led to a journalistic practice identifiable across Central Europe between 2015 and 2018 to depict refugees as “depersonalized, passive and sometimes vulnerable objects”, and while their voices are not completely absent, they are not used to present a “meaningful perspective” (Datalyrics, 2019, p. 5).

3. MAINSTREAM AND ALTERNATIVE MEDIA IN ROMANIA

Plummeting credibility has been an important issue affecting Romanian mainstream media in the past years, frequently associated with the increasing politicization of media institutions and the ensuing censorship or self-censorship practiced in newsrooms. Media channels are frequently used as propaganda tools, with opaque or visibly corrupt funding mechanism, and several media owners are undergoing criminal investigation for corruption, while the authorities are constantly pressuring journalists to reveal their sources and try to silence any criticism of the system (RSF, 2019). Similar conclusions can be found in the latest Freedom House report on Romania (2019), noting that despite the media environment being “relatively free and pluralistic”, there a few “key media outlets” controlled by “businessmen with political interests” (para. 1), promoting distorted coverage according to their owners’ priorities. Journalists are subjected to political and economic pressures, and several of them were physically abused by police during the August 2018 protests, a case also denounced in the annual report on freedom of expression by Romania’s media watchdog, ActiveWatch (2019). The report also acknowledged that the then-ruling Social-Democrat Party invested “massively and consistently” in journalists who contribute to transferring items from the party agenda to the public agenda, while at the same time accusing opposition media of spreading “propaganda”. Moreover, the credibility of the journalistic profession was seriously undermined in the past few years by journalists entering into politics or living off unofficial wages paid by political parties, and by the infiltration of intelligence agents inside newsrooms, as officially recognized by the Romanian Intelligence Service in 2017 (ActiveWatch, 2019).

In economic terms, the Romanian media market has registered some growth in the past two years, noticeable in ad-spending on all platforms with the exception of print media, i.e. 7% in 2017 and 10% in 2018 (Media Fact Book, 2019), but despite this, the financial prospects of the profession are not optimistic. Two of the largest TV groups – ProTV and Digi24 – have closed their local stations in 2018 and 2019, and local newsrooms everywhere are struggling. This leads to lay-offs, an increased personnel turnover and with many journalists leaving the profession to opt for officially joining political parties or unofficially getting paid for supporting a particular political organization. At the same time, vlogging continues to be a growing niche, particularly in the area of entertainment – a trend whose ascension signals the audiences’ search for alternative sources of information (Activewatch, 2019).

The shrinking of media businesses has been documented as a worldwide trend in the past few years, its initial cause being linked to the arrival of (mostly free) online media and the fact that online advertising rates have not yet succeeded in reaching offline rates in many countries. The impact was mostly visible in newsrooms, which started to receive less financing. As Lugmayr and Dal Zotto (2016) observe, media institutions gained more incentives to become “audience production plants” along with the shift onto the Internet. This is translated into targeting quantity not quality: “news needs to be sensational, spectacular and easy to understand, and not necessarily well-researched and balanced” (p. 83). In other words, producing economically profitable and high quality journalistic content is far more difficult in the Internet era than it was on print markets and “the more traditional print markets are substituted by online markets, the less likely mass media will be able to fulfil its functions in a democratic society” (p. 95).

What does this mean for professional journalists? Less revenues, job insecurity and a constant pressure to enhance their traditional skills and gain new ones, in line with the demands of the convergence era. The “Super Journalist” should not only possess high-quality writing, editing and networking skills, as well as be able to cover more areas and generally work more for less money than before, but also learn technical skills, such as coding for example (Lugmayr & Dal Zotto, 2016). The pressure to provide a large amount of work in a short amount of time may lead to “shortcuts” in writing articles, such as reproducing news stories from news agencies or other media channels, with minimal intervention on the original text, using “ready-made” photographs, videos or infographics, and generally spending less time documenting on a subject or pondering on its signification from several perspectives.

The declining credibility of mainstream media is associated with a general “crisis of confidence” faced by political parties and official institutions, and under these circumstances, independent journalistic projects coming from the alternative media tend to gain more ground (Reuters Institute, 2019).

The alternative media scene is relatively new in Romania as its beginning can be traced back to 2012. As in the case of other countries in the region, it represents a varied range of independent projects, many of which serve antithetic purposes, overall

being a “culturally unstable phenomenon” (see Macek et al., 2017) which, according to Paul Radu, founder of the investigative journalism platform *RISE Project*, emerged as a response to the crisis and economic pressures confronting mainstream media, in an attempt to offer lacking balanced information and quality investigations (Leduc, 2014). Another alternative journalism project has been established in 2012 on a similar concept – *Casa Jurnalistului*, founded by three journalists who quit their jobs in mainstream media in order to work on producing independent and objective news stories in an experimental space (Leduc, 2014). A few other alternative publications have been established in the 2010s, exploring narrative journalism in extended feature and profile stories or reportages predominantly on social topics (*Decât o revistă, Teleleu, or Inclusiv*), and doing video-journalism and documentaries based on investigations mostly associated with corruption (*Recorder.ro*).

In addition to the projects mentioned above, which could be mostly characterized by their attempt to “challenge hegemonic media and its representations”, according to the fourfold schema of theoretical perspectives on alternative media provided by Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008), the Romanian alternative media scene consists of a wide array of other online independent projects – from websites that foster religious communities, such as *Doxologia.ro, Ortodoxtv.ro, Resursecrestine.ro* or *Crestintotal.ro*, to radical news portals that claim to uncover conspiracies and are often bordering fake news, such as *Activenews.ro, Alternativenews.ro, Cocoon.ro, Fluidrul.ro*, and many more.

What is the common ground of all these online journalistic projects which are so different in terms of purpose, newsgathering practices and newsroom structures? The “enduring characteristics” of an otherwise vaguely defined term such as “alternative media” are seen by Susan Forde (2015) as “resonating with the unrepresented; working outside established societal power structures; being overwhelmingly dedicated to the role of journalism in society; and existing primarily at the margins of the mediascape, as something of an ‘endangered species’” (p. 293). Alternative journalism has also been defined via its participatory, non-professionalized and non-commercial practices and “a rejection and critique of many of the established practices of mainstream journalism”, thus “working to different news values, covering different stories, giving access to a different cast of news actors and sources” (Harcup, 2013, p. 13). Such definitions explain why alternative media remains a fairly marginal trend in terms of audiences reached and can clarify why *Casa Jurnalistului* was the only alternative journalism project that covered extensively the refugee crisis from 2015 by sending on-the-scene reporters.

Mainstream and alternative media, however, do not necessarily stand on oppositional grounds, but might complement each other in the eyes of their audiences. A study conducted by Macek et al. (2017) on young audiences from the Czech Republic, Estonia and Greece, shows that mistrust in mainstream media might be positively correlated with trust in alternative media, but this affirmation depends on the

context, since the two types of media show at times symbiotic practices and tendencies and, hence, cannot be situated in a simple antinomial binary relation.

Casa Jurnalistului can be seen as practising a type of alternative journalism that “is closely wedded to notions of social responsibility, replacing an ideology of ‘objectivity’ with overt advocacy and oppositional practices” (Atton, 2003, p. 267). The undermining of established mainstream journalism rules is in line with Tony Harcup’s notion of “oppositional reporting”, an undertaking by which alternative media aims to give a symbolic reaction to mainstream media by providing “reporting that draws on some of the most valued areas of journalistic practice but incorporates [...] a critique of mainstream discourse” (2013, p. 14). The implicit opposition included in alternative reporting can be identified in the use of primary and secondary sources that go beyond the conventions of mainstream media, giving voice to the “voiceless”, questioning, evaluating, commenting and discovering the important information that mainstream media fails to find. Thus, alternative journalism fills the gap left behind by “the closures and staff cuts suffered by much mainstream journalism”, while at the same time delivering “reporting ‘with attitude’”, including implicit or explicit critique of dominant viewpoints in society, based on arguments and evidence (Harcup, 2013, p. 14).

4. METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current research consists in the content analysis of 147 articles published on the *Adevarul* platform and 22 articles published on *Casa Jurnalistului*, between 1 and 15 September 2015, i.e. during a period seen as the peak of the refugee crisis, with a focus on uncovering the media frames used in presenting the topic under scrutiny. The limited period chosen for this study is motivated by the short amount of time and space dedicated by *Casa Jurnalistului* to the topic, which can be explained by financial constraints associated with the newsgathering process, which tend to be typical to alternative media. For consistency reasons, I analysed articles published on *Adevarul* in the same timeframe as the ones published by on-the-scene reporters from *Casa Jurnalistului*. Financial constraints and different newsgathering processes also serve as explanation for the imbalance in the number of articles published in the same period of time.

In the case of *Adevarul*, all articles containing the key-words “refugee” or “refugees” (“refugiat” and “refugiați” in Romanian) and identified by the website’s own search engine were included in the analysis, except articles that do not refer to the 2015 refugee crisis, but to other events that included refugees (e.g. Second World War), and articles that were published on the blog platform hosted by *Adevarul*, which are the focus of a separate study (see Baya, 2018). In the case of *Casa Jurnalistului*, all articles published in a subdomain dedicated to the topic were included in the analysis. As announced in the About section of this subdomain, “Refugiați călătorind spre Europa” [Refugees traveling to Europe] is a collective journalistic project in which

three members of *Casa Jurnalistului* travel together with refugees on their route to Europe.

The research framework included an analysis of indicators associated with the newsgathering process, with a focus on what primary sources were used (official sources, “independent”/non-institutional sources, refugees), which secondary sources were used (news agencies, other media channels), what was the genre of the article (news, interview, investigation, feature article/reportage, comment/editorial), what visuals supported the text (photograph, video, infographic) and what their source was (on-the-scene reporter, news agency, other media channel, provided by the source), and finally, what the dominating media frame used in the article was.

Primary sources were those interviewed directly by the newsroom who authored the analysed article, whereas secondary sources were those quoted via other media outlets or news agencies. The category of official sources included all documents or persons “authorized” to provide information to the media, such as press releases, statements or TV appearances from press representatives, PR or Communication Departments, politicians, recognized specialists and professional analysts of the topic under scrutiny etc. The category of “independent” or non-institutional sources contained participants to events that became news, eyewitnesses or other types of stakeholders that are not part of the “routine sources” used by the mainstream media. I established a separate category for “refugees” functioning as sources, in order to assess the extent to which these primary stakeholders were allowed to have a voice as part of the media coverage of the refugee crisis.

For the assessment of journalistic genres, I used the established definitions functioning in the profession: (i) articles identified as news contained texts between 200 and 700 words presenting data selected along the lines of news values principles, written in an informative and (at first sight) neutral manner, (ii) interviews were structured conversations with relevant sources, (iii) investigations consisted of the original research conducted by one or more journalists in order to uncover hidden (and potentially controversial) truths by consulting several sources, (iv) comments/editorials were articles in which the author supports a particular opinion with arguments, and (v) feature/reportage articles were identified as those that rendered more than just informative details connected to the topic, focusing on the subjective rendering of aspects such as atmosphere or character description and using storytelling techniques in order to help the reader visualize the setting of the events (see e.g. Randall, 2016; Harcup, 2015).

Media framing or news framing is a method by which information is selected and organized, thus granting salience to some aspects of reality over others and inducing audiences to “filter [their] perceptions of the world in particular ways” (Kuypers, 2010, p. 300). For this reason, looking at news gathering processes such as collecting text and visual data from selected sources and using a particular journalistic genre to structure the information in a particular way is highly relevant in establishing the frame used in portraying refugees. My research starts from the assumption that

framing is the process whereby communicators, i.e. journalists, “act – consciously or not – to construct a particular point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be viewed in a particular manner, with some facts made more noticeable than others” (Kuypers, 2010, p. 300).

My analysis focuses on deconstructing the frames used in presenting the refugee crisis, observing how the information is sourced, organized and portrayed as important, starting from the assumption that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

This study is based on an understanding of media framing from a mixed methods perspective. It combines (i) a quantitative approach in the collection of data using relevant keywords over a predetermined period of time, and counting the frequency with which particular journalistic genres, sources, visuals and frames were used, with (ii) a qualitative analysis of article content in order to establish dominant frames and how they are enacted following the previously mentioned indicators. The small data set under scrutiny allowed me to detect frames as they result from news-gathering routines and assess the extent to which, in the case of mainstream media, “journalists convey information about issues and events from the perspective of values held by political and economical elites” (D’Angelo, 2002, p. 876), whereas in the case of alternative media, they practice “oppositional reporting” (Harcup, 2013). This qualitative approach to identifying frames has obvious limitations connected to the relevance of such a small sample and to an unavoidable bias in the analysis. However, as opposed to an exclusively quantitative approach concerned with “what” and “how much”, it allows a more thorough focus on “how” and “why”, on the context of journalistic practice and the cues by which frames are enacted, facilitating a move “from a more descriptive notion of framing research to a fully critical and interpretative endeavour” (Kuypers, 2010, p. 308).

The articles used in the current study were acquired and processed manually, with minimal computer-assistance and were not classified according to predefined categories. Instead, my undertaking was inductive, as at first I chose to read and analyse them carefully in order to identify dominant approaches to structuring information and use of sources. Though there were articles in which I identified two or more overlapping frames, I selected the dominant one, i.e. the aspects of the information which were presented as most salient. The inductive method of research allowed me to use issue-specific frames, instead of adopting generic frames employed in other studies (see Corbu, 2017; Durach, 2017), thus avoiding a simplifying or reductionist perspective, and establishing the significant topics highlighted by the media in the particular case of the refugee crisis. The guiding principles in classifying the frames, were the presence of “identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics”, the assumption that they are derived from a certain approach to journalistic practice, and are clearly distinguishable from other frames (Linström & Marais, 2012).

Taking into consideration how the authors chose to define problems associated with the refugee crisis, how they diagnosed its causes and potential outcome, and what moral judgments or remedies they proposed (if any), as they were reflected in the headlines, subheadings, leads and/or photo captions, as well as choice of sources and genre, I established six recurring frames and analysed their frequency:

- (i) The security frame was identified in articles which focused on problems associated with refugee-related criminal activities, border control or terrorism, as well as presenting refugees as a threat to national health. Texts included here relayed information about illegal border passing on the route of refugees from Greece to Northern Europe, ships filled with “immigrants” captured in the Mediterranean, the temporary border closing between Germany and Austria, the Hungarian prime-minister’s or other politicians’ statements regarding the “threats” posed by the influx of refugees, statements from the Ministry of Health regarding possible diseases that would be brought by refugees (particularly polio), the uncovering of a network responsible with smuggling refugees, the potential connections between terrorist activities of ISIS and uncontrolled migration to Europe etc.
- (ii) The intra-EU Solidarity frame was operationalized via official statements supporting the need for cooperation in dealing with the refugee crisis. Using official sources such as the President, the Prime Minister or politicians from the governing party and/or opposition, articles included under this frame stressed the need for a pro-EU approach in Romanian foreign policy.
- (iii) The intra-EU disagreement frame highlighted the different opinions of member states in association with how the crisis should be approached, particularly in relation to the refugee quotas. The official sources such as the Prime Minister or politicians from the governing party were quoted denouncing the EU’s “double standard” when asking Romania for solidarity in accepting refugees but denying its right to enter the Schengen group of countries, politicians from different countries were cited expressing different views regarding the “fairness” of quotas, etc.
- (iv) The economic/logistical difficulties frame was detected in articles that reported on the complications associated with managing the high influx of refugees on the short term (temporary accommodation in Romania and asylum procedures, transportation between borders, administrative problems etc.) or long term (social and economic mechanisms for integration in the host society).
- (v) The cultural/religious differences frame was identified in articles that made explicit reference to the religion of refugees or to their socio-cultural habits that might be different from those of the host country, in an implied critical manner. Such articles alluded to violent events such as the Charlie Hebdo attacks, suggesting a connection between the religion of refugees and an increase in terrorist violence in Europe, or cited the leader of the National

Hungarian Council from Transylvania saying the refugees are a threat to “our [cultural] identity”.

- (vi) The humanitarian frame highlighted the life-threatening difficulties faced by refugees on their route to Europe and within the continent, with a focus on vulnerable groups (women, children, elderly and disabled persons), portraying their life on the road, in improvised camps, with no access to sanitary or medical facilities, food etc., showing implied empathy or compassion. As opposed to the other frames, in the case of this one more “independent”/non-institutional sources were used (demonstrators in Paris, Timisoara or Cluj showing support for refugees, eyewitnesses living in the Romanian or Hungarian villages where refugees stopped on their route etc.), in addition to official ones, and voice was granted to refugees telling their stories.

5. FINDINGS

News was the prevalent genre used in reporting on refugees in *Adevarul*, with 79.6% of the analysed articles falling under this category. Investigations made up 6.8% of the corpus of articles, though most of them did not imply on-the-scene data collection, but journalists consulting several secondary sources: decisions or debates at EU level analysed overtime, background statements from different politicians or institutions regarding Romania’s adherence to the refugee quota policy, what several international news channels or agencies write in connection to refugees etc. Only 4.8% of the articles were interviews and an equal percentage fell under the feature/reportage genre. An even smaller number (4.1%) were comments or editorials, possibly because *Adevarul* partly “externalized” the writing of opinion articles to the blogging platform it hosts (which is the focus of a different study – see Baya, 2018).

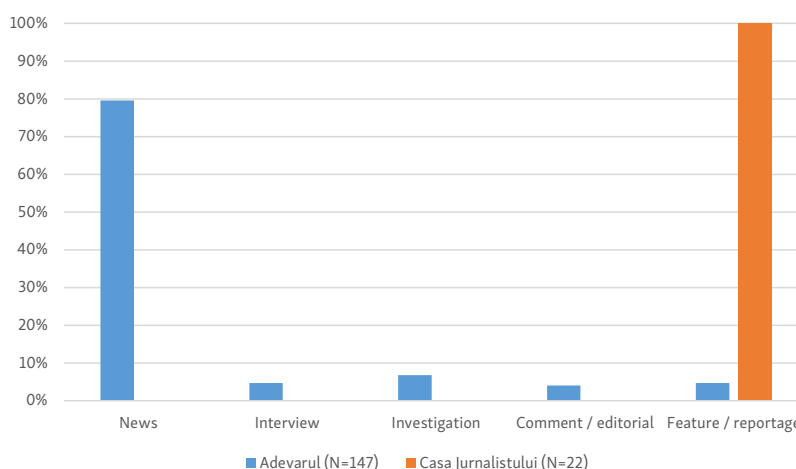


Figure 1: Choice of Journalistic Genre in Reporting on Refugees

The fact that news was the prevalent genre in reporting on refugees in *Adevarul* (see Figure 1) should be associated with the fact that 51% of the articles used public officials or public institutions as primary sources and 42.1% (see Figure 2 and 3) did not have any primary sources at all, meaning they represented articles translated from international media or reproduced with minimal intervention from news agencies. Only 2.1% of the articles on *Adevarul* used refugees as primary sources and 1.4% used both public officials and refugees. An additional 3.5% used “independent” or non-institutional sources, such as the organizers of a public meeting by the Syrian community in Timisoara, participants at the meeting or ordinary citizens who show solidarity with refugees in some sort of public statement. As far as the source of visuals used to support the text is concerned (see Figures 4 and 5), only 22.5% of them are from a reporter who is on-the-scene, the rest being reproduced from other media channels, news agencies, archives or directly from sources, with minimal effort from the part of the *Adevarul* newsroom.

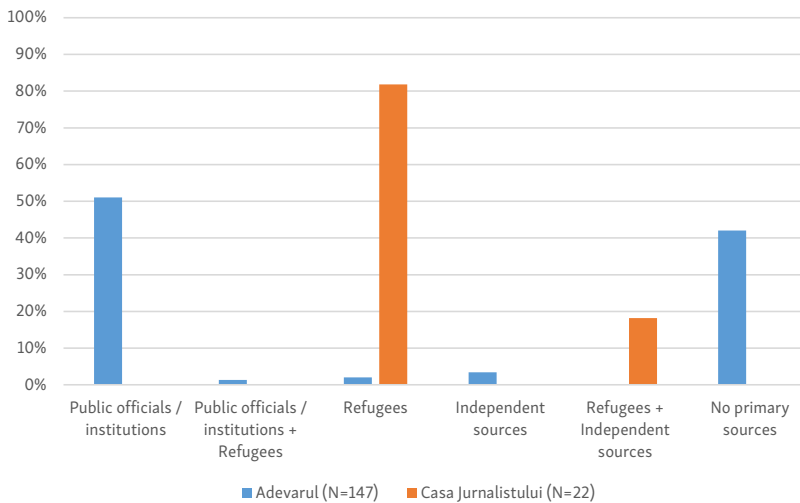


Figure 2: Use of Primary Sources

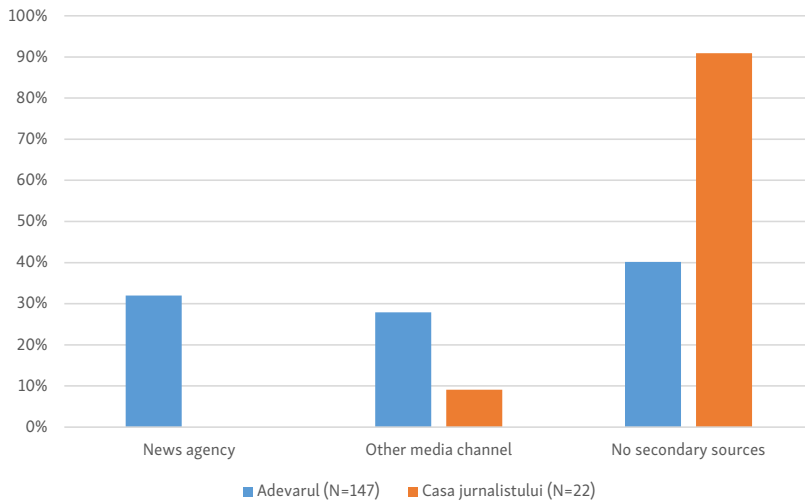


Figure 3: Use of Secondary Sources

In comparison, *Casa Jurnalistului* uses refugees as primary sources in 81.8% of the analysed articles, and both refugees and “independent”/non-institutional sources (e.g. volunteers from the Red Cross or UNHCR, the owner of a café where refugees stop in Athens etc.) in 18.2%, while all photographs and videos that complement the text are authored by on-the-scene reporters. A small number of articles on *Casa Jurnalistului* make reference to news from the international media highlighting particular events connected to refugees, but not by reproducing their content – as in the case of *Adevarul* – but just by adding a link to them, inviting the reader to check the primary source herself.

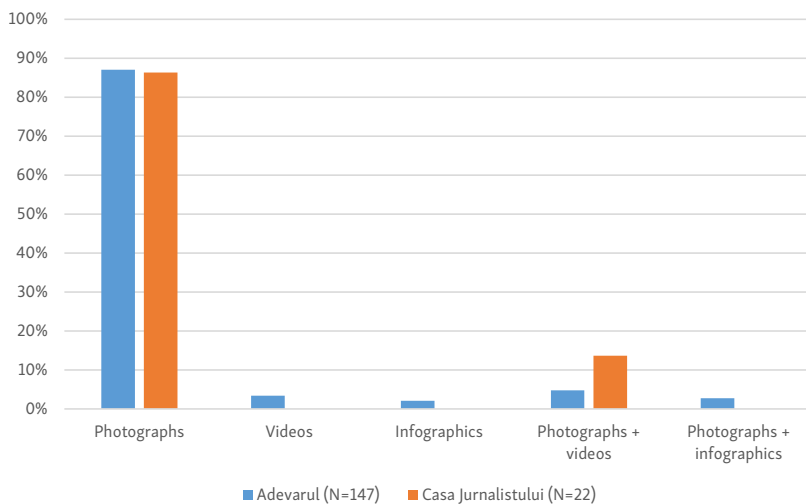


Figure 4: Use of Visuals

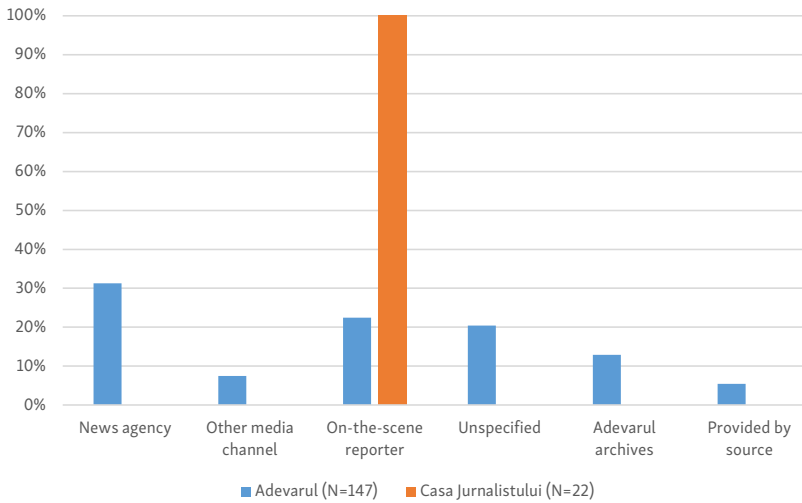


Figure 5: Source of Visuals

The four dominant media frames (see Figure 6) I identified in the case of the *Adevarul* articles are present in relatively balanced percentages: economic/logistical difficulties (23.1%), humanitarian (23.1%), intra-EU disagreement (22.5%) and threat to security (21.8%). In comparison, the dominant media frame present in the articles on *Casa Jurnalistului* was the humanitarian one, grounded on the journalists’ observations during time spent together with refugees on their illicit route from the coast of Greece to a safe camp in Germany. In a smaller number of articles here I identified the economic/logistical difficulties frame, but seen from the point of view of refugees, not of the host country officials, as in the case of *Adevarul*.

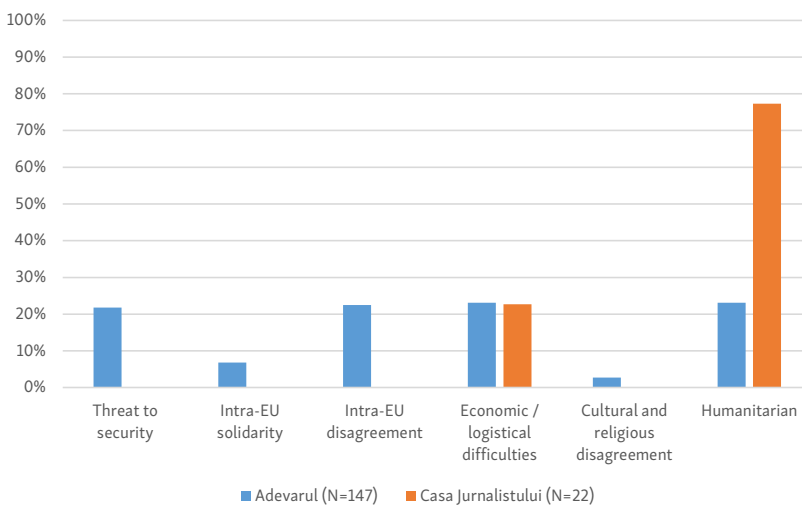


Figure 6: Dominant Frames

The articles posted on *Casa Jurnalistului* subscribe in general terms to the journalistic norms of feature or reportage writing, focusing on first-person reporting and eyewitness accounts, but most of them go beyond the theoretical rules of the genre, borrowing from journal writing or, for example, dropping headlines. The writing style focuses on rendering the atmosphere and the state of mind of the refugees, by reproducing visual details connected to their whereabouts (train/bus stations, cafés, improvised camps, interminable queues at border control) and fragments of conversation, thus allowing the reader to become immersed into the realities faced by refugees who travel across Europe. The reproduced conversations do not have the formal structure of an interview, but the reporters rather try to put themselves in the shoes of refugees. For example, at one point a reporter confesses trying to answer the following question from a refugee: “What country would you go to if you were in our place?”

