TRANSFORMATIONS OF PUBLIC SPHERE
IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL MEDIA

Jana Radošinská[*] and Ján Višňovský

University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of Mass Media Communication, Nám. J. Herdu 2, 91701 Trnava, Slovak Republic

Abstract

Dynamic emergence of the digital media has changed significantly the initial understanding of media communication which has once been seen as public, mass-mediated, mostly one-way and passively received form of information dissemination. However, these terminological and paradigmatic revisions have not influenced media communication's other key feature – the fact that it functions as a constitutional element of the public sphere, as a prominent source of dynamic structural transformations which shape the public sphere within specific historical backgrounds and cultural frameworks. The study aims to offer a theoretical reflection on the issue of understanding the public sphere in terms of the current digital media age. The digital media and their extensive, visually rich user environments need to be discussed in the context of contemporary collision between phenomena that were once distinguishable quite easily (e.g. mainstream culture versus alternative cultural elements). The authors thus work with an assumption that the public sphere is expanding in order to include deeply private aspects of human existence, slowly losing its original functions and showing little to no respect towards human privacy.

1. Introduction

Globalised media communication, the source of practically unlimited amount of information, entertainment and impulses, is closely intertwined with our everyday lives – mostly thanks to its ability to disseminate spiritual and moral values, role models, real or fictional stories and their heroes. Moreover, communication contents, which are spread via digital media, has to be understood as visually rich (as we may even say, spectacular) ways of portraying explicit and implicit elements of individual lifestyles. Media products offer an easily accessible, open discussion space for presentation and re-consideration of the current political views and economic trends.

The recent development tendencies of media communication have shown that individual members of the media audiences tend to publically express their deepening distrust of 'official authorities', especially via online discussions,

---

[*]E-mail: jana.radosinska@ucm.sk

weblogs, own websites or commentaries published on social networks [1]. These 'distrustful official authorities' include, above all, national states, politicians and political parties, educational as well as health care institutions. Taking into account this fact, media (mis)representations of the given topics and other key social problems are becoming much more important and culturally significant than ever before.

One of the first scholars to critically discuss the need to re-consider the overall nature and position of the public sphere within contemporary society is J. Habermas, the cultural critic and intellectual whose ideas and notions are associated with the Frankfurt School. Expressing his opinions on the public sphere, Habermas critically and pessimistically remarks that mass media significantly contribute to creation of the 'imaginary' public. This pseudo-public neglects rational evaluation of information and its quality just to prioritise "exchange of information about tastes and hobbies". According to the author, this problem is also apparent in terms of the private sphere – its integrity is illusionary despite the fact that mass media continually ensure their audience that such an integrity truly exists [2].

Although the given opinions were published a few decades ago and thus originally referred to cultural and socio-economic situation that cannot be compared with the current trends, we dare say that Habermas's critical reflections on the topic are timeless and thus still relevant – even though their original cultural context has changed significantly. Furthermore, the author points out that the general public itself is being 'privatised' within minds of the consuming audiences; it is transforming into 'a sphere of publishing private life histories' (e.g. stories about a unique fate of an ordinary man as well as planned, highly professional and strictly calculated processes of 'producing' celebrities and their public image, remark added by the authors), into a space meant for personalisation of serious public affairs. On the one hand, these efforts result in increased sentimentality of the media audiences towards outstanding individuals; on the other hand, the audience members tend to cynically judge social institutions and exaggerate their professional misconduct. Due to this psychological and sociological phenomenon, the media recipients are unable to objectively evaluate actions of the public authorities [2, p. 268-269].

As a result, new dimensions of the public sphere are being formed – in some cases scholars who deal with these issues are unable to distinguish between the private and the public anymore. In our opinion, such distinctions, once important, even essential, have lost their original meaning and have been replaced by a new form of public sphere which merges the private and the public into an indivisible mixture of topics, heroes, discussions and stories.

2. Current theoretical reflections on the public sphere as a part of media culture

As we have pointed out, Habermas's opinions on the transformation of the public sphere and private sphere, which are associated with development trends

of media communication, are rather pessimistic. However, many of his critical remarks have been subject to systematic re-considerations that react to cultural and social situation in the 21st century. D. Kellner and C. Pierce point out that Habermas's understanding of the appropriate function of the public sphere reached its ideal fulfilment in the late 18th century. Habermas's definition of the public sphere is, according to the authors, able to stress out the key elements of the strong connection between media communication and democracy. Media function as an integral part of the communication space which unites the public interests with the interests of late-modern capitalist society. The current "global public spheres" are full of inner contradictions and ambiguities – mostly because it is necessary to confront alternative media or rather non-mainstream opinions with wealth and power held by multi-national and even global media corporations. D. Kellner and C. Pierce also mind the need to avoid reductionist and deterministic views of the global public sphere which tend to result either in a non-critical celebration of globalisation (positive 'globophilia') or in its strict refusal (negative 'globophilia') [3].