Reporters from *Casa Jurnalistului* go together with the refugees through Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Austria and Germany, walking on-foot for tens of kilometres, across roads, fields or train tracks, sleeping on the ground in train stations or in improvised camps, hitch-hiking or going on buses driven by smugglers. They cross the border illegally and experience first-hand the refugees’ exhaustion and desperation, or reproduce in short fragments of conversations their enthusiasm when thinking at the “better future” envisaged in their new European life. Most articles are based on observation and on talking to refugees, whom however are solely presented under their first name and sometimes mentioning their profession and/or a short physical description. Details about their lives are presented briefly, in a story-like manner: why they escaped Syria or Afghanistan, where they plan to travel in Northern Europe and what they expect to find there. On the whole, the articles on *Casa Jurnalistului* are more homogenous in terms of writing style, use of sources and visuals, in comparison to the ones on *Adevarul*.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The current study undertook a comparative analysis between media frames used in reporting on refugees on two Romanian online media channels. While the mainstream media outlet *Adevarul* features a significantly larger amount of articles on refugees than the alternative media project *Casa Jurnalistului*, the former grants less space for documenting several aspects of the story by interviewing refugees directly (as primary stakeholders) and hence for consolidating well-documented frames.

On the one hand, most articles published by *Adevarul* fall under the “news” category and use public officials as primary sources, or partially/entirely reproduce news texts and visuals from international media or news agencies. This translates in a tendency to adopt the media frames and interpretations imposed by national or supranational official institutions. The small number of non-official sources used reconfirms that the editorial decisions made by journalists under pressure have little

to do with quality reporting and make them prone to manipulation from politicians, whose proposed frames mainstream media often adopts uncritically – a conclusion which is in line with other studies on recent journalistic practices (see among others ICMPD, 2016; Lugmayr & Dal Zotto, 2016). The dominant media frames identified in *Adevarul* by my research were the economic/logistical difficulties in managing the influx of refugees, the humanitarian aspects of the crisis, the intra-EU disagreements on the topic and the potential security threats posed by the crisis – all in a relatively balanced percentage. This is partially in line with what other studies on frames used in portraying refugees in Romanian mainstream media showed (Corbu et al., 2017; Durach et al., 2017), namely that the humanitarian aspects of the story are not the main focus in the case of most articles. However, my study revealed a more balanced distribution of frames, which might be a result of the fact that both Corbu et al. (2017) and Durach et al. (2017) used generic frames, whereas I found the inductive method of establishing frames to be more fertile in establishing connections with a particular type of journalistic practice. Results concerning the use of sources and visual support for articles confirm trends noticeable in other mainstream European media in terms of willingness to spend time/resources for properly documenting the story and fairly representing all stakeholders: refugees are rarely cited directly and usually referred to via statements by public institutions or politicians (see e.g. Gemi et al. 2012; Datalyrics, 2019).

On the other hand, *Casa Jurnalistului* did not use official sources at all, publishing articles that fall under the “feature/reportage” genre, based mostly on refugees as primary sources and, to a smaller extent, on some “independent”/non-institutional sources. Articles from international media are used as secondary sources in some cases, though not summarized or translated, as in the case of *Adevarul*, but mentioned in a link, so as to stimulate readers to do their own research. The dominant media frame in *Casa Jurnalistului* is the humanitarian one, enacted by the use of refugee statements and profiles, and by photographs or videos recorded by reporters on the scene. The fact that public officials or institutions are completely absent from the articles on *Casa Jurnalistului* confirms the alternative journalism project’s attempt to fill the gap left behind by mainstream media, to provide “a different cast of voices”, making sure “the unspoken” is being said (Harcup, 2013, p. 67). Thus, *Casa Jurnalistului* offers the insights into the lives of refugees that mainstream media fails to deliver, representing the marginal voices and unconventional type of reporting that is typical for alternative journalism projects (see e.g. Atton, 2003; Harcup, 2013; Forde, 2015).

To conclude, the mainstream media website analysed here fails to offer audiences a complete picture of the events by covering all stakeholders in a balanced way. At the same time, the humanitarian media frame, which tends to be underrepresented in mainstream media, is at the centre of the feature articles published by *Casa Jurnalistului*, thus allowing the reader to complete the factual, mostly impersonal data from outlets such as *Adevarul* with accounts of the refugees’ side of the story. Therefore,

the alternative media project serves well in complementing reports on refugees from mainstream media, but would probably be insufficient on its own to give a fully balanced view on the size and implications of the crisis.

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SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF NATIONAL MEDIA REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN V4

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ABSTRACT

The availability of studies which assess the implementation and performance of social media (SM) regulation within European Union countries is currently sub-optimal. Therefore, this study uses a problem-oriented approach, from a political-regulatory perspective, inspired by governance concepts, to investigate existing regulatory challenges within a specific region of Central and Eastern Europe. Based on interviews with the National Regulatory Authorities (NRA) experts from Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, and review of official documents, it provides insights on the regulatory policies and approaches enacted, proposed and used by NRAs. The study found that suggested approaches and opinions of the NRAs on possibilities of SM regulations show variety of challenges and that suggested regulatory approaches are often mutually contradictory. This study thus sets the stage for awareness creation among the key stakeholders that will facilitate further advancement of planned common social media regulatory protocols within the EU. Finally, this study sets a foundation for further regional or comparative studies on the regulation of social media.

Keywords: regulation ▪ social media ▪ digital services ▪ the Czech Republic ▪ Hungary ▪ Poland ▪ Slovakia ▪ national regulatory authority

1. INTRODUCTION

The evolution of social media (SM) into indispensable tools for the performance of various leisure, political, journalistic, academic and business activities has stimulated ongoing discussions about social and political harms caused by SM within Visegrád Four (V4) countries located within the European Union (EU) sub-region. Brix and Busek (2018) argue, supported by Kirch (2019), that there is an ongoing informal exchange of information between civil servants and politicians in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. This exchange of information should

compensate for the resource deficits in smaller countries when compared to larger EU states or other existing regional alliances. It is true that media-related regulatory issues are discussed within European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) network and, less so, within the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (ERPA) network. There is also the Central European Regulatory Forum (CERF), which was set up in 2009, and currently includes the NRAs in Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, and Slovakia. It seems that the CERF does not play significant role among NRAs in regulatory discussions. The 2018 EU Coalition Explorer (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2018) confirms that the V4 are each other's default partners. Seen from this perspective, Lang (2018) claims that the V4 is one of the most actively cooperative regional blocs within EU. This justifies our focus at V4 approaches to potential regulation of SM from the media regulatory authorities' (NRAs) perspectives. Be that as it may, a recent study on the rules on access to the audiovisual market within EU 28 member states (MS) has found that: "It was impossible to even detect significant similarities between countries that in principle share geography, language or history" (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2018, Foreword). In other words, it is challenging to carry out any comparative study in this research area, or, more precisely, to select a proper sample.

The article assesses existing regulatory strategies for legacy media, as well as emerging or discussed regulatory strategies that have been suggested for SM by NRAs of V4 countries. These strategies – self-regulation, co-regulation and public regulation – are collectively placed as the key regulatory strategies within the context of media governance, as suggested by Freedman (2008), "the totality of institutions and instruments that shape and organize a policy system – formal and informal, national and supranational, public and private, large-scale and smaller-scale" (p. 14). For example, a new form of self-regulation has emerged – sometimes called "institutional self-regulation" (e.g. Frankel, 2018). This is specifically important form of regulation regarding the role of SM platforms which currently very much rely on self-regulation by themselves.

This article argues that the existing regulatory strategies have challenges and are sub-optimal, and proceeds through four sections to adequately address the prevailing concerns. It begins with a brief introductory overview of the current academic and policy discussions related to the regulation of the SM environment in general. This is followed by discussions on legacy and SM self-regulation and co-regulation in V4, public regulation of traditional NRAs in V4, and finally presents the latter opinions on SM regulation. The conclusion from this study is based on the findings from field research – interviews based on the questions sent to key experts working for the NRAs from Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic in this specific emerging regulatory area – and a review of the relevant literature, as well as official documents on the regulatory policies and approaches for SM.

The study was driven by two observations. Firstly, there is relatively little research

about the regulation of SM within the V4 region, and no research on this specific topic. Even though this regulatory area has been by and large until recently ignored by the academic community within V4 region, there have been considerable ongoing discussions at supranational academic, political and regulatory levels concerning emerging and evolving general regulatory policies for SM in the EU countries or at the EU level (see e.g. Školkay et al., 2020).

Secondly, the inter-dependence or ongoing convergence of legacy and new media – there can be embedded links of TV programmes on YouTube or Facebook – complicate the subsequent identification of regulatory strategies for individual platforms. Planti et al. (2016) argue that platform-based services acquire characteristics of the infrastructure they are built on, while new and existing infrastructures are built or reorganized based on the logic of platforms. This development suggests a new form of capture which can be called infrastructural capture: “circumstances in which a scrutinizing body – for example, news industry – is incapable of operating sustainably without the physical or digital resources and services provided by the businesses it oversees and is therefore dependent on them” (Nechushtai, 2018, Abstract). For example, this may be related to a needed speed of regulatory intervention in the case of hate speech or terrorist broadcast live. Another example could include the non-transparent use of algorithmic operations by some SM platforms. These issues raise a novel challenge – the traditional NRAs might be handicapped and may not be capable of efficient regulation of SM without their close cooperation. Consequently, we acknowledge that regulatory needs are different from previous period and the variations observed between given existing and emerging regulatory systems necessitate the analysis of regulatory approaches. It should be noted that the question of origin of the content provided via SM is not tackled here in detail.¹ This is a follow-up “technical” issue that will arise after prior decision concerning who (which institution) should regulate SM. Similarly, the question of roles and responsibilities of Internet Services Providers (ISP) is beyond our focus at SM.² As it will be discussed furthermore, the NRAs in our sample, with one exception, do not have unique competencies in the Internet (or telecommunications) regulation. For that purpose, there are different regulatory authorities. It is, of course, possible, that these regulatory authorities will merge.

In general, two closely related schools of thought are worthy of consideration here. According to the first one, multiple regulatory interventions and discussions can be seen as governance, i.e. as reflexive coordination which focuses on those “critical moments” when routine activities become problematic. According to the second, they can be seen as regulations constituted as public or private interventions

1 It can be either original – or at least curated – which means that the service controls what is being transmitted, or by third party – uploaded by the users in which case the service works only as a hosting service.

2 An Internet service provider (ISP) is a company that provides customers with Internet access. Data may be transmitted using several technologies, including dial-up, DSL, cable modem, wireless or dedicated high-speed interconnects (Techopedia, 2016).

targeted at influencing the behaviour of others (Hofmann et al., 2017). The assessment of regulatory approaches from these two theoretical perspectives provides valuable insights into the inconsistencies which characterise regulations and discussions about possible regulations across different countries. In other words, “in such times, when routines stop working and actors recognize a mismatch in their understanding of the situation, a transition takes place from simple coordination to reflexive coordination” (Hofmann et al., 2017, p. 1415). Concurrently, this permits the discovery of available forms of regulatory frameworks which can be successfully adopted in a convergent environment. To sum up, we assess and discuss suggested regulatory solutions in the V4 countries; self-regulation, co-regulation and public, sometimes referred to as statutory or state regulation. The assessment focuses on the past and current efforts, with significant focus on the challenges, toward the regulation of specific media sectors including audiovisual and print media sectors, or specific issues like advertisements. We assume that there is sufficient experience with the regulation of the audiovisual sector (and, in addition, with print media for self-regulation, be that negative or positive experience) and there is a normative-professional or legal basis for cooperation with self-regulatory and co-regulatory bodies on the part of the NRAs. In this regard, current and progressive roles for the NRAs and other existing media regulatory institutions for traditional audio, audiovisual and (very briefly) digital platforms, i.e. Video on Demand (VoD) and Video Sharing Platforms (VSP), will be discussed too.

2. A VERY BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRENT ACADEMIC AND POLICY DISCUSSIONS ON REGULATING A CONVERGED MEDIA ENVIRONMENT WITHIN EU

Discussions and debates within academic, regulatory and policy-making jurisdictions highlight divergent views on regulatory approaches and interventions for SM in particular and for digital media or the Internet in general. There are distinct areas of regulation reflected in policy discussions in relation to different domains of regulation (copyright issue, harmful content, fake news and hoaxes, surveillance, SM influencers, virtual reality, bots, etc.). Different solutions or policy responses (notice and correct, notice and takedown, hard or soft approach, behavioural economy based and technology-algorithm based approaches, etc.) are also being discussed, as well as the question of who should regulate and guarantee the enforcement (self-, co-, and public regulation) or at which level (state or some global organisation).

The existing and proposed regulatory approaches are characterised by inconsistencies across media systems and nations. As an instance, the EU MS set different age limits for television programmes for minors (ERGA, 2017), yet television broadcast is no longer limited to national borders, or even satellite distribution – it is increasingly becoming available online and especially on SM, accessed via smartphones, and this makes it difficult to enforce appropriate parental control. It is hoped that some of

these issues (e.g. regulation of VoD and VSP) will be successfully tackled by national legislation based on the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive 2010/13/EU as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/1808. There are also challenges related to copyright protection. Several attempts at regulating illegal downloading have been reported as failures (Edwards et al., 2012). These challenges should be seen as by and large solved by Directive (EU) 2019/790 – the so-called Copyright Directive. Similarly, many critical indicators including clearly defined responsibilities, transparent regulatory processes and measurable results, adequate sanction powers, periodical reviews and external control by the general public and the state, have not been effectively prioritized in self-regulatory initiatives (Lievens, 2016), although, many SM providers have committed themselves at supranational and national levels to self-regulatory interventions. In particular, the European Commission agreed with Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube (later joined by some other SM) a “Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online” in 2016. There are regular monitoring exercises of this form of institutional self-regulation and quasi co-regulation by SM. The most recent assessment from September 2019 argued that “the Code of Conduct has contributed to achieve quick progress, including in particular on the swift review and removal of hate speech content” (Council of the European Union, 2019, p. 2).³ Yet there are debates that this approach may be seen as going against constitutional rights – there is no due process (see Hanych & Pivoda, 2017), that this does not cover all the media but only 96% of the EU market share of online platforms and it obviously covers mostly hate speech (see Cappello, 2018). It is also questionable whether this institutional self-regulation is in line with established principles (see EESC, 2015). There is also ongoing discussion that efforts to tackle information disorder with help of fact-checkers may hamper freedom of expression and perhaps sometimes go too far (see Goda, 2020). Therefore, there is still room for additional or alternative regulation of SM. We are going to discuss experience with self- and co-regulation of legacy media in the next section.

The regulatory discrepancies across media and nations have resulted in a heightened focus specifically on the convergence of legacy and SM and follow up interventions to be tailored to the regulatory requirements of the converged media environment. For example, Niklewicz (2017) proposes that SM platforms should be considered as media companies and should be regulated by modified versions of existing press laws adapted to suit new technologies. The creation of a *notice and correct procedure*,⁴ as he calls it, would in his view provide an effective tool to stop libel, fake news, and hoaxes and allow affected parties to protect their rights. Yet, the question remains – who could provide effective supervision of any such regulatory regime?

3 72% of hate speech content was removed in 2019 comparing to 28% in 2016; while only 40% of notices were reviewed within 24 hours in 2016, in 2019 it was 89% (Council of the European Union, 2019, p. 2).

4 In this framework, the contested item could be corrected either by the author(s) or by the SM platform itself.

Moreover, in the context of a more narrowly focused self-regulatory approach, Hanych and Pivoda (2017) argue that the current liability regime for SM, based on the *notice and takedown* procedure,⁵ appears to be an inappropriate solution for different kinds of expressions. This regulatory approach does not meet the requirements of legal certainty of users or the transparency of the process, and allows significant interference with users' rights. It is required of effective governance to allow the media and its audience to freely express themselves, and to be immune from negative influences of conflicts of interest and fear of the state. The authors conducted a review of relevant theories which led to the conclusion that SM are indirectly under obligations which usually belong to states. Therefore, they developed further an idea on a new liability regime based on the principles of *notice and action*,⁶ to give appropriate consideration to expressions which do not carry significant negativity and offer constructive criticism, and guarantee the balanced regard for the fundamental rights of all the parties concerned. Yet, again, who should guarantee the enforcement of this goal?

Flew (2015) pointed out that almost all SM are on platforms that are both transnational and private. This would suggest international approach to their regulation, thus highlighting importance of this study. Indeed, SM platforms are not neutral providers; they influence – they already intervene in various areas (Gillespie, 2015). Consequently, it is not surprising that the European Commission is planning a comprehensive directive regulating SM that should have originally come in force in late 2020 (Khan & Murgia, 2019). The very important Directive 2000/31/EC (Directive on electronic commerce), which covers inter alia rules of liability exemption of ISP for third party content (the so-called safe harbour), is apparently not a sufficient tool for effective and efficient SM regulation. As put by Cappello (2018, Foreword):

This directive is a regulatory answer to those problems that were apparent in the year 2000. Again, a world without Facebook, YouTube and iPhones. A world without big data or fake news. Even its nickname, Directive on electronic commerce, sounds outdated, passé. Everything all those services offer and the things you can do with those little devices go way beyond just “commerce”.

Currently, it is expected that the planned SM regulation (with working title “Digital Services Act”) within the EU will be at play not sooner than in three years from now (Struhárik, 2020). Within this discussion, the contribution of academics of V4 countries to discussions of SM regulations has until recently remained limited. There was just a single article which focused explicitly on discussions about how to regulate SM (see Hanych & Pivoda, 2017) in the sample of academic articles on SM from Slovakia

5 The content is removed by the host following notice.

6 See the related terminology in ICF et al. (2018).

(200), the Czech Republic (100), Hungary (130), and Poland (180), published between 2013 and 2017. It is true that many articles discussed specific regulatory aspects, especially those related to the protection of minors or copyright protection in a changing media environment (Bartoň, 2016; Hazucha, 2014; Abelovský, 2015). Some discussed legal aspects of employers' interest in the surveillance of social sites (Lukács, 2017). Others discussed the legal aspects of virtual identity (Naseh, 2016) or the hate speech regulation. For example, Smieško (2016) analysed the regulatory aspects of criminal liability with the use of feedback buttons on Facebook. Kutiš (2014) raised a question about the general regulation of the Internet, albeit in the context of Bitcoin. Finally, there are two books, even though relatively outdated, about general legal responsibility on the Internet (Husovec, 2014 and follow up in 2016; Matejka, 2013). Notably, the book by Pouperová (2016) actually questioned the very foundations of the state/public regulation of broadcasting from the constitutional law perspective. It is true that this lack of academic literature on SM regulation has recently been changing, with a number of articles dealing with SM regulation directly (e.g. Mazúr & Patakyová, 2019).

While there is slowly emerging academic discussion on SM regulation among V4 authors, in the meantime, at the country level, for example Germany was the first among the EU Member States to pass a law providing for hefty fines for larger SM companies if they do not remove hate speech quickly from their portals in 2018. In 2019, Germany introduced the first regulatory proposal in the EU to impose binding diversity obligations on SM platforms' ranking and sorting algorithms in 2019 (Helberger et al., 2019).⁷ This means that while some countries are lagging behind in academic regulatory discussions, some other countries are already introducing specific regulatory policies for SM.

In general, the European institutions are not proposing separate rules just for SM, instead, they are keeping to the tradition of horizontal rule-making whenever possible and trying to find a holistic solution as opposed to patchwork solutions applying to individual parts of the sector (see Yar & Stolton, 2020; Micklitz, 2017). One of the exceptions to this rule is the newly approved AVMSD, taking a sectoral approach. It may be interesting to learn how experts from the V4 NRAs perceive these challenging SM regulatory issues. Before that, a short overview of local regulatory experiences with legacy and social media might be useful. Can perhaps self-regulation and

7 These obligations include a) non-discrimination – video platforms are prohibited from “unfairly hindering” the content they carry, or “treating it differently without a commercially justified reason”, both in terms of the access conditions for content providers and the search and browsing features for users; b) priority for the public broadcasting content – public broadcasting content, for those platforms that offer it, should be “especially highlighted and made easy to find”; c) user choice and customization – video platforms must offer users the choice between at least two different types of sorting logics, such as alphabetical, chronological or view-based sorting. More generally, the algorithm must also be customizable by the user; and d) search features – users must be able to access the video platform's content through a search function, which must be “discrimination-free” (see Helberger et al., 2019).

co-regulation be used for SM regulation, as well? Does experience make us optimistic in that regard?

3. LEGACY AND SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-REGULATION AND CO-REGULATION IN V4

We put together the two out of three regulatory forms, self-regulation and co-regulation in this section. This was based on three observations which we made from our analysis: firstly, it is difficult to distinguish between the self-regulation and co-regulation when they are at work, and secondly, the number of countries implementing effective self-regulation in the media sector is very low, while the implementation of co-regulation remains questionable in some countries. Thirdly, there are also authors who use for co-regulation a term “regulated self-regulation” as well as “statutory self-regulation” (see Ukrow, 2019). Thus, this decision is supported by both theoretical and practical considerations.

Media self-regulation is a joint endeavour by media professionals and media owners to set up voluntary editorial guidelines and abide by them in a process open to the public. If the state and the private regulators co-operate in joint institutions, this is called “co-regulation.” As mentioned, there emerged important concept of “institutional self-regulation” which reflects regulatory codes and initiatives by individual SM platforms.

3.1. Self-regulation and co-regulation in the Czech Republic

The Czech NRA, the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting (Rada pro rozhlasové a televizní vysílání; RRTV), reported co-operation with the Association for Internet Development in the Czech Republic (Sdružení pro internetový rozvoj v České republice, SPIR), a self-regulatory body, as successful in 2016, although, there were no administrative proceedings which involved it. The RRTV assessed conclusions and analyses of the self-regulator and noticed that the key regulatory issue was concerned with online betting. The RRTV did not report any form of cooperation with the other self-regulator, Association of Television Organisations [Asociace televizních organizací; ATO] (RRTV, 2017). The ATO and the Association of Independent Radio and Television Broadcasters (Asociácia nezávislých rozhlasových a televíznych staníc; ANRTS),⁸ are primarily professional associations of organisations in television and/or radiobroadcasting in the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively. Their members include public broadcasters (in the case of the ATO) and commercial broadcasters in both cases. In contrast to the (former) ANRTS, the ATO has established its self-regulatory commission as well as created code of ethics for editors news and current affairs programmes in television broadcasting (ATO, n.d.; ATO, 2009).

⁸ Since 2020, only the Association of Radios of Slovakia, Asociácia rádii Slovenska, ARS.

Although the ATO cooperates, according to its statute (ATO, 2016, Article III, 1j), with the Czech RRTV, its self-regulation is complementary to administrative regulation by the RRTV, and judicial regulation by the courts. This existing regulatory triplicity could explain why only nine findings from 2009 until early 2018 were issued by the Ethical Commission of the ATO. Interestingly, the last finding was issued in 2014 (ATO, 2014). Clearly, the ATO's ethical self-regulation is limited, firstly, to its members, secondly, within the television broadcasting sector, and thirdly, to news and current affairs programmes and is not working well, if at all.

In the press sector of the Czech Republic, there is a Commission for Ethics at the Syndicate of Journalists (Syndikát novinářů; SN). The Commission for Ethics, geographically limited to the territory of the Czech Republic, is supposed to cover only the work of journalists, including members and non-members of the SN, within the dictates of professionalism, although, the code of ethics is only binding for its members. Furthermore, it extends its coverage to online versions of newspapers, and the website of the Czech Television. Nevertheless, the system does not work, as the commission reports that its calls for cooperation with third parties remain unanswered. The last "statement" issued by the Ethics Commission is from February 2019 (Komise pro etiku, 2020).

3.2. Self-regulation and co-regulation in Slovakia

In Slovakia, the radio and television sector has not officially attempted implementation of self-regulation except within the advertising sector. The Advertising Standards Council (Rada pre reklamu; RPR), a private sector initiative for ethics in advertising which was co-founded by the ANRTS, has its own code of ethics for advertising practice. However, these ethical principles are de facto only binding for members. The Interactive Advertising Bureau of Slovakia (IAB Slovakia - združenie pre internetovú reklamu; IAB), an association for online advertising, comes closer to the effective regulation of SM with its issuance of the code of ethics for electronic media. The code is comprehensive in covering all electronic media, goes beyond the requirements stated by law, and is open to all complainers. However, it is also limited to marketing-related communication. The code defines electronic media as "any medium which ensures electronic interactive communication through the Internet" (IAB, 2010, Article 3). This could, theoretically, include SM which show some signs of marketing activity. An even more important regulatory instrument is the Code for Copying Content from the Internet (IAB, 2014, updated in 2020). The Code focuses mainly on identifying media which base their business model on such illegal and unethical practices, with little attention to minor breaches. The Ethical Commission exists to supervise adherence to this code, however, the IAB did not publish results of its regulatory activities until 2019 and this qualifies for a completely non-transparent self-regulation.

There is a bit unusual legal situation here. The Administrative Division of the Supreme Court in Slovakia in almost every ruling that tackled media commercial

communication (i.e. advertisements) mentioned that the court could not consider a possible sanction issued by a self-regulatory authority, since such body does not exist (Školka, 2019). However, section 5 of the Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission (Act 308/2000) assumes that NRA “shall cooperate with self-regulatory authorities in the area of broadcasting, retransmission and providing audiovisual services on demand at establishing efficient self-regulatory systems”.⁹ Thus, despite the RPR’s long-time existence – over twenty years – the judiciary did not notice its existence, and the NRA did not enter into effective cooperation with the RPR, although the law that expected that this would happen had been passed almost twenty years ago (Školka, 2019).

Indeed, the RPR (2019) adopted an Optional Protocol to the Ethical Code of Advertising in spring 2018 only, with consolidated version available since 2019 (RPR, 2019). This was done on request of the ANRTS. This Protocol should tackle ethical aspects of media commercial communication (i.e. advertisements in television and radio broadcast). The consolidated version tackles advertising at SM, too.

An earlier attempt at regulation of the digital world in Slovakia could be noticed in 2017 when the IAB joined the founding body of the Press Council, which was responsible for regulating ethical aspects of print journalism, and since then has become the Press-Digital Council (Tlačovo-digitálna rada; TRSR). As a result, the Ethical Code of the Journalist has changed and currently covers providers of information services and Internet portals. The aims of the Ethical Code of the Journalist include, “ensuring that all content published in print or on the Internet should be in line with the generally binding Slovak legislation and good manners”, and it is purported to serve as a guideline on all technological platforms (TRSR, 2017, p. 3). However, both the Code for Copying Content from the Internet (IAB, 2020) and the Ethical Code of the Journalist (TRSR, 2017) are only binding for those who explicitly sign up to it.

It is important to consider these limitations relating to regulation of journalistic content and digital media in Slovakia. Apparently, the TRSR does not plan to deal with self-regulation of digital media, apart from journalistic content, in the near future (see TRSR, 2018). Generally, it appears that the majority of SM platforms are still not effectively regulated in Slovakia; exceptions can be made of those which are defined as journalistic and fall outside the broader scope of SM, voluntarily adhere to self-regulation, or have registered voluntarily with the NRA, based on the AVMSD, following guidance issued (VoD, referring to the older version of the AVMSD). In spite of the growing interest in the regulation of SM, as part of regulation of the digital media world, self-regulation appears to be in its embryonic and rather confusing stage in Slovakia. Concurrently, co-regulation, that should be represented by cooperation between the RVR and RPR, did not work; the RPR is not going to deal with SM except in advertising-related issues.

9 An English version is available at: http://www.culture.gov.sk/extdoc/3626/308_aj_342.

3.3. Self-regulation and co-regulation in Hungary

In Hungary, as Urban (2018) argues, there are limited instruments of media accountability. An effective system of self-regulation and a common code of ethics are yet to be adopted by the whole industry. A self-regulatory body, named *Korrektor*, established with numerous ambitions aiming at ethical journalism in 2015 on the initiative of the Forum of Editors-in-chief in co-operation with the Hungarian Publishers' Association (MLE) and the Association of Hungarian Content Providers (MTE), has made a couple of substantive decisions, even though these are mostly dismissals of some existing discrepancies. The Association of Hungarian Journalists (MÚOSZ), the Community of Hungarian Journalists (MÚK), the Association of Hungarian Content Providers (MTE), and the Self-regulatory Advertising Association (ÖRT), as independent self-regulatory bodies, also have their own code of ethics. Major online outlets are members of the MTE, which issued a code of conduct in 2007 dealing with data protection, copyright, archiving policy and responsibility on the Internet. The code on responsibility on the Internet, requires online content producers to monitor and remove any textual and visual elements which are considered unlawful from their platform. However, the above-mentioned associations are fragmented and this makes it difficult for them to enforce the needed regulatory controls – their members are journalists and not publishers. There is very little publicly available information about the effectiveness of these self-regulatory bodies, apart from the ÖRT. Nevertheless, we can safely argue based on the aforementioned trends that at the moment, effective self-regulation is absent in the media industry of Hungary.

Co-regulation, on the other hand, is permitted in media administration by the Hungarian media and interested professional organisations can assume media administrative duties following authorisation of the National Media and Info-communications Authority (NMHH) – there are four such co-regulatory bodies. Importantly, these co-regulatory bodies can investigate complaints that are related to selected violations including: advertisements which violate human dignity or offend religious or ideological convictions; use of subliminal advertising techniques or subconscious perception; advertisements promoting tobacco products, weapons, ammunition, explosives, prescription medication; advertising content representing harmful or unfair influence to minors. Nevertheless, they can only act within the limited jurisdiction of printed and online press products, and on-demand media services. Moreover, Urban (2018) claims that co-regulatory arrangements could be most aptly described as the outsourcing of official responsibilities, therefore, efficient enforcement mechanisms are not involved. The Media Council, which is a semi-autonomous part of the NMHH, is obliged to review every decision rendered by the co-regulatory bodies and partly finances them. The NMHH and the co-regulatory bodies enter into an administrative contract which must be reviewed annually, and the NMHH passes certain regulatory powers to the body which in return submits to the code of conduct which is a mandatory extension of the contract. Subsequently,

when the NMHH receives a complaint regarding those media which are part of the co-regulatory framework, it forwards it to the co-regulatory body. Applicants also have the right to appeal to the NMHH against the co-regulatory body's decision. Unfortunately, the co-regulatory mechanism has been practically applied only in a handful of cases; there are less than ten cases annually and only a maximum of two end up with a substantive decision (NMHH, 2017). Meanwhile, the main areas covered by complaints received are the protection of minors, hate speech and personality rights (Berkényi, 2016).

3.4. Self-regulation and co-regulation in Poland

In Poland, the Polish Chamber of Press Publishers (Izba wydawców prasy, IWP), along with the two biggest professional journalism organisations, the Polish Journalists Association (Stowarzyszenie Dziennikarzy Polskich; SDP) and the Journalists' Association of the Republic of Poland (Stowarzyszenie Dziennikarzy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej; SDRP), formulated their own codes of professional ethics and established internal disciplinary courts for their members (SDRP, 2020a, 2020b). However, there are no further reports on ethics available either for the SDP or SDRP. The Council of Media Ethics (Rada Etyki Mediów; REM), linked with the SDRP, provides only communication tool for uploading complaints, i.e. it is just a website (<http://www.dziennikarzerp.pl>). The Supreme Journalistic Court of SDP (Naczelny Sąd Dziennikarski), which may be ethical council does not provide any further public information about its activities (SDP, 2020b). This was confirmed in e-mail communication with the organisation (Zielińska, 2020).

Media owners and other professional organisations adopted the Charter of Media Ethics and Journalistic Code of Conduct at a (Permanent) Conference of Polish Media, which appointed the advisory Council of Media Ethics (Maślankiewicz, 2015). It appears that the Council of Media Ethics operates somehow, reportedly dealing with up to 500 cases annually (Dziennikarze RP, 2019). However, detailed checking of its public website and verdicts issued shows that the last annual report is from 2010 year (REM, 2020a). Moreover, there are no internal documents publicly available that would prove how the Council actually operates, save for its verdicts (REM, 2020b).

Public broadcasters also formulated their own code of ethics, initiated by the National Broadcasting Council (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji; KRRiT) round table, to fight disinformation and hate speech, and promote best practices. The Commissions of Ethics have no sanctioning powers, but act as advisory bodies to the public Polish Television (TVP) and Polish Radio (PR) supervising boards.

Generally, self-regulatory media accountability mechanisms do not work well, if at all, nation-wide in Poland. We are going to discuss co-regulation in the Polish case in the next part since it appears to be working in some areas instead of self-regulation.

3.5. Self-regulation and co-regulation across V4 countries

In summary, self-regulation of SM and legacy media across V4 countries works only with limited success and scope. SM media regulation does not exist in Slovakia, except for emerging advertising/marketing regulation within the digital online sector. Moreover, prospective self-regulatory arrangements (including SM) have been put in place but only for the journalistic sector. Similarly, co-regulation for audiovisual sector did not work. In the Czech Republic, self-regulation of legacy media is little effective, and co-regulation is demonstrable with formal signs of presence through two organisations co-operating with the NRA. Partial SM regulation appears to be even less developed than in Slovakia. In Poland, self-regulation is negatively influenced by political and related professional divisional dynamics and cannot be seen as a meaningful and relevant regulatory solution for the press sector or SM. Nevertheless, there are some sector-specific co-regulatory successes regarding co-operation with the Polish NRA (to be discussed next). The Hungarian case is more complicated with partial co-regulation and no self-regulation; co-regulation seems to work relatively well, however, dealing with only a few cases each year.

Although certain sectoral exceptions can be made, within V4 countries self-regulation and co-regulation for the traditional press and audiovisual sectors, with occasional focus on digital media possibly encompassing SM, are problematic, generally non-existent or dysfunctional. Therefore, it seems useful to explore future role of NRAs in SM regulation.

4. PUBLIC REGULATION – MEDIA REGULATORS IN V4

In every V4 country, there is a media board for audio-visual and audio services – radio and television, including re-transmissions (NRA). Yet there are huge differences in their legal definitions, internal organisational structures, competencies and real or formal independence from the government/parliament.

For example, Hungary is the only exception with a converged media board, the NMHH, which deals with both media and the telecommunications administration. The convergence in Hungary refers to the convergence within traditional broadcasting and telecommunications. Nevertheless, the Hungarian solution at the institutional level remains confusing for external observers; there are three partially independent administrative bodies within one complex body, that tackle various media and telecommunication policy related issues. The content related issues are primarily addressed by the Media Council (MC), having a separate and independent legal identity within the NMHH, and partially by the Office of the MC, which is the main administrative body of the MC with independent regulatory powers. The Office of the MC regulates selected issues including provisions on media content which contain or incite violence, or carries the potential of causing disturbance or infringing regulations on the protection of religious convictions. Consequently, the

MC and its Office share capacities. The NMHH is defined as an autonomous regulatory agency subordinated solely to the law.

In contrast to both definition and composition of Hungarian NRA, the Polish KRRiT split by law in 2016 into two parts, establishing separate the National Media Council (KRRiT, 2016). This latter body took over part of KRRiT's mandate concerning public service media and wire agency.

Thus, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have three or four separate bodies which deal with (almost) all audio-visual media services (traditional broadcasting), including some on-demand online media services, then there are supervisory bodies that oversee public service media and/or wire agency (there is a newly formed body for both public service television and radio as well as wire agency in Poland), and, finally, authorities that are responsible for telecommunications, postal services and frequency management (the last issue is in some countries shared competence with NRA).

The KRRiT is unique with its constitutional anchoring (KRRiT, 2020). In effect, this means institutional culture openly defined as “a supreme state body charged with broadcasting matters” (KRRiT, n.d., 1st paragraph). This can also be seen in composition of its members who can be politicians (but not members of political parties).

Although the RRTV in the Czech Republic is defined in the same way as “central state authority” (RRTV, n.d., 1st bullet), nonetheless, it appears to be by and large a more independent regulatory body. In Slovakia, the RVR is actually neither a fully state body, nor a fully autonomous body, but defined by the law as a *sui generis* body. In particular, it is defined almost identically as the Czech counter-partner, when it deals with execution of state administration in broadcasting and related issues. A slight difference consists in that it is not defined as “central state authority”, but as “state authority with nation-wide powers” (Act 308/2000). However, in other (not-state) areas of oversight and regulation, it is defined as “collective independent organ” (RVR, n.d.).

In general, although nominees in the NRAs may not be closely or openly tied to politicians or political parties, they are usually not independent personalities. However, there is still difference how these candidates are selected and how openly these nominations are politicised. Hungary and Poland seem to be much more politically/ideologically polarised in this perspective than either the Czech Republic or Slovakia (see e.g. Kovács, 2019). Nonetheless, independence of all NRAs very much depends on how politicians intervene or not in their work, and how official or unofficial political nominees stay independent in their new posts. Obviously, political interventions, political nominations or overall legal and institutional design may have impact on professionalism and independence of the NRAs, too. This, in effect, may be seen as negative factor when entrusting the NRAs with SM regulation. For example, the initial findings of the joint mission to Hungary carried out by the International Press Institute (IPI), Article 19, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), Free Press Unlimited (FPU) and Reporters Without Borders

(RSF), supported by the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO) came to conclusion in late 2019: “Hungary’s system of media regulation is not independent” (European Federation of Journalists, 2019, paragraph on Media Regulation). A more detailed analysis came to the same conclusion, although formally there are present guarantees for independence of NRA (Rozgonyi, 2019). Similarly, Klimkiewicz (2019) states that “Despite these safeguards, the issue of weak independence, in particular from political pressure, has long been on the political and public agenda in Poland” (p. 93). Moreover, according to her, “the comparative results place Poland in the group of four countries with the lowest trust in the independence of key regulatory institutions of the media sector in the EU” (p. 94).

The RRTV, RVR, KRRiT and NMHH are encouraged by their respective legal acts to co-operate with self-regulatory organisations and support co-regulatory mechanisms. However, as mentioned, this co-operation is non-existent in Slovakia, although, within the context of the working group established by the Ministry of Culture of Slovakia to draft a new media law, there is a strong tendency toward co-regulatory arrangements in several policy areas, most prominently advertising and protection of minors. The Czech RRTV officially recognises two self-regulatory institutions, although their past activities fall short of optimal. The Hungarian NMHH represents a more advanced case which, as earlier mentioned, has entered into administrative contracts with four self-regulatory bodies which, as a result, qualify as co-regulatory bodies: the Hungarian Advertising Self-Regulatory Body, the Hungarian Newspaper Publishers’ Association, the Association of Hungarian Content Providers, and the Association of Hungarian Electronic Broadcasters – their activities were discussed in the previous section. In the Polish case, the KRRiT has encouraged adoption of codes of good practice in some areas, including those concerning the protection of children from advertisements of “junk” food and content containing pornography and violence in VoD services. KRRiT (2017) reported that in some cases self-regulation was not able to meet the expectations of recipients, and highlights the failure of self-regulation with regard to the gradual increase in the number of programmes with facilities for the disabled. Apparently, media regulation is dominated by public regulation with attempts being made to develop and/or promote self-regulation and co-regulation. This is the reason why we turn to the role of the NRAs with respect to SM regulation.

5. NATIONAL REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN V4 AND SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION

Initially, we carried out a search using the keywords, “social networks” and “social media” in national languages, on the websites of all four NRAs. The aim was to identify indirectly, if and to what degree the NRAs see SM as a relevant regulatory issue. Of course, this survey reflects and is impacted by overall communication efforts by NRAs as documented by level of development of their websites. Nonetheless, our

findings on the importance attributed to SM by the NRAs are demonstrated in statistics in Table 1. The marked differences also serve as notable indicators for transparency, as the detailed analysis may reflect the extent to which general information is presented to the public.

Table 1: Social media and social networks on websites of media regulators in V4 (May 2018)

	SK	CZ	HU	PL
Results for social networks	0	7	217	2948
Results for social media	0	65	3933	4540

The Polish NRA demonstrated the highest interest in these issues, yet it was found to offer mostly translations and wire agency reports on media related issues in published materials. On the other hand, the Slovak NRA (RVR) was found to provide little information to the public and demonstrated the lowest interest on SM. The Hungarian and Czech NRAs fell in between, with the former performing much better than the latter.

Furthermore, we were interested how these reporting and monitoring trends on SM are reflected in annual reports by the NRAs. The Czech RRTV, in its annual report, pointed to the novelty and sensitivity of the regulation of live-streaming of television broadcasts via YouTube, and the lack of sufficient regulation in the case of HbbTV (RRTV, 2017). However, it does not seem to be focused on the regulatory aspects of SM, unless discussions about revisions of the AVMSD are considered as part of this process. Interestingly, the Slovak RVR mentions HbbTV in its 2016 Annual Report, but does not mention any associated regulatory issues. The KRRiT, on the other hand, pays a lot of attention to SM in its 2016 Annual Report (KRRiT, 2017, pp. 46–50), however, this takes the form of statistics and does not focus on regulatory issues. Moreover, in its 2017 Annual Report (KRRiT, 2018), it only mentions SM as a tool for PR, media literacy and educational activities. The overview of annual reports of NRAs suggests that the NMMH has paid the most, although still relatively limited, attention to online content regulation. It carried out an interesting study (2016) on compliance with the recommendations on media content on the Internet among 120 media websites. Additionally, it examined 50 out of the most visited websites which had media content. Out of the 50 pages, 25 were reported to be harmful to minors. Hungary, since 2011, has had a set of legal regulations to be uniformly applied for all media. However, this is limited to activities of economic nature provided on a commercial basis. The NMHH sets details, and differentiates the rules pertaining to media services based on the nature of the respective services, in accordance with the media act.

In similar fashion to what is observed for majority of other EU countries, currently, there are no well-defined regulations of SM in V4 countries. Therefore, we

leveraged the answers to the questions and we asked experts from the NRAs in all four countries in order to get insights into current challenges and possible solutions to them from the national perspectives of these four NRAs. As regards their field of expertise – these were executive managers for the NRAs in Slovakia and Hungary, and members of European cooperation/legal department respectively, with focus on SM). The Polish and Czech contributors (specialists in SM – EU/ERGA cooperation representatives or contact points) were contacted via the Slovak NRAs' contributors. Although the answers presented below do not represent official positions of the NRAs, they are still informative opinions. Obviously, any policy position is drafted first of all by professional staff, not by a collective body. Moreover, this communication was done transparently and semi-officially, via official institution channels (the NRA in Slovakia facilitated the answers from NRAs in the Czech Republic and Poland) or directly via contact points in NRA in Hungary. The answers were much more complex than are their short summaries presented in tables.

The first question required definitions of the most problematic aspects of regulating SM from the perspective of each V4 country, and the answers are demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2: The most problematic aspects of regulating social media in V4

Country	CZ	HU	PL	SK
Issues	Inconsistent regulation	Vagueness and enforceability	Cultural differences	Absence of direct editorial responsibility and mostly extraterritoriality

The perceived greatest challenge varied with each country. The Czech NRA member or members (their exact number was not specified in the answer from NRA) highlighted inconsistency. The inconsistent regulation was defined in its context as a lack of balance between the regulation of SM and various fundamental rights. The Hungarian NRA experts (there were two of them) highlighted a difficulty in determining which SM sites should be regulated and the legal grounds for the selection criteria. The Polish NRA expert or experts (their exact number was not specified in the answer from the NRA) answer highlighted the cultural differences among the EU M.S. regarding issues like minors' protection and audio-visual commercial communications, for example, the ban of alcohol advertising in some countries. The Slovak NRA experts (there were two of them), also deviating from the others, highlighted regulatory challenges in foreign jurisdictions of major SM platforms and the absence of direct editorial responsibility.

We also observed hesitance or conditional attitudes towards delegating the general task of regulating content on SM to the media regulators (see Table 3).

Table 3: Should the National Regulatory Authorities regulate the content on social media?

Country	CZ	HU	PL	SK
Position	No	Yes, but conditionally	Partly	Unclear

The Czech NRAs experts maintained that the regulation of SM should be limited, to a large extent, to self-regulation. In contrast, the Polish NRAs experts suggested that professional video content provided by SM should be regulated by current regulatory bodies. The Hungarian NRAs experts answered in the affirmative, yet with a condition, and their main challenges included authority and universality. The Slovak NRAs experts preferred to keep the answer open.

We also investigated expert opinions on the efficient regulatory frameworks to be adopted for SM, in response to the call for self-regulation or co-regulation among NRAs instead of reliance on an established NRA. Our findings are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: What are efficient regulatory alternatives for social media?

Country	CZ	HU	PL	SK
Position	Self-regulation	Co-regulation	Self-regulation	Co-regulation

The Czech NRA experts suggested that the primary choice should be self-regulation, and it should be an expression of the social responsibility of social network operators. In the context of effective legislation, they suggested that the German legislation, NetzGD, could be a good inspiration for V4 countries. The Hungarian NRA experts suggested co-regulation and possibly a global regulatory agreement, but the latter option is very unlikely according to them. The KRRiT experts intimated a lack of experience with alternative forms of the regulation of VSPs, but their positive experience with the self-regulation of linear media and VoD led them to a conclusion that self-regulation of VSPs could be an efficient solution. The Slovak NRA experts preferred co-regulation but also believed that at this stage, it is going to be subject to trial and error, since it is a new field for most of the public policy institutions.

Finally, we investigated the awareness of the NRAs experts on the impact of cross-border regulation, which has been a pertinent issue in discussions on SM regulation. Table 5 demonstrates our findings.

Table 5: Is there a room for global regulatory solutions (e.g. through Facebook itself or via the European Commission) or more room for regulation via national/local Internet Service Providers?

Country	CZ	HU	PL	SK
Position	Ideally global, practically at national level	Both global and national	Definitely global, national/local ISPs under national authorities + general basic rules for all MS.	European level, + Direct dialogue with the platforms for national regulatory solutions

The Czech NRA experts suggested that SM is a global technology, so optimal regulation should be global in nature; however, they agreed that the involvement of providers at national and local levels was essential. According to the Polish NRA experts, global regulatory solutions are definitely necessary for global players. Hungarian NRA experts believed that global and national approaches should be employed synergistically. Finally, the Slovak NRA experts believed that European solutions, within the ERGA and EPRA, are good approaches for solving common issues, but there are specific issues which need attention at the national level of individual Member States.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Although there is a custom of informal exchange of information and opinions among V4 countries, including within more international and formal discussion platforms such as the ERGA or ERPA, there are surprising differences how would V4 NRAs experts' approach SM regulation and how much attention the NRAs devoted to SM. In retrospective, both the overview of annual reports of the NRAs and of their websites suggests that the Hungarian NMMH has paid the most, although still relatively limited, attention to online content regulation, while Polish NRA paid more attention in communicating SM related topics on its website. Generally, there appear to be prevailing inconsistencies which characterise the present regulatory approaches and suggested regulatory approaches applied to SM, among the V4 NRAs.

The lesson learnt from this overview is that self-regulation and co-regulation for SM may work only in some sectors such as advertisements or protection of minors, but with questionable effectiveness. Historically, self-regulation as a regulatory modality for legacy media is comparatively most developed in Slovakia even though it is characterised by weak results and limited focus on advertisements and journalism. We argue that self- and co-regulation for SM in Slovakia are not practically evident except, very recently, online advertising, and tentatively for journalism and copyright related issues. Self-regulation in Hungary and Poland is practically non-existent (formally, there is some self-regulatory activity in Poland in journalism but it is non-transparent) either for legacy media or for SM, while it is marked by inefficiencies for legacy media in the Czech Republic. Co-regulation is more formal or rather symbolic in the Czech Republic, limited in Hungary, and focused on specific areas in Poland. It appears that within the Polish context, the KRRiT may play flexible, yet efficient, roles in regulating SM, especially if this will be done in cooperation with some other bodies. However, both Hungary and Poland may be challenged in SM future regulation by the political environment.

The coupling of nation-specific or sector-specific regulatory interventions and EU-wide approaches represents a promising solution to the evolving regulatory needs of SM as part of digital media in general. However, this still may be challenging

task, since our overview of opinions of the NRAs experts on possibilities of SM regulations shows variety of opinions and suggested approaches.

First, the most problematic aspects of regulating SM in V4 seem to be differently identified among V4 NRAs. For the Czech NRA experts, it seems to be a lack of balance between the regulation of SM and various fundamental rights. For Hungarian experts, it is vagueness of definitions (and inclusion) of SM and questionable legal enforceability of SM regulation. For Polish experts, it seems to be cultural differences among EU MS that may complicate SM regulation efforts even at the national level. The Slovak NRA experts see it as a more complex issue, namely as an absence of direct editorial responsibility and mostly extraterritoriality in case of SM.

Second, the question whether the NRAs should regulate the content on SM appears to be rather challenging for NRAs experts. There was no enthusiastic support for full involvement of the NRAs in SM regulation, although there was awareness that some involvement may be necessary. In the related issue, what could be seen as efficient regulatory alternatives for SM (in general, or if we exclude NRAs roles), experts from the Czech and Polish NRAs would tentatively prefer self-regulation, while experts from the Hungarian and Slovakian NRAs would prefer co-regulation.

Finally, when asked whether there is a preference for global regulatory solutions or rather for regulation via national/local ISP, experts from three NRAs would prefer combination of global and local solutions, while experts from Slovak NRA would prefer a European approach.

Considering the results of this regional overview, it is evident that much more discussion and consultation is needed to find a common ground in the EC attempts to develop the pan-European approach to regulating SM. Interestingly, the first common position of ERGA on the Digital Services Act (see ERGA, 2020) was published in June 2020.

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ROLA SYMBOLICKÉHO KAPITÁLU V ŠTÁTOM DOTOVANOM POLI SLOVENSKEHO DOKUMENTÁRNEHO FILMU

// THE ROLE OF SYMBOLIC CAPITAL IN THE FIELD OF STATE FUNDED
DOCUMENTARY MOVIES IN SLOVAKIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper applies the concept of symbolic capital introduced by Pierre Bourdieu on the research of the Slovak documentary field. The paper explains three different sources of symbolic capital for documentary producers and directors; movies themselves, director's acting in front of camera and media discourse about movies and their directors. The paper accents the importance of symbolic capital in state funded industry and shows how it is perceived by commissioners of the Audiovisual Fund in Slovakia.

Keywords: discourse analysis ▪ symbolic capital ▪ Pierre Bourdieu ▪ documentary film ▪ Audiovisual Fund ▪ Slovakia

1. ÚVOD

Európsky film, obzvlášť ten dokumentárny, je častokrát odkázaný na systém štátnej podpory. Od vzniku Audiovizuálneho fondu (ďalej AVF alebo Fond) – ako hlavnej inštitúcie poskytujúcej štátnu podporu pre filmový priemysel na Slovensku – býva fondom podporených približne 80 % celovečerných dokumentárnych projektov (Vlček, 2018, s. 56). Prítom samotná osoba žiadateľa býva pri rozhodovaní o ne/pridelení podpory jedným z najzásadnejších kritérií a hodnotitelia komisií (nie len dokumentárneho, ale i hraného filmu) majú častokrát tendenciu tematizovať skúsenosti žiadateľa ako argument pre podporu projektu, ako naznačujú predošlé štúdie (Urban, 2016; Vlček, 2018).

Doterajšie štúdie však neponúkajú komplexné vysvetlenie mechanizmov, ktoré

obraz žiadateľa – ako „skúseného autora“ – v myšliach komisárov konštruujú. A práve to je cieľom tejto štúdie; cez koncept symbolického kapitálu, pochádzajúceho z prác Pierra Bourdieuho, vysvetlíť, aké mechanizmy môžu do procesu konštruovania obrazu autora vstupovať, kde všade možno nájsť zdroje identity autora a akým spôsobom pôsobia tieto mechanizmy vo verejnom diskurze.

Kým Bourdieuho práce vychádzajú predovšetkým z analýzy literárneho poľa, aplikovanie jeho konceptov na pole filmu nie je nové. Avšak texty zamerané na slovenský filmový priemysel sa doposiaľ o takýto prístup naplno nepokúsili. I české texty, ktoré s konceptom poľa vo výskume filmu pracujú, neaplikujú koncept symbolického kapitálu v jeho plnej šírke.¹ Okrem samotného poznania mechanizmov budovania symbolického kapitálu vo filmovom priemysle práca prináša aj aplikáciu teoretického rámca, ktorý v tomto rozsahu nie v tejto oblasti úplne ustálený.

Potreba analýzy symbolického kapitálu v rozsahu tejto štúdie vychádza tiež z prozaickej otázky: kto je dokumentárny režisér (alebo) producent na Slovensku? Odpovede na túto otázku možno bez hlbšieho skúmania, na základe intuície, rozložiť na pomyselnom spektre od začiatočníka po etablovaného tvorca. Na strane začiatočníka môže stáť ktokoľvek, kto práve režíruje (alebo produkuje) vlastný film, a nezáleží na tom, či má predošlé skúsenosti. Až film dokončí, stane sa debutantom, no bežné je, obzvlášť u čerstvých absolventov filmových fakúlt, že ďalej filmy nerežirujú a pracujú v inej oblasti. Sú teda režiséromi? Niektoré festivaly zas vyhlasujú špeciálne kategórie pre tvorcov, ktorí dokončili druhý alebo tretí film, inak je vnímaný autor, ktorého filmografia obsahuje desiatky filmov. Prvotné úvahy nad týmito odlišnosťami vnímania režiséra v diskurze ma viedli ku konceptu „profesionality“, avšak vzhľadom k tomu, že v poli umenia je bežné binárne rozdelenie ochotník/profesionál, rozhodol som sa toto uvažovanie ďalej nerozvíjať. Práve aplikácia konceptu symbolického kapitálu pomáha tieto rozdiely medzi tvorcami lepšie pochopiť.

Tento text okrem aktualizácie Bourdieuho teórií na dokumentárnom poli na Slovensku (ako podpoli poľa filmového priemyslu) prináša vysvetlenie, ako sa existencia samotných filmov a ich následne úspechy stávajú zdrojom symbolického kapitálu, ako je konštruovaná identita režiséra v mediálnom diskurze, ktorý je následným zdrojom symbolického kapitálu režiséra, a nakoniec ako môže vystupovanie režiséra pred kamerou – ktoré je pre slovenských režisérov skôr výnimočné – posilňovať symbolický kapitál režiséra. V poslednej kapitole vysvetlím, ktoré mechanizmy utvárania symbolického kapitálu možno v samotných hodnoteniach podaných projektov nájsť a ako tieto mechanizmy ovplyvňujú rozhodnutia hodnotiteľov.

Ťažiskom textu sú štyri prípadové štúdie zamerané na Zuzanu Pisussi ako takmer výhradnú samoproducentku, Petra Kerekesa, ktorý sa príležitostne stáva aj producentom cudzích projektov, Ivana Ostrochovského, ktorý je režisér, ale veľkú časť jeho producentského portfólia predstavujú projekty iných režisérov (aj projekty hrané), a Maria Homolku, ktorý síce má režisérske skúsenosti, avšak toho času produkuje len

1 Pozri napr. Szczepanik, Zahrádka (eds.) (2018).

cudzí projekty. Takéto rozdelenie vychádza z mojej systematickejšej práce v oblasti slovenského dokumentu, kde vo svojej pripravovanej dizertačnej práci navrhujem práve takúto kategorizáciu producentov na základe ich primárneho zamerania. Rozhodnutie pre tento výber posilňuje i prvotný postreh,² ktorý naznačil, že identita režisérov je omnoho silnejšia a identita producentov býva častokrát upozadovaná, čo v tejto práci preukázali i niektoré prípadové štúdie.