Many newer definitions of the public sphere (or plural public spheres) are associated with discussions on the general nature of the globalised 'information society'. Interested scholars and researchers mostly focus on economic and social relationships related to late capitalism and commodification of information and ideas, to expansion of various cultural forms. These phenomena have one important thing in common – they are typical for the current era of global digital communication. Different forms, methods and ways of disseminating media culture are integrated into a cultural framework which is influenced by problematic distinguishing between public and private matters. The products of media culture function as sources of information and entertainment; moreover, they offer their audiences certain role models, behavioural patterns (desirable as well as unwelcome ones), fashion tips, and images of different forms of lifestyle that are visually associated with well-known media personas and celebrities [4]. The aspects of human life, which were once essential parts of the private sphere, are now mixed up with social, economic, and political ideas – these are mediated through specific types of media narratives. Such narratives or rather media stories tend to work with 'light', visually attractive and pleasant forms of popular entertainment.

The products of media culture are able to reflect individual, i.e. private needs of their recipients (delightful experiences, preferred meanings, specific identities) and thus integrate these audience members into a specific social, economic, political and cultural system which defines the everyday life in the given historical moment. It is not a coincidence that contemporary media theorists mind the need to revise older theoretical concepts related to the public sphere – they deem it necessary to place emphasis on its global expansion. N. Stevenson discusses the notion of global public sphere by using the concept of 'cultural citizenship'. The current form of the public sphere simultaneously operates on a local, national, and global scale. Media culture follows this trend and offers commodified information and cultural messages along with stories

and impulses that lead to popularisation of various forms of resistance. The questions of 'cultural citizenship' are therefore closely related to intimate relationships but they also react to debates about human rights or national identity – all important pieces of information about these topics are necessarily disseminated via media communication. Understanding 'cultural citizenship' is therefore dependent on thorough knowledge on media organisations and their professional production activities, on dissemination and perception of cultural messages [5]. Technological development and dynamic emergence of the digital media cannot be left out either. However, one big question remains unanswered – what are the purposes and true potential of local and regional media whose agenda essentially differs from the goals and ambitions of media contents produced by multi-national or worldwide conglomerates which operate on the global media markets [6].

The concept of 'cultural citizenship' is, as we suggest, also applicable in relation with the increasing need to critically re-consider once relevant binary oppositions which used to define various production spheres of media culture. The most important change here is the significant blurring of boundaries between information that is relevant for the general public and entertainment products which are meant for individual recipients to meet their preferences. Nowadays, creation of the public sphere and public opinion is not based on strict differentiation between relevant news stories and entertaining contents which appeal to human emotions in order to provide pleasant distractions. Entertaining media culture (television dramas, reality shows, talk shows or mainstream films) is, in accordance with its own qualitative and quantitative variability, as important a source of creating the public as hard news that reflect on economic, political and social situation in the given cultural environment.

Transformations of our understanding of the public sphere, which have become relevant in the context of global communication networks and digital media, deepen the need for re-considering the ever-actual question of media objectivity. E. Louw remarks that social dialogues which offer open, non-manipulated exchange of opinions and formation of citizen-based decision-making are practically unreachable ideals: "*It is possible that social dialogues (public spheres) that facilitate an un-manipulated sharing of ideas and the formation of citizen-driven decision-making may be a pipe-dream. Contemporary notions of citizenship involve non-discriminatory access to membership, democratic participation in social decision-making for all members and reciprocal rights and duties that are equal for all members.*" However, as the author remarks, this raises a number of problems. Above all, today's societies are demographically huge (involving millions of citizens), making it difficult to see how one could organise real, unrestricted dialogical participation [7]. The contemporary societies of late capitalism are enormously complex and variable; it is very hard or rather impossible to find a homogenous population that would stand united in its shared opinions and beliefs. As always, the conflict between individual freedom and the need to decide on crucial social issues collectively is placed in the centre of our attention.