2. TEÓRIA POĽA A SYMBOLICKÝ KAPITÁL

Bourdieu naprieč svojimi prácami hovorí, že pole je sieť objektívnych vzťahov medzi pozíciami, ktoré jednotliví aktéri v ňom zaujímajú. „Každá pozícia je objektívne definovaná svojim vzťahom voči ostatným pozíciám, teda inými slovami systémom relevantných, teda výkonných vzťahov, dovoľujúcich ich situovať voči všetkým ostatným pozíciám v štruktúre celkového rozvrhnutia vlastností“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 303). Na všetkých aktéroch, ktorí do (literárneho, filmového alebo iného) poľa vstupujú, pôsobia sily, ktoré sú ale odlišné podľa pozícií, ktorú daný aktér v poli zaujíma. Navyše medzi jednotlivými aktérmi v poli prebieha neustály boj o moc. Na to, aby sme mohli pole skúmať, musíme tieto pozície spoznať a spoznať i vzťahy medzi nimi. Na to potrebujeme chápať, čo a prečo chcú jednotliví aktéri dosiahnuť, slovami Bourdieuho, aký typ *špecifického kapitálu* chcú nadobudnúť.

V každom poli podľa Bourdieuho prebieha kolektívna viera v hru so všetkými jej pravidlami (*illusio*) a v posvätnú hodnotu predmetu tejto hry, ktorý je ako predpokladom, tak produktom samotného priebehu hry. Na samotnej hre sa zakladá samotná *posväcujúca moc*, ktorá umožňuje niektorým *posväteným* umelcom premeniť niektoré produkty v *posvätené* objekty, tvrdí Bourdieu (2010, s. 302). Čo má na mysli, keď hovorí o *posvätnosti*? Nie je ďaleko, a sám si to uvedomuje, od benjaminovského ponímania mena autora ako fetišu a konceptu aury umeleckého diela. Tvrdí, že „hodnotu umeleckého diela“ neprodukuje samotný umelec, ale pole produkcie, v ktorom toto dielo vzniká. „Umelecké dielo existuje ako symbolický objekt obdarený hodnotou, len ak je známe a uznávané verejnosťou obdarenou estetickými dispozíciami a estetickou kompetenciou“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 300). Inými slovami, na to, aby mohla byť dielu pripísaná nejaká „umelecká hodnota“, musí existovať také publikum, ktoré má dostatok kompetencií dielo verejne *oceniť*, aby sa stalo známym, Bourdieu by použil pojem *posvätiť*. Slovo z náboženských diskurzov tu je na mieste, pretože v takomto prípade ide o „vieru v hodnotu diela“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 301).

Bourdieu vymenúva mnoho subjektov, ktoré sa podieľajú na vytváraní takéhoto *posvätenia*. Od štátnych inštitúcií, ako sú ministerstvá, cez pološtátne a príspevkové inštitúcie, ako sú galérie, akadémia, historici, kritici, umelecké školy a ďalšie

2 Prvá analýza budovania symbolického kapitálu práve cez vystupovanie pred kamerou bola prednesená na konferencii The NECS 2019 v príspevku s názvom: Documentary Director in Front of the Camera as a Way of Building Symbolic Capital Through Storytelling, táto štúdia predstavuje rozšírenie predneseného príspevku.

inštitúcie produkujúce umelcov, až po inštitúcie a aktérov produkujúce divákov, ako sú učitelia, rodičia, kolektív. Navyše dodáva, že v minulosti sa v poli kultúrnej produkcie ustanovil „súbor inštitúcií slúžiacich k evidencii, uchovávaníu a analýze diel“ v podobe reprodukcí, katalógov, odborných revue, galérií atď., pričom v kontexte filmu by sme tu mohli spomenúť rôzne národné centrá zodpovedné za propagáciu národnej kinematografie. Tvrdí, že tiež narastá počet pracovníkov, ktorí sa venujú „oslavnej propagácii umeleckých diel a intenzifikácii obehu diel a umelcov“, čím má na mysli rôzne veľké medzinárodné výstavy a galérie, v oblasti filmu tu bez pochyb patria festivaly. „Všetko prispieva k ustanoveniu bezprecedentného vzťahu medzi umeleckým dielom a jeho vykladačmi: napríklad už diskurz o diele nie je len pomocník majúci podporiť pochopenie a ocenenie diela, ale súčasť produkcie diela a jeho zmyslu a hodnoty“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 228).

Čo ale autor získa, keď je jeho dielo *posvätené*? Môže získať rôzne druhy špecifického kapitálu, predovšetkým *symbolický kapitál*, teda istú formu nefinančného kapitálu, ktorý je ale umelec schopný neskôr za ekonomický kapitál zmeniť. Pre autora, ktorý chce zaujímať miesto v centre poľa, je extrémne dôležitý, pretože v poliach kultúrnej produkcie prebieha tzv. „dvojaká ekonomická logika“.

Umelecké a literárne polia sú totiž podľa Bourdieuho miestom stretu dvoch protikladných módov produkcie a výmeny. Na jednom póle stojí *antiekonomická ekonomika* toho, čo nazývame *čistým umením* alebo *umením pre umenie*. Tá vychádza z akejsi povinnosti „rozoznať hodnoty nezištnosti“, spočívajúcej v takej výrobe, v ktorej autor odmieta (obchodnú) ekonomiku a finančný (krátkodobý) zisk, čím sa jeho výroba javí ako nezištná v zmysle absencie priameho finančného úžitku. Takýto autor je podľa Bourdieuho úplne *autonómny*, pretože produkuje len to, čo chce on, a nie to, čo chce publikum (dopyt). Jediným „ekonomickým“ (v širokom, nefinančnom slova zmysle) cieľom takéhoto autora je akumulácia *symbolického kapitálu*, ktorá ale nijak neznižuje jeho autonómiu. Koncept *symbolického kapitálu* je najbližší bežne užívanému pojmu *renomé*. *Symbolický kapitál*, podobne ako *renomé*, neprináša priamy ekonomický zisk, Bourdieu preto vraví o „odoprenom ekonomickom kapitáli“, avšak ostatní aktéri v poli *symbolického kapitálu* ostatných vnímajú ako istú formu kreditu a sú si vedomí, že za istých podmienok, napríklad pri úspechu v grantovej žiadosti, tento kredit prináša priame ekonomické zisky (Bourdieu, 1998, s. 235). Podriadením sa podmienkam donátora grantu tak autor istú autonómiu môže strácať, ale miera takejto straty je tradične nižšia, ako podriadenie sa požiadavkám publika. Napríklad AVF po ukončení projektu kontroluje len finančnú stránku projektu a naplnenie cieľov v zmysle odovzdania filmu vo fáze a metráži, ktorá bola zjednaná v zmluve. Priame obsahové zásahy AVF do podporených projektov takmer neexistujú, v praxi sa vyskytujú len niektoré nezamýšľané vplyvy vznikajúce napríklad pri udelení nižšej dotácie, ako bola požadovaná: nižšia technická kvalita, redukcia počtu lokácií a pod.

Na opačnom, heteronómnom, póle poľa platí „ekonomická logika umeleckého a literárneho priemyslu“, kedy výroba vychádza v ústrety dopytu a k predaju kultúrnych

statkov sa pristupuje ako k predaju akéhokoľvek iného výrobku. Prednosť má predaj, distribúcia a „okamžitý a dočasný úspech“, čo môže byť napr. výška nákladu, v prípade filmu napríklad počet platiacich divákov. Pre takýchto autorov je možné získať istý symbolický kapitál vedľa toho ekonomického len vtedy, ak „odmietnu najhrubšie formy ziskuchtivosti a celkom úplne zamlčia svoje zištné zámery“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 191).

Na rozdiel od pólu, ktorý prísne riadi ekonomická logika, je obchod s čistým umením akýmsi „obchodovaním bez obchodovania“ (Bourdieu, 2010, s. 200). Takéto princípy je náročné interpretovať čisto s pomocou nástrojov ekonómie. Na tomto póle totiž dochádza ku konštantnému kolektívnemu popieraniam hodnoty ekonomického zisku.

Koncept *symbolického kapitálu* i ostatných typov špecifického kapitálu, ktoré Bourdieu naprieč svojou prácou definuje, je hojne používaný naprieč výskumom rôznych polí, predovšetkým umeleckých. Za viac než dvadsať rokov ale musel čeliť i istej kritike. V oblasti filmu predovšetkým v dôsledku globalizácie filmových polí. David Hesmondhalgh (2006) napríklad upozorňuje na to, že sociálnu a kultúrnu významnosť tzv. blockbustrových filmov na heteronómnej strane poľa nie je možné vysvetliť cez Bourdieho uvažovanie o posvätení diela. Tieto filmy získavajú iné formy *posvätnosti*, ako definuje Bourdieu. Navyše takéto diela vytvárajú svoje špecifické podpolia, kde určujú vlastné pravidlá hry, na čo Bourdieu neponúka koncepty schopné tieto procesy vysvetliť. Napríklad dnes veľmi úspešné filmy spoločnosti *Marvel* či sága *Star Wars* sú možno niektorými autormi odmietané v tradičnom Bourdieuho ponímaní ako komerčné, ale nemožno odoprieť, že sa im dostáva inému typu posvätenia v podobe vytvárania kultov a širokých fanúšikovských základní a ich autori kumulujú rôzne formy špecifického kapitálu.

Marijke de Valck zas upozorňuje na to, že dnes koexistujú odlišné stratégie finančnej kapitalizácie symbolického kapitálu naakumulovaného cez filmové festivaly. Ako príklad takejto dvojakosti uvádza thajského filmára Apichatponga Weerasethakula, niekoľkonásobne úspešného laureáta cien napríklad z festivalu v Cannes, ktorý nepretavuje svoje festivalové úspechy do vysokých tržieb. Opačný prístup má Lars von Triere, festivalovo nemenej úspešný nezávislý filmár, ktorí dokáže vypredávať kiná takmer po celom svete (de Valck, 2014, s. 81).

Avšak žiadna z revízií Bourdieuho náhľadu na *symbolický kapitál* nie je aplikovateľná na pole slovenského dokumentárneho filmu. Premeny, ktoré sa podpísali pod spôsoby, akým môžu filmári svoju prácu monetizovať, sa len málo odrážajú v poli slovenského dokumentu. Skutočný komerčný úspech (v zmysle finančného zisku) má len niekoľko komerčne zameraných dokumentov portrétujúcich hviezdy hudby či športu³ a väčšina dokumentov má len nízku návštevnosť, a teda minimálne príjmy

3 Dva najnavštevovanejšie filmy sú 38 (Daniel Dangl, 2014), s hrubými tržbami v distribúcii 541 238 eur, a *RYTMUS – sídliskový sen* (Miro Drobný, 2015), s tržbami 402 349 eur. Okrem týchto dvoch žiaden z dokumentov v histórii slovenskej samostatnosti neprekročil tržby sto tisíc eur (Ulman, 2009–2019).

z distribúcie,⁴ pričom zisky z televíznej distribúcie tiež nie sú vysoké, pretože televízia do projektov vstupuje už vo výrobe ako koproducent, a teda jej vklad je súčasťou rozpočtu už pri zostavovaní nákladov na film. Ani v oblasti zahraničnej distribúcie nie sú slovenskí dokumentaristi výrazne úspešní, ak opomenieme výnimky, ako je Pavol Barabáš, vyrábajúci filmy blízke cestopisom, ktoré sa tešia televíznej popularite, alebo jednotky projektov, ktoré od počiatku počítajú so širokou medzinárodnou distribúciou, pretože sú širokými medzinárodnými koprodukciami (napr. filmy Petra Kerekesa). Väčšina slovenských dokumentaristov je odkázaná na *odložený zisk*, teda úspechy ich filmov im uľahčia získavanie verejných prostriedkov pre ich nasledujúce filmy. To potvrdzujú aj rozdiely v rozpočtoch medzi prvým a druhým filmom jednotlivých režisérov alebo vysoké dotácie, ktoré obdržali v posledných rokoch niektorí dokumentaristi po úspechu ich debutov (napr. Mária Rumanová). A práve kombinácia absencie príležitostí filmy monetizovať tak, ako ukazujú zahraničné štúdie, ktoré revidujú koncept *symbolického kapitálu* a praxi AVF, pre ktorý je stále *symbolický kapitál* tvorcov dôležitý, akcentuje, že je tento koncept v poli slovenského dokumentu stále relevantným.

3. TRI OBLASTI KONŠTRUKCIE SYMBOLICKÉHO KAPITÁLU

Cieľom tejto štúdie je vysvetliť, čo všetko sa môže podieľať na vytváraní symbolického kapitálu v očiach hodnotiteľov AVF.⁵ Práve tento podmieňovací spôsob je dôležitý. V niektorých prípadoch je totiž možné na základe výrokov hodnotiteľov presne identifikovať, z čoho daný obraz žiadateľa v očiach komisárov pochádza – to robím v poslednej kapitole tohto textu –, v mnohých prípadoch však konkrétny zdroj symbolického kapitálu žiadateľa nemožno presne identifikovať. Ak napríklad komisár o režisérovi hovorí ako „renomovanom“, nedá sa povedať, z čoho takýto prívlastok vyvodil. Mnohé z týchto procesov sú dokonca vnútorné, pravdepodobne samotným komisárom neznáme, a preto je nutné uvažovať o všetkých potenciálnych zdrojoch konštrukcie symbolického kapitálu: existencia filmov a ich úspechy, mediálny diskurz o tvorcoch a vlastná propagácia tvorcov skrze ich samotné filmy.⁶

Samotná existencia filmov a ich festivalové úspechy sú jasným zdrojom symbolického kapitálu. Ochota zveriť žiadateľovi prostriedky je priamo naviazaná na vnímanie schopnosti dokončiť filmový projekt, a tá je demonštrovaná práve v natočených

4 Okrem dvoch vyššie spomenutých len šesťnásť filmov prekročilo v hrubých tržbách desať tisíc eur, z nich polovica dvadsať tisíc: *Všetky moje deti* (Ladislav Kaboš, 2013) – 83 862 eur, *Mečiar* (Tereza Nvotová, 2017) – 77 944 eur, *Sloboda pod nákladom* (Pavol Barabáš, 2016) – 44 026 eur, *Arcibiskup Bezák Zbohom...* (Olga Záblická, 2014) – 37 978 eur, *IMT Smile a Lúčnica: Made in Slovakia* (Paľo Janík, 2016) – 35 784 eur, *Vábenie výšok* (Pavol Barabáš, 2017) – 27 637 eur, *Richard Müller: Nespoznaný* (Miro Remo, 2016) – 23 808 eur, *Devínsky masaker* (Gejza Dezorz, 2011) – 22 915 eur. Ostatné dokumentárne filmy majú tržby len niekoľko tisíc či sto eur (Ulman, 2007–2019).

5 Okrem nižšie popísaných mechanizmov to môže byť celý rad ďalších individuálnych mechanizmov, napríklad členstvo stavovských inštitúciách, podiel na výuke na filmových školách, členstvo v rôznych festivalových porotách a mnohé ďalšie.

6 Samotní tvorcovia nemajú takmer žiaden systematický marketing. Na sociálnych sieťach sú skôr menej aktívny a ich stránky sú skôr súborom anotácií k ich filmom ako premyslenou koncepčnou marketingovou kampaňou.

filmoch. Ich nasledujúce festivalové úspechy sú prakticky jediným kvantifikovateľným úspechom tvorcov, vzhľadom na vyššie popísanú neekonomickú povahu poľa slovenského dokumentu.

V súlade s Bourdieuhov prístupom predpokladám, že na hodnotenie projektov má vplyv i širší kontext poľa, v ktorom sa žiadatelia nachádzajú. Predpokladám, že na vnímaní žiadateľov komisármi sa podieľa i mediálny diskurz o týchto autoroch a samotné filmy, ktoré títo režiséri či producenti natáčajú. Tento predpoklad vychádza z faktu, že samotní komisári sú súčasťou poľa dokumentárneho filmu na Slovensku. Väčšina z komisárov sú alebo boli aktívni producenti či režiséri, zdieľajú pravidlá hry v danom poli (*illusio*) a akumulácia symbolického kapitálu je (alebo bola) aj ich cieľom ako autorov.⁷

Aj keď nemožno s istotou tvrdiť, ako a do akej miery sa napríklad mediálny diskurz podieľa na utváraní vnímania symbolického kapitálu komisármi, pochopenie mechanizmov, ktoré symbolický kapitál v mediálnom diskurze utvárajú, je dôležité. Nakoniec posledná kapitola ukazuje, že v niektorých prípadoch hodnotenia odrážajú mediálny diskurz o tvorcoch.

Pre vyššie uvedené dôvody budem hľadať zdroje symbolického kapitálu aj mimo samotné hodnotenia. Najprv vysvetlím, akým spôsobom priamo AVF kvantifikuje symbolický kapitál cez „kredit žiadateľa“, ktorý je vedľa hodnotenia obsahu projektu a rozpočtu projektu jednou z troch zložiek celkového bodového hodnotenia každej žiadosti o štátnu podporu. Kým táto prvá časť analýzy je univerzálne platná pre všetkých žiadateľov, v nasledujúcich častiach sa už zameriam na štyri konkrétne prípady, ktoré uvádzam v úvode tejto práce. U týchto režisérov budem rekonštruovať verejný diskurz o týchto štyroch tvorcoch a vysvetlím, akým spôsobom sa líši konštrukcia ich identít vo vzťahu k ich úspechom a aktivitám.

V ďalšej časti sa budem venovať konštrukcii identity režiséra skrze samotné filmy, konkrétne cez vystupovanie režisérov pred kamerou. Toto rozhodnutie vychádza z predpokladu, že samotné filmy sa podieľajú na vytváraní symbolického kapitálu ich autorov. Tento predpoklad dokladujú aj samotné hodnotenia prezentované v kapitole sedem. Rozhodnutie zúžiť analýzu samotných filmov na tie, v ktorých samotní režiséri vystupujú pred kamerou, vychádza z konceptu reflexivity, ktorý v oblasti skúmania filmu rozvádza Robert Stam. Ten za reflexívne považuje široké spektrum postupov, ako napríklad priame adresovanie diváka výpoveďou na kameru, film vo filme či prítomnosť filmovej techniky v obraze, ktoré divákovi umožňujú uvedomenie si samého seba ako filmového diváka (Stam, 1992, s. x). Reflexivita „požýva diváka preskúmať design a textúru“ filmového diela a upriamuje pozornosť na fakt, že film je len „konštrukt v podobe textu“ (Stam, 1992, s. 1). Ak teda prvok reflexivity – režisér pred kamerou – núti diváka bližšie uvažovať o spôsobe, akým je konštruovaný samotný film, obdobne ho núti bližšie uvažovať o osobe režiséra, ktorý film

⁷ V komisiách sa vyskytujú aj filmový teoretici, u ktorých je správne predpokladať, že poznajú mediálny diskurz o tvorcoch, ktorých projekty hodnotia.

konštruoval, a teda takýto film sa silnejšie podieľa na formovaní symbolického kapitálu režiséra, ktorý vníma divák. V tejto časti vychádzam z predpokladu, že komisári AVF sú zároveň divákmi aspoň časti filmov, ktoré AVF podporil a pre účely tejto práce tieto kategórie stotožňujem.

4. METODOLÓGIA

Koncept symbolického kapitálu, resp. analýza, akým spôsobom je budovaný v rámci rôznych diskurzov, pomáha špecifiká identita režiséra, ku ktorým som sa vyjadroval vyššie, vysvetliť. Kláť si otázku, kto je dokumentárny režisér/producent, znamená, pýtať sa na to, ako sú v odlišných diskurzoch reprezentované jeho identity.⁸

Diskurzívna analýza Jamesa Paula Geeho ponúka priamy nástroj „analýzy budovania identít“. Tie vníma Gee cez rôzne indície a stopy, ktoré vytvárajú sociokultúrne situované významy o identitách jednotlivých aktérov (Gee, 1999, s. 86). Takými to indíciami môžu byť snahy rečníka (nezáleží na tom, či vedomé alebo nie) vyberať taký slovník, ktorý prislúcha konkrétnej triede alebo sociálnej skupine, prípadne označovanie ostatných v snahe sa pripojiť, či vymedziť voči nejakej skupine (Gee, 2011, s. 110). Gee vo svojich starších textoch (Gee a Green, 1998, s. 139) priznane vychádza z prác Donala Carbaugha (1996), ktorý okrem biologickej identity (pohlavie, rasa a pod.), psychologickej identity (napr. povahové vlastnosti), kultúrno-sociálnej identity (napr. príslušnosť k sociálnym skupinám) definuje aj *kultúrno pragmatický idióm identity*. Takáto identita vychádza z jej performatívneho módu v duchu prác Ervinga Goffmana (1967), podľa ktorého sme všetci subjektom sociálneho vystúpenia či predstavenia. Carbaugh tvrdí, že *kultúrno pragmatický mód identity* sa prejavuje až v konkrétnej komunikačnej situácii, kedy konkrétny človek, v závislosti na povahe a charaktere situácie, o sebe niečo hovorí, nejako koná, nejaký je. Sociálne identity tak Carbaugh vníma ako dimenzie a výstupy komunikačných performancií, ktoré sú, kvôli kultúre, príznačné pre jednotlivé situácie a v rámci týchto situácií sú vykonávané konkrétnym spôsobom (Carbaugh, 1996, s. 25–27).

V tomto texte analyzujem tri konkrétne situácie, v ktorých sú demonštrované identity aktérov: mediálny diskurz, samotné filmy, hodnotenia projektov. Carbaugh a do veľkej miery aj Gee sa obracajú predovšetkým k samovytváraniu identít rečníkmi. Mňa však samovytváranie identít zaujíma len v prípade vystupovania režiséra pred kamerou ako jedinom komplexnejšom prejave režisérov mimo novinový diskurz. V prípade analýzy mediálneho diskurzu a hodnotení projektov podávaných režisérmami ma zaujíma, ako je ich identita vytváraná inými rečníkmi, predovšetkým aké konkrétne diskurzívne nástroje sú tradične v týchto situáciách využívané na vytváranie identity režiséra, o ktorom je daný text. Faktom je, že i v prípade

⁸ Táto štúdia zámerne vypúšťa hľadisko samotných režisérov/producentov a ich seba-identifikáciu, ktorá má iné paradigmatické východiská.

novinových článkov sa režiséri spolupodielajú na vytváraní tejto identity – poskytli rozhovor – avšak konečná kontrola takto vytvorenej identity nie je v ich rukách.

V analýze mediálneho diskurzu pracujem s textami, ktoré vybrala výstrižková služba Slovenského filmového ústavu do zložiek k menovaným režisérom (do septembra 2019), a to v nasledujúcich počtoch: Piussi 52, Kerekes 30, Ostrochovský 15 a Homolka 12 textov. Išlo predovšetkým o rozhovory s uvedenými, primárne od roku 2008, pričom niektoré staršie rozhovory s Homolkom vyšli v roku 2004 a následne po prvých úspechoch Kerekesa vyšlo niekoľko textov o ňom.⁹ Jednotlivé články vyšli predovšetkým v denníkoch SME a Pravda, prípadne v Hospodárskych novinách, neskôr v Denníku N. Z týždenníkov má najväčšie zastúpenie takýchto textov Týždeň a Život. Niekoľko textov je aj z českých periodík, predovšetkým Reflexu, ale aj deníka Hospodárske noviny. Jednotky textov vyšli v iných periodikách.

Vystupovanie režisérov pred kamerou analyzujem najprv pomocou diskurzívnej analýzy samotných filmov (ich zoznam v príslušnej kapitole) a následne, ako doplnok tejto analýzy, sa zameriavam na recenzie k týmto filmom. K tomuto kroku som sa uchýlil preto, lebo predošlé práce (Urban, 2016; Vlček, 2018) nepreukázali, že by sa v hodnoteniach k projektom odrážal tento mechanizmus, avšak ako som naznačil vyššie, vzhľadom k tomu, že komisári i kritici zdieľajú jedno pole, možno predpokladať, že sa i kritiky filmov spolupodielajú na vytváraní symbolického kapitálu vnímaného zástupcami Fondu.

Výber článkov pre analýzu vplyvu vystupovania režiséra pred kamerou na vnímanie jeho identity v diskurze prebehol vo februári 2019. Celkom bolo analyzovaných 60 recenzií k deviatim filmom. Vyhľadávanie prebehlo online a obsahovalo kľúčové slová mena režiséra a názvu filmu. Následné porovnanie s výstrižkami SFÚ k menovaným režisérom ukázalo, že takéto hľadanie je dostatočne reprezentatívne. Dokonca ukazuje to, že podstatná časť recenzií vychádza len v online priestore, a teda takéto vyhľadávanie slúži k vytvoreniu úplnejšej vzorky.

V poslednej časti ponúkam analýzu premeny manifestácie symbolického kapitálu producentov v hodnoteniach ich projektov podaných na AVF. Táto časť odráža práve vzťah medzi predošlými zdrojmi symbolického kapitálu a vnímaním symbolického kapitálu komisármi Fondu. Je však nutné myslieť na to, že takéto reprezentácia symbolického kapitálu je čiastková a neúplná, pretože hodnotenia neodrážajú vnímanie producentov komisármi v absolútnej novej miere. Časť postojov komisárov sa do hodnotení nemusí dostať, a to z mnohých dôvodov: časopriestorové limity pôsobiace pri písaní hodnotení, nevedomé postoje, autocenzúra atď. Táto analýza prebehla v septembri 2019 metódou tematickej analýzy, pričom som vychádzal predovšetkým z postupov Sergeja Moscoviciho (2008), ktorý za tému považuje takú propozíciu či schému, ktorá môže zastupovať širšiu skupinu schém vzťahujúcich sa k jednému

⁹ Rok 2008 nie je arbitrárne vybraný. V tomto roku sa totiž v mediálnom diskurze začínajú menovaní producenti objavovať oveľa častejšie, pretože jednak začali aktívnejšie pôsobiť a tiež preto, že s rastúcim počtom dokumentárnych filmov rastie i mediálny záujem o túto oblasť.

obsahu, ktorý môže byť formulovaný odlišnými spôsobmi či podobami. Medzi jednotlivými témami vyjadrenými v týchto schémach existujú prepojenia, na základe ktorých možno porozumieť vzájomným vzťahom jednotlivých tém, ako napríklad príbuznosť, podradenosť a ďalšie.

5. SYMBOLICKÝ KAPITÁL POCHÁDZAJÚCI Z EXISTENCIE FILMOV SAMOTNÝCH A Z ICH ÚSPECHOV

Najľahšie skúmateľným zdrojom symbolického kapitálu producentov a režisérov sú samotné filmy a ich následné úspechy na lokálnych i medzinárodných súťažiach, ktoré sú istým spôsobom hodnotenia kvality týchto filmov.

Samotný Fond považuje každý dokončený film na konte producenta za istú kvalitu, ktorú bodovo ohodnotí v kategórii kredit žiadateľa (Kredit žiadateľa, 2013). Na tomto mieste ponúknem len stručný prehľad toho, za čo všetko dostávajú žiadatelia body v tejto kategórii. Vedome sa dopúšťam istej redukcie, podrobný popis systému bodovania je dostupný na stránkach AVF.

Bodovanie by sme mohli rozdeliť do troch skupín: realizované filmy, ocenenia, producentské a distribučné úspechy.

V skupine *realizované filmy* sa oceňujú dlhometrážne filmy uvedené v kinách, pričom počet hraných filmov je násobené koeficientom 9, dokumentárne koeficientom 8 a animované koeficientom 10. Body producent získa i za minoritné koprodukcie (koeficient 5 bez rozdielu formy, žánru, minútáže), krátkometrážne diela (hrané sú násobené koeficientom 7, ostatné 4) a televízne projekty (koeficienty odrážajú minútáž i typ filmu). Istú formálnu výhodu v tejto časti hodnotenia majú pred tvorcami dokumentu tvorcovia animovaných a po nich hraných filmov. To vychádza predovšetkým z finančnej náročnosti jednotlivých foriem, no nič to nemení na fakte, že do istej miery vyšší symbolický kapitál získavajú nedokumentaristi. Je ešte nutné dodať, že v tejto skupine je nastavený bodový strop na 120 bodov, ktorí mnohí etablovaní tvorcovia ľahko presahujú.

Ocenenia filmov sú hodnotené nasledovne: počet filmov, ktoré získali národnú cenu (Slnko v sieti a Igric) je násobený koeficientom 10, ostatné národné ceny koeficientom 5. Koeficientom 20 sa násobí ocenenie či užšia nominácia na jednu z týchto medzinárodných cien: Oscar, EFA, Emmy, Golden Globe, Cartoon d'Or. Na festivaloch, ktoré AVF považuje za festivaly kategórie „A“,¹⁰ sa počet výhier násobí koeficientom 20, iné ocenenia koeficientom 10 a samotné zaradenie do programu koeficientom 5. V skupine „INÝ FESTIVAL“ sú koeficienty polovičné (10–5–2). Počet ocenení na

10 Nutno zdôrazniť, že AVF má vlastný zoznam tzv. áčkových festivalov. Tento pojem sa však naprieč filmovým priemyslom používa rôzne, za áčkové festivaly sa tradične považujú tie najstaršie a najprestížnejšie, pričom najviac formalizovaný je zoznam, ktorý pripravuje Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films (FIAPF), dostupný na www.fiapf.org. Hierarchia festivalov sa môže u jednotlivých inštitúcií a aktérov líšiť, a teda v praxi i symbolický kapitál, ktorý ocenenia prinášajú, môže byť vnímaný odlišne. Pre bližšie k hierarchii festivalov pozri Loist (2016).

festivaloch mimo zoznam je násobený koeficientom 3. Maximálny počet bodov v tejto kategórii je 160.¹¹

Za *producentské a distribučné výsledky* sa považuje počet projektov podporených EURIMAGES (koeficient 15 pre hlavného producenta, 7 pre koproducenta) a MEDIA (koeficient 7 pre hlavného producenta a 10 pre slate funding¹²), počet získaných dotácií zo zahraničných fondov (koeficient 5), počet filmov v medzinárodnej kinodistribúcii (koeficient 10) a televíznej distribúcii (koeficient 5) a celkový počet divákov v kinách a TV vysielaní na Slovensku (násobený 0.01 pre kinodivákov, 0.002 pre divákov televízie). Na počte zahraničných divákov nezáleží. V rámci tejto kategórie môže ešte producent získať 10 bodov, ak je registrovaný ako nezávislý producent v audiovizíi v zmysle zákona. Maximálny počet bodov v tejto kategórii je 120.

Producent môže získať aj *mínusové body*, ak má nevysporiadané či nedokončené dotované projekty, alebo neoprávnene použil prostriedky AVF.

Tento, do istej miery úmerný, výpočet bol nutný, pretože utvára obrázok o tom, čo sú oficiálne kvantifikované kritéria pre hodnotenie skúsenosti autora, a teda v súčte i celého projektu. Kvantitatívne hodnotenie projektov, ktorého kredit žiadateľa je súčasťou, má však do istej miery len pomocný charakter, pretože dôležitá je momentálna konkurencia projektov v rámci danej výzvy (a množstvo alokovaných prostriedkov na danú výzvu), ako ukazujú iné štúdie (Vlček, 2018, s. 63). Jednotlivé projekty totiž komisári (podľa ich vlastných slov) častokrát zoradia podľa vlastných predstáv o tom, ktoré projekty by mali byť podporené a ktoré nie. Následne im pridelia body tak, aby toto poradie bolo dodržané. Štúdie však tiež ukazujú, že tvorcom pripisovaný symbolický kapitál je v textových hodnoteniach projektov častokrát tematizovaný (Urban, 2016; Vlček, 2018). I posledná analýza v tejto práci ukáže, že autori sú častokrát hodnotení ako „skúsení“, „etablovaní“, „renomovaní“ atď.

Úspechy režiséroov hodnotené v kategórii kredit žiadateľa sa ale na mnohých miestach prekrývajú so slovnými hodnoteniami. Hodnotenie autora ako „etablovaného“ alebo „skúseného“ s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou vychádza práve z kritérií popísaných vyššie, predovšetkým z počtu realizovaných filmov a ich festivalových, distribučných a iných úspechov. Vyššie popísané kvantifikovateľné kritéria sa teda v hodnotení odrážajú prakticky dvakrát. Raz v mysliach hodnotiteľov, ktorí nazerajú na podané žiadosti optikou zohľadňujúcou tieto úspechy a toto uvažovanie reflektujú v slovných hodnoteniach, a druhýkrát v bodovej kategórii kredit žiadateľa, ktorá je súčasťou každého hodnotenia. Takéto hodnotenie teda možno konceptualizovať skrze symbolický kapitál. Do tejto inak abstraktnej konštrukcie nám tak pochopenie kvantifikovaných kritérií fondu prináša aspoň niekoľko konkrétnych kritérií, i keď nemožno s istotou definovať mieru dôležitosti partikulárnych kritérií pre jednotlivých hodnotiteľov.

11 Audiovizuálny fond. (2011). *Zoznam festivalov*. <http://www.avf.sk/support/kreditziadateľa/zoznamfestivalov.aspx>

12 Slate funding je podávanie skupiny projektov v rámci jednej žiadosti.

Na tom, do akej miery sa oficiálne kritéria Fondu premietajú do uvažovania jednotlivých hodnotiteľov, ale nemusí úplne záležať, už samotný princíp totiž zásadne ovplyvňuje hodnotenia. Napríklad debutanti majú dvojnásobne sťažené podmienky na vstup do poľa. Bojú s istou (netvrdím, že zakaždým neoprávnenou) nedôverou komisárov, vychádzajúcou z toho, že za žiadateľa nemôžu hovoriť jeho predošlé úspechy, a zároveň ich samotný bodovací systém (ak sa vôbec aplikuje) odsúva na nižšie miesta v celkovom poradí, práve pre nízky počet bodov za ich predošlé úspechy. Analogicky sú dvakrát zvýhodnení tvorcovia, ktorí v minulosti realizovali úspešné filmy, avšak dvojnásobne v ich prospech. Tento mechanizmus tak v hodnotní posilňuje dopady symbolického kapitálu tvorcov.

6. OSOBA REŽISÉRA V MEDIÁLNO M DISKURZE

Vyššie som vysvetlil, prečo je symbolický kapitál formovaný mediálnym diskurzom dôležitý v rozhodovaní AVF. Nižšie vysvetlím, ktoré konkrétne diskurzívne nástroje sú v danej situácii – písanie textov o dokumentaristoch – využívané a ako sa premieňa ich používanie s rastúcim symbolickým kapitálom tvorcov.

Absolutórium filmovej školy je prvým z mechanizmov, ktoré v diskurze identitu režiséra formujú. V slovenských podmienkach ide najčastejšie o ukončenie Vysokej školy múzických umení v Bratislave, prípadne Filmovej a televíznej fakulty Akadémie umení v Prahe, alebo Akadémie umení v Banskej Bystrici. Kým v hodnoteniach komisárov som takéto zmienky nenašiel (to nemusí nutne znamenať, že tam nie sú), v mediálnom diskurze sa objavujú často. Takúto zmienku nachádzame v textoch o všetkých štyroch producentoch, ktorých som vybral pre prípadové štúdie. Podrobnejšie vývoj prítomnosti tejto informácie v čase zrekonštruujem na prípade Petra Kerekesa, ktorého začínajú zamestnanci SFÚ v rámci výstrižkov sledovať od jeho celovečerného debutu z roku 2003. Práve v tomto roku vychádza vo Film.sk krátky rozhovor s Kerekesom o jeho *66 sezónach* a po titulku začína slovami: „Peter Kerekes (1973) je absolvent filmovej réžie na bratislavskej VŠMU...“ Následne text pokračuje vypočítavaním jeho krátkometrážnych filmov (Michalovič, 2003). Zmienkou o jeho štúdiu začína i ďalší text z tohto roku: „[h]oci Peter Kerekes vyštudoval na bratislavskej Vysokej škole múzických umení réžiu hraného filmu, upísal sa dokumentu“ (Opuldusová, 2003). Odhliadnuc od nevedomosti autorky, že katedra dokumentu na FTF VŠMU v čase Kerekesových štúdií ešte neexistovala, i tu vidíme potrebu vytvoriť identitu „debutanta“, minimálne v poli celovečerného dokumentu, najprv na základe absolutória filmovej školy.

Po prvých *festivalových úspechoch* sa dôraz na absolutórium znižuje. V ďalších rokoch má väčšiu posväcujúcu silu fakt, že Kerekes bol na festival v Cannes zaradený do programu *Producers on the Move*. Touto súvislosťou v roku 2009 začína uvádzať veľká časť textov, ktoré okrem tohto faktu tematizujú jeho film *Ako sa varia dejiny* (Opuldusová, 2009; Paštéková, 2008; Kampf, 2009). Zmienku a absolutóriu VŠMU

tieto články obsahujú ďalej v texte, ale dôležitejším sa stáva festivalový úspech, ktorý sa dostáva do úvodu textu.

Podobným prerodom prechádza aj identita Ivana Ostrochovského vytváraná v mediálnom diskurze. Pred dokončením filmu *Koza* (2015) je v textoch uvádzaný napríklad ako „filmový teoretik a praktik v jednom“. Následne pokračuje perex s kontextom o štúdiu filmovej vedy a doktorátu Ostrochovského a následnom štúdiu dokumentárnej réžie na VŠMU (Bokníková, 2012). Po filme *Koza* je skôr akcentovaný „svetový úspech“ tohto filmu, kedy ho „Európska filmová akadémia vybrala medzi 50 najlepších filmov roka“ (Štiflová, 2015).

Vidíme teda, že absolútorium môže byť dôležitým zdrojom identity, ktorý ju môže formovať dlhodobo, avšak vo chvíli, kedy za producenta začínajú „hovoriť jeho výsledky“ v podobe ocenení, dostávajú v textoch prednosť. Vzdelanie a ocenenia sú teda dva najpríznačnejšie mechanizmy konštrukcie identít režisérov v mediálnom diskurze.

Odbornosť dokumentaristu na tému, ktorej sa venuje, je ďalším z mechanizmov konštrukcie identít v mediálnom diskurze. Dokumentarista sa po tom, ako dokončí film na nejakú tému, stáva pre médiá autoritou a je automaticky oprávnený sa k danej téme vyjadrovať. Keďže vzorku z výstrižkov zo SFÚ tvorili primárne rozhovory s producentmi (recenzie vychádzajú v denníkoch len veľmi poskromne), bolo možné tento jav pozorovať naprieč všetkými prípadmi.

Najvýraznejší je však u Zuzany Piussi, u ktorej nie je identita tak výrazne kreovaná na základe medzinárodných ocenení, pretože v porovnaní s Kerekesom či Ostrochovským získala menej významných cien. Navyše jej témy jej filmov sú často krát politické, spoločensko-kritické a obsahujú výrazné prvky, ktoré vyvolávajú silný mediálny ohlas. A práve istá kontroverzia je pevnou súčasťou jej mediálneho obrazu. Preto skôr, ako sa dostaneme k tomu, ako sa z Piussi stáva v mediálnom diskurze akási „autorita“ na jednotlivé témy, vysvetlím, v čom spočíva jej kontroverzia. Tento jav je totiž zásadný v analýze hodnotení jej projektov podaných na AVF, ktorému sa venujem nižšie. Stručne by sme mohli to, ako tieto „kontroverzie“ popisuje mediálny diskurz, zhrnúť v spojení s jej filmami takto: *Výmet* (2003) – kukláči vtrhnú do zlého bytu; *Anjeli plačú* (2005) – prvý film o LGTI komunite na Slovensku, kde nevystupuje žiadna lezba; *Babička* (2009) – 55-ročná protagonistka spáva s výrazne mladšími mužmi; *Koliba* (2009) – za neblahý koniec Slovenskej filmovej tvorby môžu sami nejednotní filmári; *Nemoc tretej moci* (2011) – film o justícii, kde jedna z hlavných „záporných postáv“, sudkyňa Helena Kožíková, podáva na Piussi trestné oznámenie; *Od Fica do Fica* (2012) – film o najväčšej slovenskej korupčnej kauze zo strachu multiplexy odmietnu premietiť; *Český Alláh* (2017) – hlavného predstaviteľa na ulici bodnú preto, že je moslim; *Selský rozum* (2017) – film o devastačnom poľnohospodárstve Andreja Babiša zo strachu odmietne ČT sprvu vysielieť.

Celkový mediálny obraz Piussi výstižne rekonštruuje (a zároveň posilňuje) perex jedného rozhovoru z mesačníka XANTYPA, ktorému sa pri jeho bulvárnejšom

zameraní darí cez zveličenie (až karikatúru) vystihnúť to, ako býva Piussi naprieč printovými médiami označovaná:

O slovenské dokumentaristice Zuzaně Piussi se v tisku dočtete, že je kontroverzní. Když dojde na osobní setkání, spatříte milou a křehkou mladou ženu s názory, pod které byste se také podepsali. Jenže ona se nebojí dotýkat se témat, kde i obyčejný občanský postoj nutně narazí. Někdy stačí určité temné jevy kolem nás pouze ukázat, bez komentáře a je oheň na střeše. (Adamovič, 2014)

Piussi býva naprieč všetkými denníkmi a týždenníkmi, viac alebo menej bulvárnyymi či serióznymi, označovaná ako „provokatívna filmárka“, ktorej „snímky vždy šokujú“ (Čížová, 2012). Jej „krehkosť“, kontrastujúca s výbušnými témami, ktoré si vyberá, býva tiež často súčasťou mediálneho diskurzu, predovšetkým pre jej vysoký hlas a útlú postavu.

A práve kontroverzné témy, ktoré sú pre redakcie pre svoj potenciál osloviť publikum zaujímavé, vedú k tomu, že Piussi sa cez rozhovory dostáva do mediálneho diskurzu najčastejšie zo štyroch dokumentaristov, ktorým sa venujú tieto prípadové štúdie. Piussi dostáva priestor na vyjadrenie svojho názoru k danej téme u každého z jej filmov. V článku k filmu *Anjeli plačú* redaktorka dáva priestor Piussi popisovať okrem zážitkov z premiéry filmu aj jej postoje k adopciám detí homosexuálmi či k tomu, že homosexualita je skôr spektrom ako dichotómiou (Andrejčáková, 2006). V rozhovore k filmu *Koliba* zas Piussi odpovedá na otázky ako: Prečo sa nedokázali filmári dohodnúť? (Koželová, 2008). Po filme *Muži revolúcie* zas vychádza v denníku SME celostránkový rozhovor o tom, ako vo verejných funkciách často zotrávajú komunisti (Rehák, 2012). Až k sociologicko-politologickým úvahám v porovnaní českej a slovenskej politickej situácie Piussi vyzýva Miloš Krekovič (2017) vo veľkom rozhovore po filme *Selský rozum*.

Podobný mechanizmus filmárskej skúsenosti ako oprávnenia až odborne komentovať verejné dianie sa objavuje u všetkých producentov. Ide tak o silný nástroj propagácie, pričom sa ukazuje, že kontroverznejšie témy filmov vedú k väčšiemu priestoru v médiách.

Odlišne od vyššie uvedených je konštruovaná *identita producentov*. Kým ostatný traja dokumentaristi, ktorým sa vyššie venujem, sú primárne režiséri, ktorí si zároveň produkujú svoje filmy (a niekedy aj cudzie), Mario Homolka, ktorému sa venuje štvrtá prípadová štúdia, je predovšetkým producent. Sám bol v minulosti i režisérom a dnes je jedným z mála, ktorý dnes sám nerežuruje a venuje sa len producenstvu. Jeho mediálny obraz sa ale s jeho producenstvom nespája, i keď texty spomínajú, že sám je producentom a podieľal sa napríklad na filmoch Jara Vojteka. Primárny mediálny obraz Homolku spočíva v jeho vzťahu s RTVS. Na prelome rokov 1998 a 1999 bol šéfredaktorom dokumentu vtedajšej STV, odkiaľ odišiel pre nespokojnosť. Následne sa pre médiá stal človekom, ktorý dokáže komentovať stav dokumentárneho poľa

predovšetkým z hľadiska nezávislej produkcie a spolupráce s verejnoprávnou televíziou (Kúdelová, 2004). Ako autor je vnímaný len v spojení s reláciou *Pod lampou*, ktorú v tom období režíroval (Kúdelová, 2007). Na jeho prípade tak vidíme, že samotné producentstvo oprávňuje skôr k vyjadreniam komentujúcim stav priemyslu. V spojení so samotným filmom, prípadne širšie jeho témou, je pre mediálny diskurz zaujímavý režisér, nie producent. Z toho vyplýva, že budovanie symbolického kapitálu pre „čistých producentov“ je o čosi náročnejšie ako pre tých, ktorí si svoje filmy aj režírujú. Byť len producentom je tak z hľadiska získavania priestoru v médiách „nevýhodné“.

7. OSOBA REŽISÉRA V JEHO FILME

Vyššie som už naznačil, prečo považujem samotné filmy za dôležitý nástroj vytvárania identity režiséra. Filmy môžu vytvárať dojem istého štýlu režiséra, teda súboru formálnych prvkov, ktoré režisér používa, môžu tiež vytvárať i dojem tematického zamerania režiséra. To všetko sa môže, ako ukážem v poslednej kapitole, odrážať v hodnoteniach, vo výrokoch, ktoré by sme mohli voľne parafrázovať nasledovne: „tento režisér má kultivovaný výraz“ alebo „toto je typ témy, ktoré tento režisér dokáže spracovať“. Podobné hodnotenia sa môžu objavovať aj vo mediálnom diskurze o režiséroch, ako som ukázal vyššie.

Vyššie tiež uvádzam, že propagácia slovenských dokumentov mimo samotný mediálny diskurz je skôr marginálna, a preto považujem vystupovanie režiséra pred kamerou za zásadný nástroj konštrukcie identít režiséra. Filmov, kde by vystupoval dokumentárny režisér pred kamerou, nie je veľa, a preto som tie kinematografické, kde sa tento prvok vyskytuje, analyzoval aj pre účely tejto state (medzi rokmi 1990–2018 som našiel deväť takýchto filmov).

Pri analýze som došiel k záverom, že na Slovensku neexistuje režisér, ktorý by dlhodobo a systematicky pracoval s týmto prvkom naprieč svojou filmografiou. Kým v Českom prostredí môžeme režisérov ako Jan Gogola ml. či Vít Klusák nachádzať pred kamerou v mnohých ich filmoch, zdá sa, že pre slovenských režisérov musí byť takýto prvok motivovaný vždy filmom samotným. Buď ide o motiváciu vychádzajúcu z príbehu filmu, alebo zo subžánru či inej konvencie, ku ktorým sa film snaží priblížiť.

Filmy motivované samotným príbehom sú zamerané na osobný¹³ alebo profesijný život¹⁴ samotného režiséra; na to, akým spôsobom osobu režisérskeho formoval život jej

13 *Nový život* (Adam Olha, 2012), v ktorom sa režisér snaží pochopiť motiváciu svojho otca opustiť svoju pôvodnú rodinu a s novou partnerkou si založiť rodinu novú.

14 *Posledný autoportrét* (Marek Kuboš, 2018), v ktorom režisér kontempluje nad svojou neschopnosťou dokončiť veľký projekt v posledných rokoch.

predkov¹⁵; na príbeh rodného mesta režiséra¹⁶; alebo na príbeh umeleckej skupiny, ktorej je režisér súčasťou¹⁷. Istú výnimku predstavuje film o známom slovenskom rapperovi¹⁸, ktorý nie je o živote režiséra, a predsa sa režisér nachádza pred kamerou. Režisér tu ale vstupuje pred kameru predovšetkým preto, aby reflektoval proces natáčania ako taký, napríklad v spore so svojou hlavnou postavou, kedy sa režisér sám stáva súčasťou príbehu. V ďalších scénach, kde si režisér prechádza rodinné fotografie svojho protagonistu alebo rapperovi ukazuje hrubý strih filmu, je motivácia príbehom síce slabšia, ale ako u predošlých aj tu platí, že ide o reflexivitu v zmysle, ktorý som popísal vyššie, teda odraz procesu zaznamenávania filmu, ktorého je režisér súčasťou.

Dokumenty motivované subžánrom alebo iným typom konvencie sú tie, kde je pre daný subžáner prirodzené (je to v súlade s konvenciou), že režisér vystupuje pred kamerou. V analyzovaných filmoch ide predovšetkým o postupy televíznej investigatívnej publicistiky. Takýto princíp reportéra pred kamerou sa uplatňuje v reláciách ako *Reportéri*, *Lampáreň* a podobne. V analyzovanej vzorke išlo o dva filmy, ktoré sú zamerané na kontroverzné témy, ktorých vyriešenie má celospoločenský presah.¹⁹ Aj preto sa ich režiséri neboja ísť až na hranu prijateľného z morálno-etického hľadiska. Režiséri v nich vystupujú pred kamerou vo chvíľach, keď je to pre daný subžáner bežné: keď oslovujú svojho respondenta, používajú skrytú kameru atď.

Aké identity ale režiséri v týchto filmoch vytvárajú? Či už ide o motiváciu v samotnom príbehu alebo v subžánri, v oboch prípadoch dochádza k istej reprezentácii osoby režiséra. Aj keď pre všetkých režisérov je vlastná snaha odhaliť pravdu, či už o skúmanej kauze alebo o ich osobnom živote, nástroje, ktoré na to používajú, sa rôznia a tým sa líšia aj konštruované identity.

Kirchhoff a Piussi, ako investigatívci, konštruujú identity režisérov, ktorí sú ochotní v záujme celej spoločnosti prekračovať hranice prijateľného. Napríklad Kirchhoff oslovuje svojich respondentov v situáciách, kedy to podľa vlastných slov týchto respondentov „nie je vhodné“. Používa aj skrytú kameru, keď zvoní na dvere bývalého generálneho prokurátora, a to, že sa s ním prakticky baví na záznam, mu nepriznáva. V ďalšej scéne zas režiséra vidíme pred kamerou hovoriť so sudcom na chodbe (priznane), pričom sudca ho pozve k sebe do kancelárie „ale bez kamery,“ hovorí sudca a Kirchhoff vstúpi dovnútra. Kamera ostáva na chodbe natáčať dvere, ale celý rozhovor počujeme vďaka mikrofónu, ktorý ma režisér na sebe. A to vrátane poznámky sudcu o tom, že dnes sa človek musí báť toho, kto ako záznam zneužije – presne v duchu, ako tento rozhovor nakoniec pre „väčšie dobro“ zneužije Kirchhoff. Aj Piussi používa podobné praktiky: skrytú kameru, kameru držanú v úrovni pásu,

15 *Felvidek: Horná zem* (Vladislava Plančíková, 2014), v ktorom režisérka pátra po svojich slovensko-maďarských koreňoch. *Očami fotografky* (Matej Mináč, 2015), v ktorom Mináč natáča portrét svojej matky.

16 *66 sezón* (Peter Kerekes, 2003), ktorý je príbehom košickej plavárne, celého rodného mesta režiséra i jeho starého otca.

17 *Film vlna vs. breh* (Martin Štrba, 2014) je príbehom fotografov, ktorý spolu so Štrbom študovali na pražskej FAMU.

18 *RYTMUS – sídliskový sen* (Miroslav Drobný, 2015).

19 *Kauza Cervanová* (Robert Kirchhoff, 2013) a *Nemoc tretej moci* (Zuzana Piussi, 2011).

aby pôsobila, že je vypnutá, ale predsa beží a podobne. Všetky tieto nástroje sa podieľajú na vytváraní identity odvážnych, angažovaných a spoločensky uvedomelých režisérov, ktorí síce porušujú pravidlá súkromia či ochrany osobnosti, ale robia to vo verejnom záujme.²⁰

Odlíšne identity vytvárajú režiséri, ktorí pre vystupovanie pred kamerou nachádzajú motiváciu v príbehu samotnom. Väčšina z týchto filmov, s výnimkou filmu o Rytmusovi, sú filmy osobné. Aj preto tieto filmy vytvárajú identity osobných a úprimných režisérov, ktorí sa neboja prezradiť to, čo väčšina ľudí verejne neprezradza. Navyše väčšina z týchto filmov pracuje s prvkami reflexivity, čím akcentuje fakt, že režisér je ten, kto zachytenú realitu ovplyvňuje, manipuluje či vytvára. Plančíková, Olha a Štrba na niektorých miestach pracujú s kamerou ako s istou formou rekvizity, symbolu, ktorý reprezentuje ich profesiu; vystupujú na obraze s kamerou v ruke, buď zaznamenávajú samých seba s kamerou v odraze zrkadla, alebo sú zachytení druhou kamerou. Tieto scény sú zámerné a nevychádzajú z produkčných limitov, ako napríklad v prípade použitia skrytej kamery, kedy Kirchhoff či Piussi nemajú inú možnosť, ako danú scénu natočiť. Plančíková sediac za stolom debatuje so svojimi rovesníkmi, zatiaľ čo ju natáča druhá kamera. Zábery z jej kamery nepriťahujú v tejto scéne nič nové, neplnia žiadnu premyslenú estetickú funkciu. Kamera je tu len rekvizitou, ktorú filmárka drží v ruke, a tým akcentuje svoju identitu ako filmárky. Olha a Štrba zas natáčajú samých seba v odraze zrkadla, pretože sú kameramanmi vlastných filmov, nemajú druhého kameramana. Nejde o z núdze cnosť, pretože neskôr sa vo filme vyskytujú aj bez kamery v rukách, ide o spôsob zvýznamnenia ich role filmárov – nezáleží na tom, či vedomý, alebo premyslený.

Prvky reflexivity zvýznamňujúce identitu filmára nájdeme aj v ostatných filmoch v tejto skupine. Kerekes sa prechádza pred kamerou po kúpalisku, aby našiel dievčinu, ktorú by mohol natočiť, ako pláva na chrbte v bazéne, a tým zrekonštruovať scénu preletu bombardérov ponad plaváreň v roku 1944, ktorú ako svoju spomienku popisuje jeho respondentka. Mináč i Drobný majú tiež vo svojich filmoch scény, kedy svojim sociálnym hercom hovoria, čo majú robiť. To všetko akcentuje identity dokumentaristov – tvorcov zachytenej reality.

Ďalšiu z identít, ktorú niektorí režiséri v rámci týchto „osobných“ filmov akcentujú, je ich identita, ktorá nepochádza z vnútra filmu ako takého, ale stojí nezávisle na ňom. Keď Kerekes rozpráva po maďarsky, akcentuje tým svoju identitu vychádzajúcu z jeho maďarských koreňov. Táto identita (na rozdiel od identity filmára) existuje

20 Problém oprávnenosti porušovať etické a zákonné normy v záujme spoločnosti je samozrejme omnoho komplikovanejší. Vyššie som sa snažil zachytiť len základný naratív, ktorý sa v diskurze vyskytuje. Zatiaľ za takého chovanie nebol postihnutý žiaden dokumentarista a súčasná judikatúra sa prikláňa skôr k tomu, že pri výkone verejnej funkcie musí natáčanie každý verejný funkcionár strpieť, a to aj v prípade, ak mu nebolo vopred oznámené. (Otázkou do diskusie je, či vo všetkých situáciách v týchto filmoch šlo o výkon verejnej funkcie.) Etické otázky je ešte náročnejšie posúdiť, pretože záleží na individuálnych etických hodnotách posudzovateľa a tiež na jednotlivých etických prístupoch, ktoré sú na hodnotenie aplikované; z utilitaristického hľadiska je takéto konanie ku prospechu občanom, Kantov kategorický imperatív by ale mohol viesť k úvahám, kedy je takéto správanie problematické.

nezávisle na tom, či tento film bude existovať, alebo nie, film ju len zvýznamňuje. Obdobne svoju národnostnú identitu podtrhuje Plančíková. Štrba a Ol'ha zas zvýznamňujú svoju príslušnosť k FAMU; Štrba a jeho kolegovia o nej mnohokrát hovoria, Ol'hu vidíme na jeho promóciách na FAMU. I táto identita by existovala nezávisle na filme. Filmy nasledujúce žánrové konvencie (v tomto prípade investigatívne), túto funkciu nie sú schopné plniť, pretože osobné životy režisérov sú v nich upozadené. Takýto akcent je výsadou osobných filmov.