This topic is also discussed by D. Morley, mostly in the context of political communication. The author remarks that the study of the media's role in the construction (for some people) of a relationship between the private and the public is logically prior to the study of the media's coverage of and contribution to the internal dynamics of that public – 'political' world itself. It needs to be taken into account that "*the sphere of political communication has as its necessary foundation the series of inclusions and exclusions, on the basis of which only the private, domestic experiences of some categories of people are connected or 'mediated' to the sphere of citizenship*" [8].

Media communication is, without any doubts, the key source of possibilities and impulses which strengthen the recipients' emancipation in terms of democratic participation in the processes of public administration, offering them a certain amount of 'control' over official authorities and their actions. It is rather surprising that the proclaimed general distrust of the ordinary people towards the official authorities, often disseminated through the media, also influences the media sphere itself. Europe, Slovakia not being an exception, is witnessing dynamic emergence of a new trend – the mainstream media are becoming less and less trustworthy in the eyes of their audiences.

The current research on this topic in Slovakia suggests that only 21.10% of the respondents see the Internet as the most reliable medium. The traditional press is perceived as the most trustworthy medium by 17.37% of the respondents. Paradoxically, 18.51% of the surveyed people have never thought about media reliability and 16.23% of all respondents are even unable to form their own opinion on the issue. Moreover, even though in general the Internet is a bit more trustworthy source of information than the traditional press, the news content disseminated by the traditional press is perceived as much more reliable (57.79% of the respondents) than the online newspapers (34.03%) [1, p. 239]. Trust expressed towards specific media (i.e. recipients' loyalty) manifests itself as a part of the whole process of using media. J. Hacek discusses the issue in terms of online news websites and works with an assumption that a man, who has been unable to access information lately, subconsciously turns his attention to a news portal which he normally uses on a regular basis (in order to fill the recent lack of information). The research results presented by the author also suggest that the media audiences express a high level of loyalty towards news content in case they are able to identify themselves with the news website which provides this news [9].

Understandably, the media audiences' relationship to the Internet is, similarly as in case of the press and other 'traditional media', related to quality of content as well as to design, graphic elements and functionality, i.e. to 'user-friendliness'. These factors influence, among other things, consumer behaviour of the media audiences and users' loyalty.

3. Expansion of the public sphere - the problem of distinguishing between 'private' and 'public'

Speaking of contemporary media communication, we have to mention that today's news-making, whether in the press, on TV or on the Internet, functions as a globally accessible source of images which reflect poverty or misfortune of others (e.g. natural disasters, military conflicts, cases of religiously motivated violence, epidemics). These kinds of news correspond with the general trend in news-making that prefers news values based on negativity over positive information. In addition to dealing with own problems, the recipients are confronted with a substantial amount of foreign conflicts or local crises whose impacts and consequences may later influence their lives or even become global.

Another key notion here is that the 'traditional' mass media have to be seen as social actors which, one the one hand, tend to place emphasis on their own ability to contribute to society-wide objectives but, on the other hand, their products may rather interfere with those goals due to the fact that the media space is neither free of charge and easy to access nor it is free in terms of expressing one's own opinions. In G. Burton's words, the media which the public dominantly experience often purport to speak for the public, but do not often let the public speak: *"When the public does speak, it is usually under terms and conditions which the broadcasters control. So discussion and current affairs programmes are controlled up-front by personalities. Those who do appear are allowed to do so by producers. Their appearance is allowed in relation to ideas about balance and audience interest."* To put it differently, the voice of some people might be less welcome than that of others [10]. However, this generally accepted tendency is – at least partially – changing due to the existence of digital media which are (in their nature) fragmented to give their users an opportunity to access relevant information that correspond with their individual preferences, to express their opinions instantly and actively.

Forced to select from a wide spectrum of information and information sources, today's media audiences often turn to digital media to apply user-defined 'filters' of news stories which better reflect their preferences and expectations. In case they are interested, the members of the media audience are able to quickly and quite effortlessly find alternative sources of information. These sources may often seem to be focused on topics that are deprived of adequate media (re)presentation, generally unpopular or perceived as taboo and thus do not correspond with the mainstream culture, i.e. mainstream media agenda (some aspects related to informing about migration crisis in Europe, inappropriate representation of religious minorities, etc.). On the other hand, we have to stress out that 'alternative' does not necessarily mean 'objective' and reliable. The problem of distinguishing between reliable and unreliable information sources is becoming much more complex in terms of digital communication that is, in many cases, not subject to sufficient legislation – unlike television broadcasting or the traditional press. The contents of websites, online social networks or digital applications are often impossible to regulate

even though they may spread ideas, opinions or discussions which directly interfere with law or with the public interests (e.g. extremist ideologies, hidden propagandas, half-truths related to health care such as dangers arising from mandatory vaccination and so on).

The public sphere is thus being fragmented too. New communication technologies multiply and re-organise the tools and methods of distributing media products in order to offer new communication channels and appeal to new kinds of audiences. However, all mediated pieces of information and news stories cannot be automatically considered as communication contents that are aimed to be spread in the public interest. Moreover, the fact that information is disseminated on a society-wide scale does not necessarily mean that this news reacts to a serious problem the whole society (or an individual recipient) has to know about. This seems to be true especially in case of entertaining media products which predominantly communicate 'light' topics and visually attractive spectacles, often at the expense of content (i.e. quality of information).

The efforts to re-define the disrupted boundaries between the public sphere and the private sphere are closely related to problematic determination of gender roles and preferences which manifest themselves through the processes of media consumption. G. Burton explains the issue by examples based on thematic differences between hard news and soft news. Hard news (economics, politics, and foreign affairs) is, at least according to presumptions of the media producers, aimed mostly at men. Soft news (health care, family life, social situations, celebrity news) should be, however, more appealing to women. This 'feminised' media production is thus associated with the private sphere. On the other hand, such gender codes seem to be contradictory and superficial in their nature – the author mentions the words by A. Press and E. Cole reacting to ever-controversial public discussions on legitimacy of interruption. These discussions always take place within a public and highly politicised "arena" [10, p. 97] even though the topic itself is strongly bound to private lives (mostly lives of women, of course), even to intimacy. This example illustrates the blurring boundaries between the private and the public and it is reasonable to presume that the given problem would become even more serious if we took into consideration different religious beliefs, moralities, and liberal or conservative attitudes towards the topic.

As we have to face these ambiguities and constant challenges, it is necessary to make compromises between respecting one's privacy and gathering relevant information. As M. Solík and J. Mináriková observe, the key social challenge the media industry has to face is such integration of business and media activities that would preserve the primary mission of the media – to serve the public interest. In particular, this is a matter of revitalisation of journalism as the fourth pillar of democracy and global public culture [11]. However, the media have to serve the individuals too; for instance by respecting human privacy instead of using it in order to fulfil their own commercial objectives through shocking, controversial or scandalous private stories that appeal to so-called universal human interests and values.

B. Debatin reacts to this problem and works with the term "public privacy". He claims that "*privacy is not, however, just a citizen's right, it is a need and necessity for civilized life and the development of subjectivity. The normative power of the public eye and the controlling power of discourse formations should be reviewed under the conditions of digital invasions of privacy in global communication networks and databases. Thus, we are witnessing the dawn of a tightly woven global infosphere, a digitized networked panoptic sphere that leaves little space for unmonitored privacy.*" The author also remarks that 'public privacy' is a culture of public confessions and public display (it represents exploitation of the most intimate details of private lives) as well as it is "a culture of public moralization and condemnation of private lifestyles by self-appointed moral majorities, value committees, and sentinels of politically correctness". Not to forget, 'public privacy' functions as a digitized network of social control. This control is based on vast amounts of personal data which are collected, exchanged, and interconnected by commercial, health, governmental, and other public agencies [B. Debatin, *From Public/Private to Public Privacy: A Critical Perspective on the Infosphere*, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Athens (OH), http://www.publicsphereproject.org/node/448]. In our understanding, the concept of 'public privacy' obviously reacts to inadequate (negative) impacts and consequences the expansion of the public sphere inflicts on individuals, their families and most intimate aspects of human life.

However, there are other relevant opinions and points of view. Z. Bauman, reacting to Habermas's line of thought, sees the problem from an entirely different perspective. According to Bauman, the essence of the problem is the fact that the public sphere is 'colonised' by questions and topics which used to be seen as private and therefore not suitable for public or rather society-wide representation. The current discussions on the boundaries between the public and the private determine the public sphere as a communication space that routinely consists of publicly performed and closely watched 'private dramas'. Contemporary definition of the public sphere, which has been pushed forward by the media and accepted by almost all segments of the society, therefore suggests that the media are obliged to show 'personal dramas' and the media audiences have the right to watch them [12]. This argument is hard to argue with – moreover, such tendencies are easily observable not only in the traditional media sphere, but also in all forms of digital communication. After all, the members of the mainstream media audience, women and men alike, are highly interested in lives of other people – it does not matter whether we talk about famous celebrities or about ordinary men.