Majú ale tieto závery oporu v realite divákov týchto filmov? Vníma človek, ktorý sa na tieto dokumenty pozerá, identity režiséra rovnako? Na širokej diváckej vzorke som tieto tézy neoveroval. V hodnoteniach jednotlivých filmov som takéto odkazy našiel len okrajovo. Avšak to, že vystupovanie pred kamerou môže byť silným zdrojom identity režiséra, dokazuje kritický mediálny diskurz o jednotlivých filmoch. Ak z mojich analýz vyplýva, že režisér konštruuje svoju identitu ako otvoreného a osobného filmára, podobný typ hodnotení nájdeme aj v samotných recenziách. Plančíkovej sa podľa jedného kritika podarilo jej „vlastný príbeh rozptýliť v desiatkach cudzích príbehov“ (Kovalčík, 2014), Ol'hov film je zas „osobný, vnútorne slobodný a ľudsky pravdivý“ (Branko, 2013), v ktorom ukazuje „svoj problém, svoju tému“ (Chuchma, 2013) a „povýši bolestnú osobnú výpoveď na svedectvo s istou všeobecnou platnosťou“ (Ľapajová, 2013). Štrba zas prináša „generačnú výpoveď o vášni, umení a živote“, zatiaľ čo je „osobný a kreatívny“ (Kinema, 2015).

Na druhej strane, téza spojená s reflexivitou ako zobrazením schopnosti režiséra ovplyvňovať realitu nebola na základe analýzy mediálneho diskurzu preukázaná. Len výnimočne sa objavujú zmienky na túto tému, napríklad v prípade Kerekesa, ktorý podľa recenzenta nie je len „tvorcom filmu, ale dokonca jeho aktérom“ (Sládková, 2004), teda dochádza ku komentovaniu výskytu Kerekesa pred kamerou, avšak nijakým spôsobom to nekonštruje Kerekesovu identitu v závislosti na miere reflexivity jeho filmu.

Identity Piussi a Kirkhoffa sú v súlade s mojimi tézami o tom, ako filmy ich identity konštruujú. Kirkhoff je videný ako „reportér, vyšetrovateľ, detektív, svedok, a najmä občan, nespokojný, s [...] rozsudkami“ (Kúdelová, 2013). Podobne je videný i v ďalších recenziách k tomuto filmu. S identitou Piussi je to o čosi komplikovanejšie, pretože jej mediálny obraz v prípade tohto filmu bol zatienený podaním trestného oznámenia na jej osobu sudkyňou, ktorá vo filme vystupuje.

Vystupovanie režisérov pred kamerou predstavuje veľmi špecifický, a dalo by sa namietat, že v zásade marginálny, spôsob, ako sú identity režisérov kreované a ako ovplyvňujú symbolický kapitál režisérov. Nezahrnúť ho ale do analýzy by znamenalo redukciu, ktorá by znižovala komplexnosť analýzy nástrojov vedúcich k ustanovovaniu a formovaniu symbolických kapitálov jednotlivých režisérov. Navyše aj v tomto prípade ide o nástroj špecificky vlastný režisérom – v žiadnom filme sa nevyskytuje „producent pred kamerou“ – aj preto je nutné ho do analýzy zahrnúť. Predstavuje tak ďalšiu „výhodu“, ktorou režiséri pri konštrukcii svojho symbolického kapitálu disponujú.

8. IDENTITY REŽISÉROV V HODNOTENIACH

V predošlých kapitolách som ukázal, akými spôsobmi je symbolický kapitál utváraný v mediálnom diskurze a cez samotné filmy. V tejto podkapitole ukážem, akým spôsobom je symbolický kapitál jednotlivých producentov vnímaný v čase komisármi AVF, pričom sa pokúsím ukázať jednotlivé mechanizmy budovania identity popísané vyššie, ktoré majú svoje varianty aj v samotných hodnoteniach.

Vyššie som uvažoval o tom, ako môže *predošlá tvorba* (z hľadiska témy a formy) pôsobiť ako záruka kvality. Komplexnejší vhlad do tohto fenoménu nám ponúkajú posudky k žiadosti Zuzany Piussi na projekt *Sladké srdce* (2012), ktorý má byť paradokumentom. V hodnotení tohto projektu sa komisár odkazuje k celovečernému debutu Piussi *Babička*, ktorú vníma ako paradokument, takže *predošlá tvorba* má byť istou zárukou kvality. Hlavnou postavou pripravovaného filmu, ktorý sa uchádza o podporu, má byť Talian, ktorý si nedokáže pre svoju koketnosť nájsť lásku. A práve „chlapácka“ téma je podľa jedného z hodnotiteľov prekážkou v tom, aby bola Piussi pri režirovaní tohto filmu úspešná. Hodnotiteľ píše: „na tento typ chlapáckej témy sa výnimočne hodí viac práve autor námetu a budúci autor scenára [Maroš Berák, doplnil autor]“. *Predošlá režisérska skúsenosť* s podobným žánrom je tak pre Piussi výhodou, avšak fakt, že je žena ju diskvalifikuje v očiach komisára. Odhliadnuc od absurdnosti tejto úvahy, vidíme, ako komplikovane môže *predošlá tvorba* na hodnotiteľov pôsobiť. Kým vyššie som písal, že *predošlé skúsenosti* môžu pôsobiť ako záruka, že režisér ďalší film zvládne, tu vidíme, že v konkrétnom rozhodovaní hrajú rolu ďalšie faktory, či už viac alebo menej racionálne.

Identita vytváraná mediálnym diskurzom bola v spojení s Piussi najkomplexnejšia zo všetkých prípadových štúdií. V priebehu rokov sa táto identita angažovanej filmárky, tak ako ju prezentuje mediálny diskurz, ustálila aj v očiach komisárov. Pre prehľad a zaujímavosť toho, akými rôznymi spôsobmi býva táto identita Piussi popísaná, stručne a výberovo uvediem variácie tejto témy: „fenomén filmárky ako odvážnej bojovníčky“ (Zlatý prach, 2013); „[k]ritické myslenie, ktoré sa snaží v spoločnosti podnieť Zuzana Piussi svojimi spoločensko-kritickými filmami, je nevyhnutnou súčasťou zdravej demokracie“ (Ukradnutý štát, 2017); „[a]utori sú skúsení dokumentaristi, ktorých dlhodobé zameranie na spoločensky-kritické témy podčiarkuje pravdepodobnosť dôsledného prístupu (Hlas lesa, 2018); „[z]vykli sme si u dokumentaristky Zuzany Piussi, že jej fokus je nastavený poriadne ostro a prísne tam, kde je zámerne tma a bahno“ (Lahostajný smäd, 2018).

Festivalové úspechy patria medzi najzásadnejšie mechanizmy tvorby symbolického kapitálu. Piussi je stále viac vnímaná ako etablovaná autorka, čomu prispieva aj fakt, že časť svojej tvorby natáča spolu so svojim manželom Vítom Janečkom, ktorý má tiež bohatú dokumentaristickú skúsenosť. V tíme sú hodnotení ako „uznávaní“ alebo ako „silné slovensko-české tvůrčí duo“ (Hlas lesa, 2018). Tiež býva komisármi vnímané, že „dokázali natočiť skvelé a dôležité filmy“ (V znamená lykožrúta, 2018), ale zároveň si hodnotitelia uvedomujú, že ich festivalové úspechy sú skôr lokálne a patrične

to tematizujú: „[t]vůrčí tým je velmi dobrý a oceňovaný, jakkoli [...] jen lokálně, v českém a slovenském prostředí“ (Ukradnutý štát, 2017). Vidíme teda, že predošlé úspechy filmov sú pre hodnotenia autora dôležité, ale časom do takéhoto hodnotenia nevyhnutne vstúpi i otázka medzinárodných festivalových úspechov.

Kým Piussi takmer žiadne festivalové ocenenia v žiadostiach na AVF neuvádza, Kerekes v tejto kategórii dosahuje maximálny počet bodov. Dokonca v súpise ocenení, ktoré je povinnou prílohou žiadosti, uvádza ceny a festivalové uvedenia predošlým pre svoje prvé dva filmy a zoznam ocenení ukončuje vetou: „[a] množstvo ďalších cien, ktoré už nemá zmysel vypisovať, pretože som dosiahol maximálny bodový strop“ (Peter Kerekes, 2018). A práve v tomto duchu je vnímaný Kerekesov symbolický kapitál v žiadostiach. Na mnohých miestach je vnímaný ako „renomovaný tvorca“, ktorý mal v minulosti „presvedčivé výsledky“ (Zamatoví teroristi, 2010). Dokonca niektorí hodnotitelia explicitne pomenúvajú vnímanie Kerekesa ako producenta, ktorý dokáže nakrútiť film s potenciálom na festivalový úspech: „Peter Kerekes vie prísť s netradičnou témou a predat ju na medzinárodných festivaloch, kde zväčša je aj bodujúca. Autor už neraz presvedčil, že je to jeho parketa“ (Náhradníci, 2014). Takýchto tvrdení nájdeme naprieč hodnoteniami ešte viac a nie je úplne produktívne ich ďalej uvádzať, pretože by boli len variáciou potvrdzujúcou zistenie, že festivaly sú pre hodnotiteľov dôležité. Kerekesov prípad ale dokazuje, že zahraničné ocenenia sú vnímané ako významnejšie v porovnaní s lokálnymi.

Schopnosť zabezpečiť koprodukčných partnerov, prezentovaná v predošlých filmoch, je ďalším dôležitým kritériom. Napríklad v spojení s doposiaľ nedokončeným filmom o cenzoroch jeden z hodnotiteľov o Kerekesovi píše: „žiadateľ sa môže oprieť o predchádzajúce koprodukčné partnerské vzťahy so zahraničnými spoločnosťami“ (Cenzori, 2013). Obdobne je vnímaný aj v ďalšom projekte o náhradníkoch astronautov, ktorí sa nakoniec do vesmíru nedostali: „medzinárodne potentný projekt, kde sa režisér už v minulosti osvedčil pri realizácii medzinárodných koprodukčných projektov“ (Náhradníci, 2014).

Hodnotenie nerežirujúcich producentov ukazuje zásadnú špecifickosť, ktorá je v súlade s tým, ako funguje diskurz o nich. Napríklad Ivan Ostrochovský, ktorý je ako režisér hodnotený ako „skúsený“ (Garda, 2012) a „profesionálny“ s „osobným nasadením“ (Garda, 2013), či „jeden z najoriginálnejších slovenských dokumentaristov stredného veku“ (60 minút, 2018), v žiadostiach na projekty, ktoré len produkuje a nerežiruje, nemôže počítať so svojim režisérskym symbolickým kapitálom. Od vzniku Fondu Ostrochovský žiadal niekoľko dotácií na filmy iných režisérov a len výnimočne sa v hodnoteniach objavuje jeho osoba. Ak sa tematizuje symbolický kapitál, tak takmer vždy v spojení s režisérom. Či už išlo o Mira Rema (55, 2013), Zuzanu Piussi (Prezident a ja, 2015), alebo Máriu Rumanovú a Martina Kollára (Päťročnica, 2017). Pri niekoľkých projektoch bol pozitívne hodnotený tvorivý tím, avšak z hodnotení nie je nikdy jasné, do akej miery je producent súčasťou dobrého obrazu tohto tímu.

Len v jednom prípade je jasná zmienka o tom, že symbolický kapitál producenta,

tak ako ho vníma táto štúdia, prispel k podpore projektu. Ide o autoportrét Igora Luthera, v ktorom jeden z hodnotiteľov píše, že o podporu sa uchádza: „[s]kúsený producent a filmár v spolupráci s jedným z najúspešnejších slovenských filmárov [...]“ (Autoportret, 2019). Vidíme teda, že z hodnotení nemožno jasne tvrdiť, že spojenie producent–autor je pre hodnotiteľov dôležité len v niektorých prípadoch. Ukazujú to napríklad aj hodnotenia k úspešnému projektu *Hotel Úsvit* (2016) Márie Rumanovej. Prostriedky na tento film opakovane žiadal Ivan Ostrochovský, avšak zakaždým len s malým úspechom. K žiadosti bolo komisiou skôr pristupované ako k debutu, pričom viacerí komisári viackrát akcentovali, že ide o rozpracovanie školského projektu autorky (Čierna, 2014; 2015). Vidíme teda, že identita producenta je menej významná ako tá režisárska, podobne ako v mediálnom diskurze.

Tézu, že na symbolickom kapitáli producenta skôr nezáleží, podporuje aj prípadová štúdia reprezentácie symbolického kapitálu Maria Homolku v hodnoteniach k jeho žiadostiam. Z celkom sedemnástich žiadostí k dvanástim projektom je symbolický kapitál Homolku spomenutý len dvakrát (Dušan Hanák, 2014; Skutok sa nestal, 2014).

V hodnoteniach nebola tematizovaná *sledovanosť* predošlých dokumentov autorov, za ktorú môžu získať body v kategórii kredit žiadateľa. Ak sa hodnotí „divácky potenciál“, tak takmer výhradne v spojení s pripravovaným filmom. Obdobne som v analyzovaných hodnoteniach nenašiel zmienku o *absolutóriu filmovej školy* u žiadateľa ani o jeho *metódach vystupovania pred kamerou*. Absolutórium je pravdepodobne pre hodnotiteľov menej dôležité, obzvlášť v situácii, kedy dokáže žiadateľ dokladovať predošlé úspechy. Vystupovanie pred kamerou je zas pravdepodobne príliš špecifický formálny prvok, ktorý je vedľa všetkých ostatných menej zásadným pre komisárov.

9. ZÁVER

Táto štúdia ukazuje široké spektrum zdrojov symbolického kapitálu a vysvetľuje, akým spôsobom je symbolický kapitál režisérov konštruovaný a následne ako môže ovplyvňovať rozhodovanie komisárov Fondu.

V prvom rade môžu byť zdrojom symbolického kapitálu samotné témy filmov, ktoré môžu vo verejnom diskurze i v hodnoteniach komisárov zásadným spôsobom ovplyvňovať konštruovanie identít režisérov a pomôcť vytvárať obraz toho, čoho je režisér schopný, ktoré témy budú v jeho spracovaní úspešné a u ktorých tém je zárukou budúceho úspechu projektu. V niektorých prípadoch sa dokonca môže stať, že na základe zamerania sa na istú špecifickú tému v minulosti sa z režiséra vo verejnom diskurze stáva odborník na tento fenomén. Zároveň sa ukázalo, že spoločensko-kritické filmy dokážu generovať silnejší mediálny ohlas a vďaka tomu sa môžu stať významným propagačným nástrojom.

Druhým zdrojom symbolického kapitálu sú festivalové úspechy režiséra, ktoré v mediálnom diskurze zvyknú nahrádzať informácie o jeho vzdelaní, ktoré je dôležité predovšetkým v textoch o debutantoch. Medzinárodné úspechy idú ruka v ruke

so schopnosťou vyrobiť medzinárodne úspešný film, resp. takýmto spôsobom hodnotia komisári prácu medzinárodne oceňovaných režisérov.

Poukazujem tiež na to, že symbolický kapitál v prípade (režirujúcich) producentov má svoje špecifické pravidlá. V mediálnom diskurze oprávňuje producenta hovoriť o stave priemyslu, v hodnoteniach komisárov je režisérsky kapitál producenta takmer neprenositelný do projektov, v ktorých žiada podporu pre iných režisérov.

V tejto štúdií prinášam aj analýzu vystupovania režiséra pred kamerou. I to môže byť účinným nástrojom na posilňovanie jeho verejnej identity. Vo všetkých prípadoch bolo takéto vystupovanie motivované v samotnom filme, či už v jeho téme (ak ide o osobné filmy), alebo v subžánri (ak ide o filmy investigatívne). Z hľadiska vnímania identity žiadateľa komisármi však ide skôr o marginálny prvok.

I keď býva koncept symbolického kapitálu, tak ako s ním prichádza Bourdieu, vo výskume filmu revidovaný, predovšetkým v spojení s globalizáciou koprodukčných i distribučných trhov, v poli slovenského dokumentárneho filmu prevláda ešte stále jeho pôvodná definícia, teda definícia špecifického kapitálu neekonomického typu, ktorý ale môže byť (a býva) pretavovaný cez získavanie dotácií v kapitál ekonomický. V tomto texte tak nadväzujem na štúdie, ktoré na dôležitosť hodnotenia autora komisármi poukázali, avšak nepriniesli komplexnejšie porozumenie zdrojov tohto hodnotia (Urban, 2016; Vlček, 2018).

Vo vysoko kompetitívnom poli, kde dotáciu nezíska ani polovica projektov (Vlček, 2018, s. 58), vedie aplikácia tohto princípu k výraznému sťaženiu prístupu debutantov a tiež násobne posilňuje pozície skúsených tvorcov, ktorí okrem vysokého symbolického kapitálu disponujú aj znalosťami a schopnosťami, ktoré počas svojej práce nadobudli. Obom skupinám ale neostáva nič iné, ako pristúpiť na pravidlá hry a rátať s tým, že ich práca prináša predovšetkým kapitál symbolický a nie nutne ekonomický, ako je poukázane vyššie. V konečnom dôsledku tak symbolický kapitál nie len určuje pravidlá hry, ale tiež bráni ich revízií a celý systém utužuje.

Tieto mechanizmy vedú tiež k tomu, že na Slovensku vzniká len veľmi málo projektov so skutočne komerčným zameraním. Tvorcovia s vysokým symbolickým kapitálom nebudú svoju pozíciu výrobou komerčných dokumentov ohrozovať, tá by totiž, zo samotnej logiky fungovania poľa, viedla k strate ich symbolického kapitálu.²¹ Debutanti sa v tomto segmente etablujú len ťažko, pretože majú len malú šancu získať dotáciu Fondu na komerčné projekty a ich neskúsenosť ešte viac odradí súkromných donátorov, ktorí si finančný risk môžu dovoliť menej ako Fond.

Miroslav Vlček (1990) je absolventom odboru mediálne štúdiá a žurnalistika na Fakulte sociálnych štúdií Masarykovej univerzity a doktorandom Ústavu filmu a audiovizuálnej kultúry Filozofickej fakulty Masarykovej univerzity. Vo svojom

21 Na tomto mieste ide skôr o hypotetický konštrukt, ktorý nezohľadňuje jednotlivé osobnosti pôsobiace v poli. U nich môže takýto nezáujem o komerčné produkty vychádzať z ďalšieho množstva faktorov, ako je napríklad vkus, záujem o konkrétne témy atď.

výskume sa zaujíma predovšetkým o slovenské producentské prostredie a tiež o oblasť dramaturgie ako nástroja uplatňovaného v audiovizuálnom priemysle.

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COMEDY AND TOLERANCE: VIR DAS, STANDUP COMEDY AND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

*This essay examines the relationship between stand-up comedy and identity representation. The methods for examination begin with an overview of relevant humour theories, culminating in a case study of comedian Vir Das's role in cultivating a collective secular identity in India. The case study takes on the method of critical textual analysis. By contextualizing the content of Vir Das's 2018 Netflix stand-up special, *Losing It*, in relation to the historical and present landscape of religio-politics in India, I argue that stand-up routines like Vir Das's represent humour being used as a tool to promote secularism and religious tolerance. I then conclude by suggesting that the use of this type of humour in India should continue in order to foster an Indian collective identity that promotes secularism, religious freedom, and religious tolerance. Unexpectedly, I also conclude that Vir Das's religious-themed humour takes on a more tolerant, encompassing approach to mocking religious hegemony, compared to Western comedy approaches.*

Keywords: Comedy ▪ Stand-up ▪ Religion ▪ Hegemony ▪ India ▪ Politics ▪ Secularism ▪ Identity ▪ Community ▪ Social Movements

1. VIR DAS, RELIGIOUS COMEDY & RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN INDIA

According to the 42nd amendment of India's constitution adopted in 1976, India is a secular nation. However, the definition of secularism has been globally controversial. In India's case, the constitutional amendment failed to ever define secularism. The amendment implies that the nation accepts all religious beliefs, and that it declares no official religion. Simultaneously, though, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—often reflective of the Hindu Nationalist movement—remains the majority in parliament and subsequently holds major influence on the Hindu national-fundamentalist agenda (Bhargava, 2002).

The Indian secular movement has not necessarily come to a halt, though. Indeed, comedian Vir Das is one public figure in India who may be redefining, for some, what

it means to be Indian. Because of India's size and diversity, coupled with the rise of post-national identities, there will never be one Indian identity. Nonetheless, Das brings one of the many marginalized identities within India – the secular Indian – to the sphere. Although he is a proud adherent of the Hindu faith, his comedy advocates for a legitimately secular Indian state and secular global order.

As such, Das represents the Indian secular community – Indians who are not afraid to break from tradition, criticize, and hope for a better relationship between government and religion. The land of India has a long and diverse relationship with many religions, but comedy has been a rare platform in the country for religious and social criticism. The success of Indian comedians such as Vir Das could result in greater public acceptance of the Indian secular identity, nationally and globally. Understanding that secularism in India is in jeopardy, comedy in India should be encouraged as a tool to further promote secularism and religious tolerance.

Das has an 8½ - minute religious-themed segment in his 2018 Netflix original stand-up special called *Losing It*. A critical textual analysis of this segment is worthwhile in speculating how Das might resonate with those who have been oppressed – or those who sympathize with the oppressed – throughout India's recent religio-political history. Before the analysis of Vir Das's stand-up content, it is important to firstly understand the science behind comedy's ability to cultivate a collective identity while informing and activating citizens. I would also like to address previous critical analyses on anti-religious and atheist-agnostic humour.

1.1. The Potential of Humour in Society

Since the start of this millennium, humour scholars tend to agree that humour and rationality are not mutually exclusive (Bingham & Hernandez, 2001). Because of the inherent format of stand-up, in which comedians are given a “space of free inquiry where no subject is taboo and the rules of political correctness can be temporarily suspended,” comedians have been able to successfully instigate dialogue on social issues in a way that sociologists have failed to do. This is because of the inherently dry, technical approach attached to any academic discipline (Bingham et al., 2001, p. 339). It seems then that comedians use their platform not simply to entertain, but to challenge the status quo and articulate thoughts that many avoid sharing because of social constraint. And perhaps comedy's power can be summed up even more simply by humourist author Julia Fox's claim that, “when people are in a positive mood, they're taking in more information” (cited in Hurwitz, 2006). These findings provide substantial evidence to support any intuitions that comedy may have positive effects and can often support the dry, technical format of standard education.

While we can celebrate comedy's educational benefits, we should also be wary of its occasional role in encouraging negative stereotypes, cloaking intolerance, and fuelling hatred or violent opposition. Duke University behavioural scientist Mahadev Apte famously highlighted this as “an American sociocultural dilemma,”

particularly in reference to the controversial use of ethnic humour in American pop culture (Apte, 1987, p. 27). The use of humour as insult and degradation undoubtedly stretches far beyond American borders.

Regardless, the study of humour's effects has received plenty of attention since the rise of American political satire programs in the first decade of the 2000s. Previous late-night American television personalities such as David Letterman or Jay Leno sought to make the discussion of politics an apolitical pastime, targeting political figures with *ad hominem* attacks on their quirky appearances or behaviours (Baumgartner & Lockerbie, 2018). The 2000s, however, saw a rise of passionate and opinionated political satirists such as John Stewart and Stephen Colbert. Indeed, these two TV personalities have become a notorious one-two punch in the U.S., using a humourous approach to provide left-leaning talking points while dismantling right-leaning ones. Humour and culture scholars have since studied political satire reception in order to argue that its consumption can shape or reinforce political attitudes. More importantly, though, such satire consumption also correlates directly with various forms of political participation (Baumgartner et al., 2018). With these insights in mind, we can see a clear benefit to the proliferation of religious humour within India. As Indian humourists spread their message, they may also prompt public discussion, and hopefully, public tolerance. The discussion of politics and religion may be separate, yet there is no denying of existing overlap – especially in India, where the ethnic and religious diversity of the nation dominates and sways public policy discussion.

Similar to effects noted by Baumgartner and Lockerbie (2018), others have noted that the exposure to social satire programs can help trigger a wide range of sensations and subsequent behaviours, beginning with anxiety and ending in political activation (Cao & Brewer, 2008; Doona, 2016; Jovanovic, 2019). Particularly, in Serbia, social and political satire consumption has been shown to elicit negative feelings towards the current socio-political climate, leading to a desire amongst viewers to contribute to positive social change (Jovanovic, 2019). In the same Serbian case, exposure to the popular *24 Minuta* and *Njuz.net* satirical programs provided many viewers with a sense of social cohesion and a collective identity, offering an imagined space for individuals to feel less alone with their political anxieties (Cao et al., 2008; Jovanovic, 2019). In other words, humourous, satirical media may offer audiences an approachable, safe space to scrutinize ineffective government (Doona, 2016). Indeed, political comedy audiences often find that their political frustration and perceived sense of social injustice leads to the strengthening of their shared political identities, especially those within otherwise marginalized communities (Jovanovic, 2019). Because of these beneficial effects, the use of satire in society is “vital in challenging democratic deficit and fostering active citizenship” (Jovanovic, 2019, p. 33). These academic insights are especially poignant for contextualizing the benefits of stand-up comedian Vir Das's use of social satire in the less-than-democratic nation of India.

We should further consider humour's abilities to critique religious hegemony while resonating with—and activating—audiences. Katja Guenther, Natasha

Radojic and Kerry Mulligan (2015) are three humour scholars who mutually argue that comedy can often be a central aspect of collective identity cultivation against an opposition. They demonstrate this through a case study on *New Atheism*. According to biologist-turned-philosopher Richard Dawkins, one of the movement's founding members, New Atheists seek to "raise [the] consciousness" of the public by highlighting that humans do not need to answer to a deity or higher power in order to live a balanced, intellectually and morally fulfilling life (Dawkins, 2006, p. 1). This 21st century movement, though, seems rooted more so in promoting the criticism of superstitious, hegemonic religion than in the acceptance of secular, humanist rationalism. For example, Dawkins uses most of his writing space to criticize theories of intelligent design (i.e., the "God Hypothesis"), as well as instances of religious hegemony (Dawkins, 2006, p. 2). Dawkins and other New Atheist thinkers make note of the seemingly dictated nature of the "indoctrination" of mentally developing children (Dawkins, 2006, p. 5). New Atheists see this indoctrination not only within the household, but also from within the school system and the state. With these critical New Atheist principles in mind, Guenther et al. (2015) use their analysis of the secular movement to suggest that "humour is central in depicting opponents in a negative light" (2015, p. 217). They highlight how atheist humour frames devout religious believers as humourless, ridiculous, undemocratic, and distant from the mainstream culture. Analysis of the New Atheist movement adds to the growing literature exposing the acceptance and proliferation of anti-religious rhetoric, as well as how enjoying anti-religious rhetoric cultivates a collective identity. Limitations remain though, as the New Atheist movement and its accompanying atheist humour are largely Western phenomena that have not yet become universal. There is no popular representation of these phenomena in India.