It is necessary to point out that the era of late-modern culture has brought many different ways of reflecting on these issues. For example, A. Giddens claims that we can see new political agendas – they manifest themselves "*in the tension between the privatising of passion and the saturation of the public domain by sexuality, as well as in some of the conflicts which today divide men and women*" [13]. Another scholar who discusses the issue of understanding contemporary intimacies is E. Illouz – she works with the key term of

'emotional capitalism' which summarises her opinions on political and cultural context of late-modern intimacy: "*When we view emotions as principal characters in the story of capitalism and modernity, the conventional division between an a-emotional public sphere and the private sphere saturated with emotions begins to dissolve*". According to Illouz, 'emotional capitalism' is a cultural framework in which emotional and economic discourses and practices mutually shape each other, producing a broad movement. In this movement affect is made an essential aspect of economic behaviour and emotional life – especially that of the middle classes – follows the logic of economic relations and exchange [14]. B. Highmore comments on E. Illouz's notions by pointing out that her assessment of late-modern forms of capitalism as producing a 'cold intimacy' is premised on her investigation of the way that a 'therapeutic culture' has been mobilised by management self-help books and the like [15]. These books (or even weblogs, websites, discussion forums on the Internet and so on) often spread various ideas associated with cultivation of one's own creative activities, physical appearance, behaviour or work skills to offer specific 'how to' instructions related to intimate relationships, life decisions or even career choices.

Digital media culture involves many processes of production and reception that – partially or entirely – ignore the boundaries of once strictly differentiated spheres of public interests and private life matters. Sharing private and even deeply intimate aspects of one's everyday life via social media on the Internet (*Facebook, Twitter, Instagram* and many others) is just one of many possible examples. The digital media formats also dynamically incite our interest in intimate lives of celebrities – however, real talents or special skills of these mediated personas are rarely placed in the centre of our attention. In fact, it is quite common that these celebrities do not stand out in any way which would be worthy of public attention (e.g. descendants of wealthy people who crave fame or reality show contestants who tend to behave in extreme, often socially inacceptable ways). Many related practices manifest themselves via news-making and political communication – there is practically no real difference between media appearances of Hollywood actors and politicians.

Considering the media representations of public and private topics in the 'traditional' media such as television or newspapers, it is reasonable to presume that the digital media reflect these trends accordingly, if not even more intensively. The virtual environment created by the social media can be characterised by certain specifics which are closely related to people who use these media and activities they perform. P.A. Albinsson and B.Y. Perera claim that media consumers have transformed as much as the (digital) media – they are able to access a substantial amount of information in a very short time. However, social media functions such as 'like' or 'follow' does not serve only the users – media organisations and advertisers use them to easily track consumer behaviour without investing large amounts of money, time and effort [16]. These aspects mostly suit business entities that offer their goods on the Internet, organisations as well as individuals that spread their public agendas via online social networks,

and, ultimately, traditional media professionals who strive to raise public awareness of their products via own social media accounts.

4. Conclusions

When we consider the theoretical concepts and opinions stated above, entering the private lives of ordinary people via production and reception of specific media contents is closely related to non-existent boundaries between the public and the private (as noted by J. Habermas or Z. Bauman) and to commodification of sexuality and intimacy (as proposed by A. Giddens). It seems that these new trends have to be reflected on through different perspectives and fields of study – for example, Cultural Studies may provide a more complex view on the issues of gender roles (e.g. G. Burton's remarks).

As the discussions on the new relationships between the public sphere and the private sphere emerge, interested scholars have to encounter and consider various and often mutually contradicting pieces of knowledge. As we have pointed out, J. Habermas places special emphasis on the fact that the private sphere is attacked by the public communication – many interested media theorists and social scientists follow and further develop his perspective. On the other hand, Z. Bauman sees the collision of the public and the private in the context of media culture, talking about vulgarisation of the public sphere which is saturated by private dramas and intimate stories of little to no socio-cultural relevance. Determination of individual problems and finding their solutions seem to be the only public issues, the only public matters we have left. This mediated 'insight' into other people's private lives is a specific "modality of being" that is equally shared by movie stars and television personas, by politicians as well as professional athletes. Moreover, these media celebrities are obliged to offer the media audiences access into their private lives [12, p. 115].