Continuing with the focus on the criticism of religion in Western society – particularly Christianity – I want to assess the work of scholar Rick Moore (2011), who dissects Bill Maher's documentary comedy, *Religulous*. The documentary pleads for religious agnosticism by challenging dominant, faith-based ideology. Moore performs a content analysis of *Religulous*'s critic reviews from the top 20 newspapers in the U.S. (top simply referring to highest circulation, not highest rated). He tackles this analysis from the lens of cultural hegemony. Interestingly, he believes that critic reviews act as a "second line of defence" for reinforcing hegemonic ideology and that that attempts to change hegemonic ideology would be more successful if media [and its critics] were not always so keen on defending the status quo (Moore, 2011, p. 112). Maher's *Religulous* is a production that largely focuses on the criticism of Christianity; however, he does discuss the absurdities of other religions, too. Similarly, we will see that comedian Vir Das challenges the status quo of all organized religion, not just Hinduism.

In order to contextualize the modern use of humour as a tool for social criticism, we must look at its historical success, as well. Indeed, this historical approach is a necessary step for the analysis of any modern human phenomenon (Harari, 2017). One of the earliest and most successful productions of religious criticism came

from Scottish Enlightenment philosopher David Hume. In his work *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1779), Hume uses humour and satire to address some of the contradictions and absurdities of religion. Scholar Richard White (1989) dissects the methods in which Hume criticizes religion, in order to argue that, just as Bill Maher did in *Religulous*, Hume takes down the religious hypothesis through ridicule and irony rather than calculated, logical arguments. White (1989) points out how David Hume publicized and fostered the criticism of religion during the European Enlightenment. White (1989) also suggests religious belief is a “feeling” that cannot be countered through serious objections. Lastly, the author suggests criticism of religion, to be successful, must be subtle or “rhetorically inspired” through parody and satire (White, 1989, p. 393). With these insights in mind, I have a better understanding of how comedy today continues to foster Christian scepticism and how it can be used in the future to foster appropriate levels of scepticism towards religion, in general.

To highlight relevant analyses on the criticism of religion in media antiquity, Tanny provides a brief history of Jewish humour, starting with the medieval *Toledot Yeshu*, a “cluster of folktales” (Tanny, 2015, p. 170). Tanny (2015) draws a variety of parallels that connect medieval Jewish humour to the present perspective of Jewish humour. The focus on history in relation to modern landscape is a notable example for my forthcoming research. Tanny (2015) notes that Jewish humour originally took place in the private sphere, where it was safe from Christian hegemonic oppression. Indeed, the *Toledot Yeshu* is seen to be a notable example of how Christianity is parodied in Jewish and Western society. Jokes are typically based on the absurdities of supernatural claims like Jesus’s divinity and Mary’s virginity. With this history of Jewish humour in mind, it makes sense to suggest that, perhaps, religious comedy in India may still be stuck in the private sphere, with comedians such as Vir Das slowly beginning to break the tradition.

To end our brief outline of humour theories and effects, I review an analysis of *The Simpsons*, a popular example of religious humour in American society. David Feltmate is a humour scholar who, through his *Simpsons* analysis, highlights the notion of critical intertextuality – the idea that “through parody, transgressive texts can work to disarm and dismantle the hegemonic status quo.... provoking a new, counter-hegemonic understanding” (Graym 2006, p. 46 as cited in Feltmate, 2013). He analyses every episode of “The Simpsons (from 1989-2012) and finds that 95% of episodes make at least one reference to religion and 5.5% of episodes use religion as a central theme in their plot (Feltmate, 2013, p. 225). Undoubtedly, then, an analysis of the television series was worthwhile if we consider that “external satires of a religious tradition are important examples for understanding how that religion is treated in the wider cultural context” (Feltmate, 2013, p. 231). Similar to Moore’s (2011) findings on Bill Maher’s *Religulous*, Feltmate finds that the hegemony of religion can clearly be challenged through humour in a way that cultivates collective identity against religious persecutors.

In summary, below are the key findings from this literature review of comedy & religion that will be relied upon (later in the paper) in order to connect Das's comedy with the potential benefits of its receptions:

- Humour can be used to inform (Bingham et al., 2001; Cao et al., 2008; Doona, 2016; Jovanovic, 2019).
- Satire can shape or reinforce socio-political attitudes, as well as politically activate audiences (Baumgartner et al., 2018).
- Logical arguments are often too dry and technical, and comedy is an approachable platform for increasing the receptive strength of an argument (White, 1989).
- Parody texts challenge hegemonic ideology in a subtle way (White, 1989; Tanny, 2015; Feltmate, 2013).
- Parodical, anti-opposition rhetoric in comedy helps cultivate a collective identity, providing a safe, communal space for the proliferation of shared motivations and goals, as well as shared disgust in oppositional forces (Doona, 2016; Guenther et al., 2015; Kumar & Combe, 2015).
- Socio-political satire triggers anxiety, often leading to increased political participation due to a desire for positive social change (Cao et al., 2008; Jovanovic, 2019).

2. RELIGIO-POLITICS IN INDIA: HISTORICAL CONTEXT & PRESENT LANDSCAPE

2.1. India as a 'secular' nation

It is often thought that India is the birthplace of Hinduism, as well as Jainism, Sikhism, and Buddhism. In part because of their historical diversity, Indian parliament decided to officially declare India a secular nation. It was officially adopted in their constitution, in November of 1949, and furthermore acknowledged in 1972 in the 42nd amendment to the constitution, which declared India as a secular nation in the preamble. The formal declaration of secularism in India has been controversial since its inception. In theory, though, what does it mean to be a secular nation? Indian political theorist Rajeev Bhargava (2002) considers these seven features of secularism in his piece *What is Indian Secularism and What is it for?*

1. Disestablishment of religion. (Articles 27 & 28)
2. Religious liberty to any one religious group. (Articles 25-28)
3. Religious liberty granted non-preferentially to members of every religious group. (Articles 25-28)
4. The liberty to embrace a religion other than the one into which a person is born and to reject all religions. (Articles 25-28)
5. No discrimination by the state on grounds of religion to entitlements provided by the state. (Article 15)

6. No discrimination in admission to educational institutions on grounds of religion. (Article 29)
7. Equality of active citizenship: no discrimination on grounds of religion. (Articles 16 and 325)

Although Articles 15, 16, 25(1), 26, 27, 28, 29, and Article 325 of the constitution confirm India as a secular land, some Indian political theorists consider Articles 17 and 30, and section (2) (B) of Article 25, as a departure from secularism, at least in the Western tradition (Bhargava, 2002). India cannot be a secular nation in the Western sense because of the discrepancies between the social practices of each religious group. Religious individuals in India and throughout South Asia focus more on involving themselves in social practices and traditions, contrasting the Western religions, which put more focus on the beliefs held by individuals (Bhargava, 2002). The emphasis on practice makes it difficult to strike down equally just laws, because it may be perceived as discriminatory towards one religious group's practices while favouring another's. For this reason, Indian government does not fully separate church and state, rather they act from a "principled distance;" they attempt to operationalize this distance by creating community-based rights in which there are different laws for each religious community, and, where "the state has intervened in the affairs of some religious communities more than in others" (Bhargava, 2002, p. 5). For example, Hindu reform movements have led to the abolition of the caste system and child marriage, as well as introduced the right to divorce and the right to inter-caste marriages. However, these laws are not applicable to Muslim-Indian communities, who are governed by the Muslim Personal Law/Sharia Law and have separate cultural concerns. Secular reform created a variety of measures to protect community-based rights, and these measures promote "1) positive discrimination, 2) special government programs to raise the level of welfare of religious minorities," and, "3) the establishment and functioning of the state's special institutions for protecting minority rights" (Fayzullina & Mukkhametzhanova-Duggal, 2014, p. 14). Principled distance discussions also often include debates over the necessity of separate electorates in the assembly (Bhargava, 2002). It is believed community-based social rights and other principled distance policies in India are necessary if the nation wants to claim secularity, because, "it is extremely difficult for non-Muslims to realize the Current needs and requirements of the Muslim community" (Bhargava, 2002, p. 21).

3. CASE STUDY: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF SEGMENT FROM LOSING IT (14:55-23:30)

3.1. Methodology

A textual analysis of Comedian Vir Das's religious-based comedy segments should be particularly helpful in understanding the concepts of his content in relation to India's theoretical secularism and the impeding Hindu nationalist movement. My

form of analysis takes from a popular methodology utilized in media studies, known as discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is helpful for identifying “themes, consistencies, and patterns across and between texts and to connect these to wider contexts and social formations” (Gill, 2017, p. 28). This case study focuses specifically on the themes within Vir Das’s stand-up special. These themes include, but are not limited to, religious identity, secular freedom, global peace, and community. As the prominent critical discourse analyst Teun van Dijk notes, “the crucial presupposition of adequate critical discourse analysis is understanding the nature of social power and dominance” (van Dijk, 1993, p. 254). I focus, specifically, on the nature of power and dominance in the intersecting social, political, and religious landscapes of India. The analysis further highlights the use of humorous approaches to address such themes. The analysis is also interpretive and ideological in nature. It is interpretive, in that it relies solely on my expanding, yet limited, level of awareness of the “social, political, and cultural trends and contexts,” pulled from both within and outside of the case text (Gill, 2017, p. 26). It is ideological, in that it “examines a cultural artefact as a means of understanding and illuminating the ideological notions that run through it” (Gill, 2017, p. 27). The analysis connects the selected content to a wider network of resistance and progressive ideology, by examining how humorous rhetoric affectively challenges religious power and dominance.

To reiterate my argument: With the understanding that comedy can be used as a tool to inform (Bingham et al., 2001; Cao et al., 2008; Doona, 2016; Jovanovic, 2019), to shape socio-political attitudes (Baumgartner et al., 2018), to challenge hegemonic ideology (Feltmate, 2013; White, 1989; Tanny, 2015), to cultivate a collective identity (Doona, 2016; Guenther et al., 2015; Kumar et al., 2015), and, above all, to politically activate citizens (Cao et al., 2008; Guenther et al., 2015; Jovanovic, 2019), paired with the knowledge that secularism in India remains in jeopardy (Vaishnav, 2019), comedy in India can and should be encouraged as a tool to promote secularism and religious tolerance, and to curb the aggressions of religious hegemony. In the following analysis, I relate passages from Das’s stand-up special to the present landscape of religio-politics in India. Das is a comedian born in Bombay, India. He was raised in Nigeria, studied performance art in the United States and Moscow, and has since returned to India to star in Hindi cinema.

In Vir Das’s 2018 Netflix Special, *Losing It*, Das embraces the unity of world religions and ridicules the polarization of them. Coming from a country with such widespread diversity, he’s not afraid to question sacred Hindu doctrine or put it aside for the sake of unity. He’s able to reach an audience that similarly enjoys criticism in the form of humour. Although much of his stand-up special light-heartedly pokes fun at the peculiarities of wholesome topics like childhood and travelling, Das dedicates 8 ½ minutes to the criticism of religion to the criticism of religion and religious hegemony. Below, I analyse four segments of Das’s stand-up comedy special, particularly the bits of his special that focus on religion. His comedy segments are analysed

in order, as follows: Election strategy, Selfies and the portrayal of deities, Scripture as really old superhero stories, and Uniting all religions.

3.2. Election Strategy

Growing up, Das struggled with writing in cursive English. He was unable to connect his letters, so his mother advised him to write in block letters. Unfortunately, the use of block letters added a commanding emphasis to his words that suggested he was screaming his thoughts out. This led to poor exam scores, as Das proclaims:

I got 52% in English, even though my answers were good. And I think it's because the examiner thought I was yelling at him. You know, he's just reading my paper. "THE REINCARNATIONS OF KRISHNA REPRESENT THE TRUE LINE OF INDIAN MYTHOLOGY!" He's like, "Well, that's a good point, but I don't like your attitude." Because back then, a Hindu screaming angrily for no reason seemed strange. Now it's election strategy.

What seemed like a blithe story about a misunderstanding between teacher and pupil sharply turned into a brief criticism of the Hindu nationalist movement. Das's crafty joke structure offered the audience a chance to first laugh with him at his past before presenting the punchline which mocks Hindu election strategy. At the time of this paper's submission, India's month-long 2019 general election period is underway and there's no shortage of pundits screaming at each other on live broadcast television or at other public venues. The Bharatiya Janata Party's majority rule began as Narendra Modi and the BJP catapulted to the forefront of Indian politics in 2014 after roughly 10 years of majority rule by the Congress Party— 10 years in which the BJP claimed that the Congress Party merely promoted pseudo-secularism for "selfish political interest" and "short-term electoral gain" (Vaishnav, 2019, pp. 9, 13). Their success in the election might have reflected their campaign promises – reinvigorating the economy and stamping down on corruption— more so than a public dissatisfaction with secularism, however, the BJP continues using aggressive language to promote the broader Hindutva movement and incite public discrimination towards The Congress Party and widespread non-Hindu practices. Das, despite practicing Hinduism, is not afraid to criticize the Hindu nationalist election strategies and implicitly make note of the nationalist movement's polarization of the Hindu and the "other."

3.3. Selfies and the portrayal of deities

His first religious-based joke touches on his relationship with God. Das finds it is frustrating that religions around the world constantly misrepresent the image and likeness of their gods. He believes God exists in children, nature, and animals rather

than in churches, temples, and mosques, and he believes the religious elite have enforced false images of God to a point that followers are so confident in the image that they do not even question its authenticity.

You ever take a selfie? And you know how to make yourself look good in that selfie, right? But if you hand your friend the phone, they will fuck up the selfie. Absolutely. Why? Because they do not understand your correct angles. I think for God, man is that friend. We have always fucked up the image of God because we don't understand his correct angles.

Das goes on to ponder how these gods might feel if they walked into a holy place and saw their representation. Stepping into the character of Jesus Christ, Das proclaims:

Who drew that shit? You, Leonardo? Come here.... What is this shit? What is that? I carried that cross for three days without carbs. You couldn't draw a tricep, you son of a bitch?

And, Das on the Hindu god Ganesha:

What the fuck is that? I'm half man, half elephant. That's brown and gray. What is all this colour? What are you people on acid? What is this? Hinduism by Disney?

Das's rhetoric points out the hegemony around the portrayal of gods. Throughout time, personifications of our gods become cemented in our outlook. It is understandable to want a visual depiction of someone or something that you worship. However, problems may occur when the depiction (or lack of depiction) becomes hegemonic, in the sense that those who disagree with it will be socially, or even federally, ostracized. The case of federal ostracization is most notably seen through the discouragement of any visual depiction of the Muslim prophet Muhammad:

Muslims, I think the first time Muhammad walked into a mosque, he was like... [awkward pause]... I don't know what Muhammad looks like, do you? Nobody does. Every time we draw the guy, somebody gets shot. Remember? I'm not doing that joke.

This light-hearted approach that Das takes towards mocking multiple major religions creates an atmosphere of tolerance. Ridiculing one religion might be considered discriminatory, however, opening the floor for comedically criticizing multiple religions - in this case, regarding the depiction of gods - sets a collective tone in the audience that it is acceptable to laugh at both your religion and the religion of others, without fear of persecution.

In 2019, India's population exceeded 1.35 billion people. 80% of Indians identify as Hindu, 13% as Muslims, 2.3% as Christian, 1.9% as Sikhs, 0.9% as nonreligious, 0.8% as Buddhists, and 0.4% as Jains (World Population Review, 2019). Merely 0.1% of Indians accounts for over 1.35 million people. But wait, we can keep going. Even .001%, then, is arguably a large enough subpopulation for the collective cultivation of a particular identity (135,000). These demographic statistics highlight the ethno-religious diversity in the country, at a time in India where it is now politically advantageous to boast Hinduism. However, the country is simply too diverse to effectively rely on the religio-political beliefs of a Hindu nationalist administration (BJP). Das's insistence on subjecting Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam to ridicule reminds us that depictions of gods are often arbitrary, and sometimes obscured or exploited for purposes of maintaining hegemony while thwarting individual expression.

3.4. Uniting all religions

Das continues his criticism of religious hegemony by suggesting that religious dogmatism should take a step back.

I believe the future of world peace is not going to come from politics or economics. It will come from religions. The world will be okay when every religion in the world learns to have some fun and chill the fuck out. Can we agree on that, yeah? [applause]...

He expresses his dissatisfaction with the present landscape of Christian-Muslim relations, suggesting the two religions combine to form 'Chrislam,' where people worship in chosques (church + mosque), celebrate Eid-ster (Eid Al-Fitr + Easter), and pray for pitta bread. "Give us this day our pitta bread. As we forgive those who hummus against us." Das uses his platform and popularity to destigmatize the differences between religions and to promote tolerance. Although suggestions like these are comically impractical, the underlying assumption Das wants us to understand is that our planet will not find peace unless religious communities learn how to tolerate other religious communities. He hopes for a world free of intolerance, but he only holds this hope because he understands that secularism in India remains at risk, as the *Hindutva* movement continues to connect individuals who seek to bring back India's Hindu identity. The central goal of this movement is to reclaim India's sacred geography under the guise that terrestrial India is the birthplace and holy land of Hindus (Bhargava, 2002).

Subsequently, Leaders within the movement tend to frame Muslims and Christians as culturally dangerous "others," and they refuse to accept secularism as anything more than "a fraudulent foreign Taxation, perpetrated by elites associated with the Congress Party" (Vaishnav, 2019, p. 3). The left-leaning Congress Party, too, has begun embracing Hindu identity, perhaps because of the BJP's Electoral success

since 2014. It is believed it's in attempt to curb the BJP's religious appeal, suggesting that its now politically advantageous to promote pro-Hindu social behaviour (Vaishnav, 2019). Therefore, regardless of the winner of the 2019 elections, secularism will remain at risk in India. With this contextual understanding, it seems worthwhile to consider more seriously comedy's partner-political pull. While it may have no explicit political value, more comedy in India like Vir Das's, in which we're reminded of absurdities of religious hegemony, could result in a greater tolerance and greater acceptance of secularism.

3.5. Scripture as really old superhero stories

Focusing most of his religious-based comedy on uniting Christians and Muslims, Das is not afraid to circle back to Hindu doctrine. Hindu nationalists continue to find reasons to either displace, discriminate, or disregard Indian-Muslims and Indian-Christians who have a claim to India as their place of birth. Nationalists imply that because India is the Hindu homeland, ethno-religious minorities should be treated as second-class citizens and that development efforts should put Hindus at the forefront. Despite largely refraining from federal intervention in religious affairs, the BJP has opened the gates to allow for a wide range of changes at the state and sub-state level. For religious minorities in India, this may be instigating fear of a return to anachronistic laws. See how Das questions religions' anachronistic qualities, with a focus on Hindu doctrine:

What is religion? It's a really old comic book. It's a really old superhero story. Muslims, Allah is your Batman. Christians, Jesus is your Superman.... But Hindus, we created the Avengers... There're too many guys. Nobody knows what the story is. And don't eat beef. No matter what we say, we don't understand any of it. We just end it with "don't eat beef." "Don't eat beef" is our "Despacito."

Das seems to struggle with the necessity of the non-beef doctrine, perhaps for good reason. The issue, revolving around the cow as sacred to Hindu ideology, has recently led to violent controversies. The Indian states of Haryana and Maharashtra have seen a stamping down on laws prohibiting cow slaughter as well as the sale and possession of beef. This movement to strengthen Hindu law has encouraged a call for vigilante justice, leading to lynching and mob violence (Vaishnav, 2019). Additionally, among other policy changes attempting to reverse Indian secularism, the BJP also selected Yogi Adityanath as chief minister in Uttar Pradesh, a populous, influential district often considered the "metaphorical heart of the Hindu heartland" (Vaishnav, 2019, p. 10). Adityanath operates at a conspiracy-like level, claiming Muslim men target Hindu women for conversion. Adityanath countered this "phenomenon" by creating a program to convert minorities back to Hinduism. Lastly, the BJP umbrella has

allowed for states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan to rewrite their histories and “downplay Islamic contributions to Indian history and culture” (Vaishnav, 2019, p. 10). Considering these examples of increased enforcement of fundamental Hindu law and the accompanying incitement of violence, as well as a push to convert Muslims to Hinduism, complemented by a downplay of their historical contributions to society, Das’s bravery should be acknowledged. Indeed, his speech may come with ostracism from various social groups within his own country, providing us one reason for why he may have chosen to film his special in San Francisco, United States. In the U.S., Das has access to a large Indian American and Indian diasporic community. Perhaps he feels comfortable criticizing from afar while still reaching an invested audience, relinquishing any fears of a direct backlash from native audiences and politicians.

4. CONCLUSION & LIMITATIONS

Never does Vir Das take sides on one religion’s viewpoint, and never does he ridicule one’s beliefs. This contrasts with Western comedians, such as Bill Maher and Ricky Gervais, who openly promote atheism and openly reject all organized religions. This direct approach to rejecting organized religion may work for the West’s New Atheist movement, but because religious practice is so enriched in South Asian daily life, a light-hearted, all-encompassing approach to mocking religious hegemony may work better. As I conclude this research, it is my opinion that secular Indian comedians should look at religions with a critical eye; however, they should also avoid overtly anti-religious rhetoric. I believe the light-hearted approach that Das takes towards mocking multiple major religions creates an atmosphere of tolerance. Ridiculing one religion might be considered discriminatory, however, opening the floor for comedically criticizing multiple religions sets a collective tone in the audience that it’s okay to laugh at both your religion and the religion of others, without fear of persecution.

Das’s insistence on subjecting Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam to ridicule reminds us that while each person’s religious beliefs hold validity in their hearts and in their communities, they nonetheless often take on hegemonic qualities, become subjected to political exploitation, and/or thwart individual expression. Again, to reiterate my argument, Das’s 2018 Netflix Special, *Losing It*, represents comedy being used as a tool to promote secularism and religious tolerance, while criticizing the intolerance found throughout the world, and more notably, throughout India. The use of humour in India should continue in order to help foster an Indian collective identity that promotes secularism, religious freedom, and religious tolerance.

While an in-depth analysis of one of the leading Indian comedians may be worthwhile to understand comedy’s ability to promote tolerance, there are still a variety of limitations to this study. For one, there is much more on the history and diversity of India, the controversies over Indian secularism, and the present landscape of Indian politics that were simply not feasible to cover within the timeframe of this project.

There's also an understanding that some comedy can promote persecution rather than tolerance, where the religious ridicule turns hostile rather than light-hearted. Furthermore, within the same line of concerned reasoning, it is entirely possible that Das's comedy provides fuel for opponents of his secular perspective, in such a way that is more powerful than any of the positive effects for the secular community. With any push for social change, we have to consider the backlash that accompanies it. Here, backlash is usually a resistance from those who feel their identities and capacities are threatened (Mansbridge and Shames, 2008). It'd be worthwhile to analyse audience reactions to Das and other religious-themed comedians throughout India, to find if some use comedy to promote (rather than criticize) Hindu nationalism or other forms of religious hegemony. Yes, his performances receive laughter and critical acclaim, but has anything or will anything change in India, in part of success. Longitudinal quantitative studies on representative samples of the Indian population might work well to prove this.

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VLIV NOVÝCH MÉDIÍ NA BUDOVÁNÍ MÍRU V DEMOKRATICKÉ REPUBLICCE KONGO

// THE IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA ON PEACE-BUILDING IN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO¹

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ABSTRACT

The essay deals with the influence of new media on peace-building in a post-conflict area. Using the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), I explore the impact of information and communication technologies in this area. Considering the context of events in the DRC and focusing on the impact of new media, the article looks into all phases of the conflict. The aim is to introduce and critically evaluate the potential of the information and communication technologies (ICT) that are used in crisis areas to maintain peace in the country.

Key words: new media ▪ peace-building ▪ information and communication technologies ▪ Democratic republic of the Congo

1. ÚVOD DO PROBLEMATIKY

Konflikty odehrávající se v 21. století se vyznačují zvýšeným přístupem k informacím a prostředkům mediální produkce všech zúčastněných. Propojení médií a konfliktu utváří a proměňuje další sféry konfliktu a jeho vývoj. Například budování míru je transformováno a ovlivňováno působením médií a jejich digitalizací. Z tohoto důvodu je zajímavé a důležité věnovat pozornost mediálně-technologickým aktivitám, zintenzivněné komunikaci a šíření informací v kontextu konfliktu (Sigal, 2009, s. 8–9). Politické události a povstání arabského světa (tzv. Arabské jaro) byly přičítány vlivu nových médií, vývoj svobodného mediálního systému je zase považován za ústřední prvek obnovy státu po konfliktu v Iráku, Afghánistánu, Somálsku či v Konžské demokratické republice (DRK) (Schoemaker & Stremlau, 2014, s. 181–182).

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Diskuse o roli médií v konfliktu je většinou vedena z hlediska střetu ambivalentních pozic, které buď připisují médiím pozitivní roli v propagaci míru a demokracie, anebo naopak negativní roli ve smyslu podpory násilí a zvyšování polarizace mezi účastníky konfliktu (Schoemaker & Stremlau, 2014, s. 181–182). Z této perspektivy je propojení pole médií a konfliktu v rozporném postavení. Takové prostředí nová média rozšiřují o další možnosti vlivu (Wolfsfeld, 2004; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005).

Stať se věnuje vlivu informačních a komunikačních technologií na budování míru na příkladu Demokratické republiky Kongo. Mediální systém v DRK je značně ovlivněn koloniálním dědictvím a zřetelně odráží sociální, ekonomické a politické prostředí země. Média jsou stále rozdělena dle etnické a regionální příslušnosti a jsou podřízena vládnoucí straně. Veřejnoprávní média čelí hrozbě politizace, novináři konžského národního rozhlasu a televize podléhají vlivu vlády a tvoří zaujaté zpravodajství. V dané zemi dominují tradiční soukromá média: noviny, rozhlas i televize, a vlastníci těchto médií skrze ně distribují svá politická, etnická a náboženská přesvědčení. Hlavní město Kinshasa koncentruje největší podíl sdělovacích prostředků v zemi (Kabemba, 2005, s. 1–3).

DRK je charakterizovaná nízkou úrovní hospodářského a sociálního rozvoje s nejméně rozvinutou infrastrukturou na africkém kontinentu. I přesto, že míra penetrace mobilních telefonů zde dosahuje nízkých hodnot, využívání mobilních telefonů v DRK je efektivní a přináší obyvatelům výhody (GSMA, 2015, s. 13). V roce 2018 využívalo mobilní telefon v DRK 36,47 milionu lidí, tedy 43 na každých 100 obyvatel. Pro srovnání – například Keňa v témže roce vykazovala počet 49,5 milionů uživatelů mobilních telefonů, tedy penetraci 96,32 % (ITU, 2019). Organizace GSMA (Global System for Mobile Communication) vydala zprávu, ve které uvádí, že subsaharská Afrika disponuje nejrychleji rostoucím mobilním trhem na světě, a předpovídá, že v roce 2025 dosáhne na polovinu africké populace. Největší nárůst těchto nových mobilních uživatelů je očekáván právě v DRK, Nigérii, Etiopii, Tanzánii a Keni (GSMA, 2019).

Navzdory politické a ekonomické nestabilitě disponuje velké množství států z rozvojových zemí rychle rostoucím přístupem k internetu a mobilním telefonům. Dokonce i v nejchudších afrických státech se počty mobilních telefonů prudce zvyšují. Informační nástroje se stávají v těchto lokalitách stále dosažitelnější, zatímco tradiční komunikační a informační zdroje jsou často vysoce regulované a relativně pomalejší ve svém rozvoji (Sigal, 2009, s. 18). Cílem této eseje je tedy prozkoumat působení nových médií na příkladu Demokratické republiky Kongo, se zaměřením na konkrétní fáze konfliktu a budování míru. Zároveň je cílem představit a kriticky zhodnotit některé informační a komunikační technologie a metody využívané v krizových zónách pro udržení míru v zemi.