The aspects of intimacy and private life, which are discussed and shared through cyberspace, above all via online social networks, seem to be the most obvious manifests of the deepening collapse of once essential differences between the public sphere and the private sphere. The most attention is, quite understandably, paid to highly intimate details of private lives of celebrities – it is necessary to underline the fact that any critical considerations or analyses of the real professional skills or outstanding talents of these media personas (or rather lack of them) seem to be irrelevant – at least to the members of the media audiences who admire them and follow their careers and private lives.

The right to preserve one's own privacy and intimacy is therefore voluntarily suppressed by exhibitionist self-presentation in the virtual space that is typical for celebrities and other media personas and now for 'ordinary' people as well. These processes of self-presentation have become an integral part of today's media culture and mainstream. However, we have to take into account the users' point of view and their needs. As M. Solík and M. Klementis observe, to the audiences, all cultural products are just 'raw materials' that help generate feelings of pleasure or encourage fulfilment of cultural absence. Mainstream

culture is typical for its ambiguity which is a result of social inequalities in the society [17]. This perspective thus suggests that the digital media have narrowed once sharp distinctions between being famous and being ordinary – famous or ordinary, all people are able to share various aspects of their private lives and own opinions via social networks, weblogs or regular websites – we may even say that keeping a certain amount of one's own privacy off the cyberspace seems to be much more problematic than sharing it online.

Pseudo-intimate, quasi friendly 'relationships' between the members of the media audience and popular public figures (politicians, actors, sportsmen, singers, etc.) seem to be very similar to other communication situations known as parasocial interaction (e.g. admiration aimed at fictional heroes, adoration of attractive actors and actresses). The given phenomena, as we have to remark, are in no way new or typical just for the 21st century – establishment of parasocial interactions is one of the most important production and self-presentation strategies of the media industry and its celebrities which has been employed continually for decades. However, existence of the digital media, especially the Internet and online social networks, has brought into our attention entirely different communication dimensions that have disrupted and blurred the already indistinct boundaries between the private sphere and public sphere more than any other media ever before.

Acknowledgement

References

[1] J. Višňovský, *Aktuálne otázky teórie a praxe žurnalistiky v ére internetu (Current Issues of Theory and Practice of Journalism in the Internet Era),* Fakulta masmediálnej komunikácie UCM, Trnava, 2015, 266-281.

[2] J. Habermas, *Strukturální přeměna veřejnosti (The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society)*, Filosofia, Praha, 2000, 257-268.

[3] D. Kellner and C. Pierce, *Media and Globalization,* in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, G. Ritzer (ed.), Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2007, 384.

[4] J. Radošinská and J. Višňovský, *Aktuálne trendy v mediálnej kultúre (Contemporary Trends in Media Culture),* Fakulta masmediálnej komunikácie UCM, Trnava, 2013, 40-41.

[5] N. Stevenson, *Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Questions*, Open University Press, Maidenhead, 2003, 124-125.

[6] S. Magál and J. Tinka, *RB Media as an Outcome of the Audience and Media Metamorphosis in the Post-millennial Age*, Proc. of the Conference 'Psychology and Psychiatry, Sociology and Healthcare, Education: Sociology and Healthcare', Vol. II, STEF92 Technology, Sofia, 2014, 721-726.

[7] E. Louw, *The Media and Cultural Production*, Sage Publications, Oxford, 2001, 102.

[8] D. Morley, *Media, Modernity and Technology: The Geography of the New,* Routledge, New York, 2007, 30.

[9] J. Hacek, Otázky žurnalistiky, **57(2-3)** (2014) 44.

[10] G. Burton, *Media and Society: Critical Perspectives,* Open University Press, Maidenhead, 2005, 96.

[11] M. Solík and J. Mináriková, Communication Today, **5(2)** (2014) 27.

[12] Z. Bauman, *Tekutá modernita (Liquid modernity)*, Mladá fronta, Praha, 2002, 112.

[13] A. Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1992, 197.

[14] E. Illouz, *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007, 4-5.

[15] B. Highmore, *Ordinary Lives: Studies in the Everyday,* Routledge, New York, 2011, 16-17.

[16] P.A. Albinsson and B.Y. Parera, *Consumer Activism through Social Media*, in *Online Consumer Behavior. Carrots versus Sticks*, A.G. Close (ed.), Routledge, New York, 2012, 102.

[17] M. Solík and M. Klementis, Eur. J. Sci. Theol., **11(6)** (2015) 93-105.