Tato esej vychází z dostupných dokumentů Organizace spojených národů (OSN dokumenty mírové operace MONUC/MONUSCO v DRK, dokument United Nations Economic Commission for Africa), která provádí šetření svého působení v mírových operacích OSN. Dále vycházím z rešerše materiálů vládních (United States

Institute of Peace) a nevládních (např. nevládní organizace National Endowment for Democracy a jejich iniciativa The Center for International Media Assistance) organizací, jež obsahovaly z velké části zkušenosti novinářů působících v oblastech konfliktu. Tito novináři se zabývají oblastí mírového žurnalistu, tedy přinášejí nové možnosti tvorby zpráv orientovaných na dosažení míru v zemi.² Prostřednictvím nadačních materiálů (Open Society Foundation) či dokumentů Světové banky byly vybrány tyto a další dokumenty na základě své relevance a zaměření na specifickou výzkumnou oblast vlivu nových médií na konflikt. Akademické texty zabývající se touto problematikou taktéž z velké části vycházejí ze zmíněných materiálů vládních a nevládních organizací. Vzhledem k tomuto zjištění jsem tyto materiály jakožto primární zdroje upřednostnila při tvorbě eseje.

2. NOVÁ MÉDIA A BUDOVÁNÍ MÍRU

Termín „nová média“ označuje mnoho různých forem elektronické komunikace, které jsou umožněny díky její digitalizaci, využití výpočetní techniky a internetu. Manovich (2018, s. 60) uvádí, že nová média jsou výsledkem grafiky, animace, zvuku, tvaru, prostoru a textu, které se dají reprezentovat čísly a představují proto soubor počítačových dat. Pro účely této eseje chápu nová média jako zastřešující pojem, který zahrnuje mediální nástroje používané participativním a interaktivním způsobem: informační a komunikační technologie (jakož i softwarová vybavení), síťová média, sociální média (například Facebook, Twitter).

Komunikační technologie se stávají i politickými činiteli. Stát již není jediným aktérem v politické aréně, který může vykonávat informační moc nad jinými informačními činiteli. Významnou roli hrají nevládní rozvojové organizace či soukromý sektor (např. občanské společnosti). V momentu selhání politiky se spory stávají ozbrojenými konflikty. Pro účely tohoto textu využiji definici, která chápe konflikt jako

sociální vztah mezi dvěma či více aktéry, kteří mohou postupně měnit své zájmy, cíle, chování a jednání. [...] Proces proměny konfliktního vztahu mezi aktéry je základní determinantou způsobu jeho řešení. Konflikty jsou sociální procesy s vlastní dynamikou a jako takové mají různá stádia či stupně intenzity, jimiž procházejí. Intenzita a dynamika konfliktu ovlivňuje jak nástroje a strategie stran sporu, tak možnosti řešení (Waissová, 2005, s. 49).

Boje jsou dnes sváděny vysoce mobilními silami vyzbrojenými právě zařízeními ICT (Floridi, 2019, s. 197–199, 216–217).

2 Johan Galtung poprvé použil termín „*peace journalism*“ neboli „*mírová žurnalistika*“. V roce 2008 založil organizaci „*Transcend media service*“ za účelem posilování míru a rozvoje „*peace journalism*“. Více: TRANSCEND. Dostupný z: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/about-peace-journalism/1-what-is-peace-journalism/>

Daný proces proměny sociálního vztahu mezi aktéry determinuje i následné způsoby řešení konfliktu, které jsou taktéž formovány mediální angažovaností ve všech jeho fázích (latentní fáze, otevřený konflikt, postkonfliktní fáze) (Gilboa, 2007). Proces budování míru zahrnuje i celou řadu dalších aktivit, jejichž cílem je snížit pravděpodobnost pokračování násilného konfliktu a odstranit jeho příčiny.

Johan Galtung ve své práci „*Three approaches to peace: peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding*“ popisuje budování míru jako asociativní přístup za účelem vybudování míru mezi národy. Zdůrazňuje potřebu sociální změny, jelikož mír není možné budovat mezi zneprátenými aktéry (Galtung, 1976, s. 297–300). Součástí této sociální změny jsou i technologie a související aktivity, které zlepšují sociální a ekonomické podmínky státu, například poskytování mobilních telefonů v konfliktních zónách (Chitra & Neelamalar, 2013).

Tím, že sdělovací prostředky v mírovém procesu definují politickou atmosféru, ve které se proces odehrává, ovlivňují nejen povahu mírové debaty, ale také strategii a chování antagonistů (Wolfsfeld, 2004, s. 11). Manoff (1998) tvrdí, že při zkoumání možného preventivního potenciálu médií je nutné se zaměřit na institucionální dimenzi, profesní kodexy a směrnice, vládní politiky, zájmy pracovníků sdělovacích prostředků a ekonomické faktory. Zahrnuje všechny formy masových sdělovacích prostředků distribuované takovému masovému publiku jakoukoli technologií. Kromě tradičních médií (rozhlas, televize, noviny) neopomíjí zmínit také důležitý podíl nových médií (Manoff, 1998).

Kontinuitu mezi válkami a historií médií spatřuje Kittler převážně v jejich využití při vojenské komunikaci. Ve své knize s názvem *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* poukazuje na to, že od dob vynálezu optického telegrafu k vývoji počítačových technologií měly války značný vliv na rozvoj této průmyslové oblasti. Historii filmu srovnává s vývojem automatických zbraní a rozvoj telegrafu byl dle autora podnícen nutností rychlého přenosu vzkazů a zpravodajských informací. Vývoj televize pokládá za vedlejší produkt radarové technologie. V kontextu druhé světové války shledává televizi společně s rozvojem počítače za důležité technologie, nápomocné v práci vojenské rozvědky při výpočtu dosahu raketových trajektorií (Kittler, 1999). V dnešních konfliktních a postkonfliktních oblastech napomáhají rychlejšímu zpracování informací v krizové oblasti nová média (jedná se například o softwary mobilních telefonů: Ushahidi, Una Hakika, Frontline SMS) (Tuckwood, 2014).

3. PŮSOBENÍ NOVÝCH MÉDIÍ V POČÁTEČNÍ FÁZI KONFLIKTU

Války v DRK přímo souvisí s konfliktem ve Rwandě, kde došlo ke genocidě mezi etniky umírněných Hutuů a radikálních Tutsiů. Při analýze kořenových příčin válek v DRK je nutné vzít v úvahu širokou historickou perspektivu. Důležitým spouštěčem první konžské války v letech 1996–1997 byl příliv více než jednoho milionu uprchlíků kmene Hutuů ze Rwandy do východní části DRK. Pokračující rozpory však vyvolaly další vlnu bojů se zapojením sousedních devíti afrických států a k masakrům docházelo

i ve druhé konžské válce (1998–2003). Mírová dohoda byla podepsána mezi Rwandou a DRK v červenci 2002. Do dnešní doby se však země nachází v nepříznivé situaci - miliony lidí jsou stále zbaveny základních politických, sociálních a kulturních práv kvůli rozsáhlému fyzickému, psychickému a strukturálnímu násilí. (Economic Commission for Africa, 2015, s. 1–2, 14).

Velká pozornost v souvislosti se zavedením nových technologií v oblastech konfliktu je ve studovaných dokumentech věnována fázi před jeho vypuknutím a také procesu otevřeného konfliktu - přesněji systému včasného varování a rychlých reakcí. Na technologie pro včasné varování je v současné době kladen podstatný důraz, jelikož tato oblast rozvoje podléhá největším inovacím, spočívajícím v podpoře místních obyvatel v konfliktní zóně, aby se podíleli na spolupráci v otázkách budování míru (Puig & Larrauri, 2013, s. 61).

Zavedení mechanismu včasného varování před konflikty bylo na africkém kontinentu formálně iniciováno Organizací africké jednoty (OAU) v červnu 1992, v platnost vstoupilo roku 1993. Jedná se o ústřední mechanismus pro řešení a řízení konfliktů a jejich prevenci. Z důvodu eskalace konfliktu ve Rwandě, který se stal následně příčinou konfliktu v Demokratické republice Kongo, byl zapojen i mechanismus udržování míru (Cilliers, 2005, s. 3–4).

V červnu 2004 byla Demokratická republika Kongo otřesena rozsáhlými humanitárními krizemi, zejména na východě země, které vedly k vnitřnímu vysídlení velké části populace. Humanitární organizace zajistily finanční a materiální prostředky k implementaci mechanismu rychlé reakce. Místní vesnice a farnosti byly kontaktovány charitativními organizacemi, které tato kontaktní místa vybavily mobilními telefony za účelem shromažďování informací a podávání zpráv regionální charitativní organizaci. Odtud byly dále informace předávány Dětskému fondu Organizace spojených národů (UNICEF) a posléze OSN (Catholic Relief Services, 2012, s. 8–13).

Mediální působení se tedy zaměřuje na prevenci či snahu zabránit eskalaci konfliktu. Pomocí nových technologií je umožněno rychleji přenášet informace v postižené oblasti, čímž je urychlena i následná reakce na tyto informace. V této fázi se využívá i mediální participace občanů v krizových lokalitách, kde je posilována mediální gramotnost prostřednictvím zvláštních školení (Puig & Larrauri, 2013, s. 61).

4. PŮSOBENÍ NOVÝCH MÉDIÍ VE FÁZI OTEVŘENÉHO KONFLIKTU

Dle intenzity násilí a úrovně otevřeného konfliktu nabírají potřeby mediální intervence různý charakter. Tyto intervence mohou provádět nejrůznější aktéři, zahrnující nevládní neziskové organizace, příspěvkové organizace či specializovaná mezinárodní vysílání. Každý z aktérů upřednostňuje jiný plán a přístup. Mediální úsilí je zaměřeno na poskytování humanitárních informací skrze místní či mezinárodní sdělovací prostředky, a to zejména pro nejzranitelnější účastníky konfliktu, jako jsou například uprchlíci. Poskytování takových informací je spojeno s informačními kanály oznamujícími, kde a jakým způsobem získat přístup k přístřeší,

potravinám, pitné vodě, lékařské pomoci a uprchlickým táborem. V místech otevřeného konfliktu bývá zvýšená potřeba výstavby vysílačů a obnovování radiopřijímačů: tedy potřeba vysílání, výroby nebo přijímání informací. Mediální produkce i konzumace tak na místní či komunitní úrovni zintenzivňuje (Spurk, 2002, s. 2–9).

Ve fázi otevřeného konfliktu podléhají nová média větší kontrole úniku informací než tradiční média (Liebes & Kampf, 2004, s. 25). V důsledku útlaku médií praktikují někteří novináři a mediální domy v DRK autocenzuru, často se zdržují zveřejňování informací, které považují za citlivé. V některých případech odborníci čekají na zprostředkování zpráv pomocí zahraničních médií, na něž odkazují. Občané disponují relativně větší svobodou projevu skrze online média. Využívají blogy, Facebook a další komunikační aplikace (například WhatsApp) (CIPESA, 2016, s. 5).

Výroční zpráva konžské nevládní organizace *Journaliste en Danger* poskytuje každoroční přehled o tom, jak informační a komunikační technologie ovlivnily postupy novinářů v zemi a jakým výzvám tito novináři čelili. Mobilní telefony a internetové připojení změnily každodenní práci konžských novinářů, ti jsou nyní více propojeni s lidmi z různých lokalit a jsou schopni lépe vyhodnocovat informace nežli v době, kdy nová technologie nebyla rozšířena (Frére, 2013).

Během mírové mise v DRK (MONUSCO, MONUC do roku 2010) využívali členové ozbrojených sil mobilní telefony pro navázání spojení s místními aktéry, kteří poskytovali informace o aktivitách a násilí vyskytujících se v dobrovolnických ozbrojených složkách. Využívali důvěryhodných reportérů, kteří monitorovali rizika, a mohli tak včas upozornit mírové síly na potenciální násilí (Dorn, 2011, s. 180).

Nástroje sociálních médií umožnily lidem, aby se stali producenty obsahu a součástí debat, které se odehrávají po celém světě v reálném čase. Je důležité si uvědomit, že nová média jsou v oblastech konfliktů pouze prvkem většího a složitějšího systému. Jako každý mediální nástroj, včetně tradičních novin, rozhlasu a televize, nové technologie a aplikace mohou být použity k předávání přesných nebo nepřesných informací a k podpoře nenávislné nebo tolerantní agendy. Nová média jsou často považována za prostředek demokracie a míru, avšak sociální sítě a další nové mediální technologie mohou být stejně snadno použity k radikalizaci a násilí (Ngige, Badekale, & Hammanjoda, 2016, s. 8–9).

5. PŮSOBENÍ NOVÝCH MÉDIÍ V POSTKONFLIKTNÍ FÁZI

Informační a komunikační technologie pokládají v postkonfliktní fázi základy pro dlouhodobější stabilizaci situace, přispívající k sociálnímu a ekonomickému rozvoji státu. Obnovování telekomunikací buduje u veřejnosti důvěru v to, že se stát navrací opět do normálu (Kelly & Souter, 2014, s. 16).

V mediálním zprostředkování konfliktů, udržování míru a stabilizaci země po konfliktu mohou být nová média značně limitována. Rozsáhlé státní pravomoci stanovují základní pravidla pro infrastrukturu a tarify, uplatňují cenzuru a dohled nad reportováním událostí. Také disponují potenciálem omezit používání a dostupnost

digitálních médií ve velkém měřítku například i tím, že zamezí internetovému a mobilnímu přístupu. Veškeré tyto strategie sice potlačují funkčnost nebo dosah síťových médií, avšak nezastaví jejich používání zcela (Liebes & Kampf, 2004, s. 79).

Telekomunikační společnosti patří mezi největší podniky v mnoha rozvojových oblastech a významně přispívají ke státním příjmům. Rozsah jejich působení v zemích po skončení konfliktu roste s postupující stabilizací a rozšiřováním sítí. Obnovení komunikace je důležitým aktem v počátečním období po ukončení konfliktu (Kelly & Souter, 2014, s. 17).

Mediální prostředí v DRK ve svém současném stavu upřednostňuje především vládní zájmy. Telekomunikační společnosti nemají možnost zpochybnit, nebo dokonce odmítnout vládní příkazy. Také přístup k internetovým službám je často blokován (CIPESA, 2016, s. 12).

Nová média však mohou být prospěšná v rozličných situacích a umožňují občanskou angažovanost. Například telekomunikační společnosti Vodacom a Airtel se aktivně zapojily do vlastních vzdělávacích programů podporujících vzdělávání dívek, a také do plánů výuky digitální gramotnosti dospělých žen. Vyvinuly podpůrné programy pro místní projekty, jako je například instalace soukromých komunikačních kabin či prodej telefonních karet (Mushizi, 2019). S nástupem internetu začali být novináři snadněji dostupní pro publikum, kterému je umožněno reagovat na vysílané informace, což vytvářelo interaktivnější vztah mezi mediálními profesionály a publikem. Díky technologii mobilních telefonů došlo k vytvoření nové veřejné sféry a zapojení publika do řady programů, jež pak zpopularizovaly činnost soukromých rozhlasových stanic v DRK (Frére, 2009, s. 227–228).

Během televizního vysílání Radio Télévision Kindu Maniema ve východní části DRK v březnu 2012 mohli lidé volat do televizní show a diskutovat o veřejném dění ve společnosti. Obyvatelé tak otevřeně kritizovali život pod vládou guvernéra provincie Maniema, Tutu Salumu. Podobné programy přispívaly k šíření povědomí o mobilních telefonech, což v konečném důsledku vedlo k rozšíření mobilního připojení v oblastech bez pevných linek (Frére, 2013).

OSN v procesu mírové operace zřídila v DRK prostřednictvím švýcarské nevládní organizace Hironnelle novou rádiovou stanici Radio Okapi. Tato stanice sehrávala důležitou strategickou roli v prevenci a řízení konfliktů. Skrze rozhlasové vysílání zprostředkovávala komunikaci mezi znepřátelenými stranami, poskytovala zpravodajství v místech, kde komunikační kanály chyběly, vzdělávala a informovala o aktuálním stavu konfliktu (Betz, 2004, s. 44–48). Propojení vládních útvarů, nevládních agentur a dalších aktérů je na počátku procesu rekonstrukce velmi přínosné, avšak často se neobejde bez angažovanosti politických představitelů (Kelly & Souter, 2014, s. 19).

6. ZÁVĚR

Využití informačních a komunikačních technologií v postkonfliktních oblastech, a to zejména při konstruování míru, je pro praktiky a výzkumníky stále neprobádanou

oblastí. Praxe a literatura se do značné míry soustředí na období, které nastává v počáteční fázi konfliktu, během otevřeného konfliktu a na bezprostřední důsledky konfliktu. Nejméně zdrojů se týká používání informačních a komunikačních technologií po mírových dohodách a v období po ukončení konfliktu, při konstruování dlouhodobého a udržitelného míru a při řešení základních příčin konfliktu (Comminos, 2013, s. 4).

Nadšení pro potenciál nových informačních a komunikačních technologií by však nemělo zastiňovat důležitost tradičních médií. Televize, a v mnoha případech zejména rádio, jsou klíčovým zdrojem informací pro obyvatele v krizových oblastech. Kvalita vysílacích médií v postkonfliktních situacích nese proto značný význam pro stabilizaci a příměří (Kelly & Souter, 2014, s. 19–20).

Mediální technologie pomáhají mírovým misím vytvářet téměř nelimitované množství kanálů pro komunikaci s místními aktéry. Spojují taktéž společnost s mírovými jednotkami. Chybí však strategická institucionální integrace informačních a komunikačních technologií do širšího ekonomického plánování misí. Aby bylo dosaženo cílů stanovených v mírovém jednání, je nutné uvažovat komplexněji o tom, jakým způsobem mise a jejich technologické prostředky zapadají do lokální ekonomiky (Martin-Shields & Bodanac, 2017, s. 6).

Peace-building ovlivňují mediálně orientované mezinárodní programy jako African Media Development Initiative, na kterých se podílí řada mezinárodních partnerů (například BBC World Service Trust). Podobné projekty zprostředkovávají kooperaci sponzorů, mediálních odborníků, investorů a rozvojových organizací. Doposud však příliš mnoho investic do rozvoje této oblasti postrádalo udržitelnost, koordinaci a schopnost prokazovat nebo sledovat dopad těchto aktivit na média (BBC World Service Trust, AMDI, 2006, s. 9).

Nezávislá a efektivní média hrají zásadní roli při rekonstrukci státu. Prosperující demokratické státy vyžadují účinná pluralistická média, fungující na místní, národní a regionální úrovni (Esipisu & Kariithi, 2007, s. 56). Programy prevence konfliktů a budování míru se snaží usnadnit dialog a vyjednávání mezi konfliktními skupinami. Začleněním mediální strategie, tedy cílením i na mediální systém, angažovaností a vyvíjením mediálních aktivit, však tyto programy mohou potenciálně ovlivnit daleko širší skupiny lidí.

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THIRTY YEARS OF THE PROPAGANDA MODEL: RESILIENT UNIVERSAL FILTERS OR LOCAL LEGEND?

TODD NESBITT

MacLeod, A. (Ed). (2019). *Propaganda in the Information Age: Still Manufacturing Consent*. London and New York: Routledge.

Scrolling quickly through publisher sales emails, a title concerning propaganda and new information and communication technologies is a sure attention-getter for critical media studies scholars – or at least for those who have not found a title which satisfies their expectations in comparing and contrasting contemporary (digital) state propaganda with pre-convergence forms. The subtitle ('manufacturing consent') for some echoes Gramsci, for some Bernays, and for others Herman and Chomsky. Importantly, familiarity is there, and it resounds.

Further inspection reveals an edited volume to mark three decades since the publication of Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's classic *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. This is not the first time authors have attempted to re-contextualize the famous propaganda model (see, among others, Goss, 2013, or Mullen, 2010), and clearly will not be the last. Having said that, it has also not gone without critical

rejection, not least in terms of its international application (see e.g., Corner, 2003). This is also documented in the first chapter of the book, in an interview with Chomsky (pp. 12–13).

It is easy to be sceptical of the motivations of volumes such as this. Few would argue that edited volumes are a world apart from monographs in terms of workload. Additionally, any anniversary edition related to a classic will warrant attention regardless of the quality, thus doubts arise as to the authenticity of the buzz around such books, and the motivation of the publisher in this regard. Thus, it is perhaps not without reservations that one elects to invest in this book. Further, why a review of this book, for this journal? A volume published in an entirely different political system, focused on a completely different cultural and media environment? The motivation was simple, and admittedly, not entirely original. The question: To what extent can a model, born in the cold war, in a distinctly American context, have value for critical media scholars in Central and Eastern Europe, three decades after publication?

In *Manufacturing Consent* (1988), Herman and Chomsky's contribution to the literature of the political economy of the media consisted of an institutional critique of the functioning of the elite news media in the United States. The 'propaganda' aspect of the propaganda model can be misleading at first, since propaganda is usually associated with the construction of persuasive text with a deliberate agenda, whereas Herman and Chomsky examine the process of news creation. Specifically, they focused

on the agenda-setting role of the elite US press in contributing to, and resulting in, hegemonic societal relations. The authors do this through presenting five “filters” that the news media pass through on their way to publication (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). The central argument of *Propaganda in the Information Age* put forth by the author in the introduction is “... the propaganda model is still an indispensable method of understanding not just how corporate American, but global, media function, and that the central theory of the propaganda model is perhaps more relevant today than it was in 1988” (p. 8). As mentioned earlier, this “global” is of primary concern in this review.

The first two sentences of the book are impossible not to mention: “The media is not your friend. The media is a weapon of the elite in the battle for your mind” (p. 1). One is hard pressed to think of a more emphatic and battle-ready beginning to an academic book. After a couple of decades of increasingly market-focused and careful approaches to media issues, it is indeed a refreshing change. Much of the introduction remains in this tone, with the author setting the stage for further chapters by reviewing the five filters.

The main ten chapters of the book do not consist only of applications of the propaganda model. Two of the chapters are interviews (one with Chomsky himself, and one with Mathew Alford, the author of *Reel Power: Hollywood Cinema and American Supremacy*, 2010), and one chapter brings an essay on working for elite news organizations. The remaining seven chapters apply all or parts of the

model, analyse it, or test it as a standard as to how news organizations work.

Including the introduction and the conclusion, in half of the chapters of the book, the editor of the volume’s voice is heard. An assumedly newish member of the esteemed Glasgow Media Group, Alan McLeod is mostly known for his book *Bad News from Venezuela: Twenty Years of Fake News and Misreporting* (2018). In that volume Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model is also employed as a primary tool of analysis of media coverage, and McLeod was indeed lauded for the use of it in a 21st century context, which, as stated earlier, forms part of the central argument of this volume (Zweig, 2018).

The pessimist, expecting an easy edited volume on a classic topic, may be surprised at the extent to which some chapters bring themes related to the model into perspective. In chapter two, Florian Zollman expertly reviews and synthesizes updates to the model from various scholars over the past decade and a half, and suggests additional filters not covered by the original model, which in 2019 seem simply curious to be missing (e.g. gender and race). We also see here, for the first time in the book, an attempt to consider the model in national contexts, albeit briefly, including the troublesome (due to the original cold war context) fifth filter of ideology (namely anti-communism).

McLeod carries this point further in chapters three and four. After effectively updating the model to reflect contemporary media realities, he examines the assumption of the loss of relevance of the ideological filter due to the collapse

of Soviet communism. He reviews several suggestions put forward in the past (e.g. Herman and Chomsky – the benefits of neoliberal globalization, Pedro – anti-terrorism, or Goss – us/them), before extensively exploring the replacement of the anti-communist filter with an anti-Russian filter. Multiple precise and descriptive examples provide a very convincing and enlightening argument.

One of the highlights of the book comes, perhaps unsurprisingly, from Oliver Boyd-Barret. In a chapter focusing on the third filter, which is reliance on information provided by official sources, he focuses on “deflection propaganda”, or “...action or aspects of a person or situation with the intention to distract the audience” (p. 84). Specifically, he provides examples of “deflective source”, or “making the source of a piece of information appear more credible than it is” (p. 85). Beyond a number of classic examples at the outset, he masterfully dissects western propaganda in Syria in the context of this filter.

As for the interviews, each of the two are effective in bringing up issues related to the model. In chapter one, Chomsky is given the opportunity to reflect on the lack of attention the book received after publication, and, as it would be expected, how he sees potential changes to the model overtime (he sees it as maintaining relevance). The aspects of the model evident in the entertainment industry are discussed with Matthew Alford in chapter six, and feature a fairly broad scope, including propaganda connections in video games, the role of product placement, and national product placement. In chapter ten, the testimonials

of the former Financial Times journalist Matt Kennard (the author of *The Racket: Rogue Reporter vs. the Masters of the Universe*, 2015) serve to give support to the “elite journalist thesis”, and the extent to which self-censorship is prevalent.

The ten chapters are tied together in a conclusion with a somewhat predictable, yet hardly redundant, title “New media, same old rules” (p. 164). As with any serious concluding chapter, it serves to comment on contemporary trends, summarise each author’s contribution to the whole, and solidify the overall argument. MacLeod emphasises one of the most prominent elements in the political economy of the contemporary global media, i.e. the growth of digital media empires and their societal impact, and extrapolates this to the international decline of public confidence in the news media (pp. 164–165). He then briefly summarises the preceding chapters, neatly weaving in contemporary examples, and refers to various aspects of the original volume, in order to further accentuate the prominence of the model.

The purpose of any good paradigm or theory is to allow in-depth examination and discussion. As mentioned earlier, the book’s editor sets out in his central thesis that the Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model is more important than ever, and applicable to various national contexts. It is arguable that perhaps this is slightly overemphasised, as the national contexts in the volume consist of only two – India and Kenya. Further, the application of the model, at least in comparison with earlier chapters, seems minimal. This is not to say that a study of Kenyan or Indian affairs is not essential,

rather the opposite is the case, but the use of the model in these case studies gives the impression of being tangential.

One also is inclined to assess if the model – originally focused on the US environment – is indeed relevant and easily applicable to others. For decades, if not since the very origin of the study of international/global media contexts, this has been an unavoidable issue which many often refrain from, but eventually have to admit: There is no understanding the global without an explicit understanding of the local, and any attempts to suggest otherwise are simply not reliable. It is always possible to extend frames, and justify generalisations, but in the end, this is self-serving, and does no one justice.

On the other hand, the never-ending international fascination and reliance on American politics and media demands an international understanding of the US media environment. Without it, it is nearly impossible to understand the system. The propaganda model, with McLeod's proposed anti-Russian fifth filter (pp. 65–83), seems to be an excellent way, for example, to explain to wide-eyed students the exceedingly theatrical nature of the US media, as they rabidly attack Donald Trump, particularly in an age when the study of propaganda in the context of (news) media studies has suffered, and yet is in such serious need of emphasis (Zollmann, 2019).

As a communication studies student in the early 1990s in Canada, *Manufacturing Consent* was an essential purchase. It is often noted that Chomsky enjoys (relatively) enormous popularity in Canada (compared to the US), but students were

not only buying the book simply because it was a typical staple on reading lists of course syllabi. It was also the book you carried around on campus to show you knew something that others did not (remember the days when you carried books around to make a statement?), and that you were hip to the man. This of course did not mean you sat around reading it – those in the know will testify that at times the text can be dense. Thirty years later, the title's shock value in this respect is likely gone, just as are gone the days when carrying a book or record around was a political statement. Regardless, arguments over the value of the model only serve to prove that it is worthwhile considering, and MacLeod's volume is proof of that.

I am guessing that some local publishers in the Central and Eastern European countries have at some point considered translating the original. *Propaganda in the Information Age* does an effective job of a) tracing and explaining the model from a variety of perspectives; b) showing modern examples of the filters in action; and c) extending the discussion of the model applicability outside of the USA. In that respect, as an introduction to a classic model, with contemporary contexts, and attempts at international applications, McLeod's volume just may serve central European students better than the original.

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