

# Hana Pravdová, Magdaléna Ungerová

## Discourse of Expression of Image Representations in Contemporary Audiovisual Culture

### Abstract

The presented study deals with the issue of the discourse of pictorial portrayals in present-day audiovisual culture. The authors aim to find the basic parameters of the current discourse and discursive practices within audiovisual creation, especially film and television. They define basic concepts and categories and submit them to analysis. From this aspect, they examine aesthetic categories, especially aesthetic values and functions in relation to the interpretation of image representations. They formulate the premise that the expressions of visual presentations are reflections of the digital technical-technological platform of audiovisual making, the ethos of postmodernity and postmodernism, and the ideal of consumption of experiences as one of the most important values of present-day Western civilization. In a logical sequence, they deal with the matter of the ethos and value-related frameworks of postmodernism as relevant factors that condition the discursive practices of

audiovisual creators. On the other hand, they name the mindsets of individuals, recipients of audiovisual statements, testifying to their specific desires for emotional encounters. They reach the conclusion that the discourse of the expression of visual representations in contemporary audiovisual culture has clearly defined parameters of creative approaches and reception expectations.

### Key words

Aesthetic Value. Audiovisual Culture. Discourse. Expression. Image. Postmodern. Postmodernity. Representation.

### Introduction

The issue of the image in audiovisual culture has been quite extensively discussed in the analyses of theoreticians and media authors. Audiovisual production has evolved into a subject of numerous disputes, criticisms, both professional and lay. In addition, it has also become the object of investigation by specific scientific disciplines. After all, the fact is that, in the words of Malík, the cinematic image currently influences, “moves” the world and the lives of people in it. However, he asks the question of what “moves the film itself”. He answers it by pointing to the primary mover. The determining formative agent, he argues, becomes technology. Malík (2008) says: “Increasingly more, the film story and its delivery are coming under its sway. Technology is not at the service of the film, but the other way around” (p. 19). In our opinion, technological determinism in media, in this case film production, is of high importance. However, it is just one of the other factors involved in the expression of image representation. In audiovisual production itself, the interpretation of pictorial portrayal can also be identified through different genre forms, along with diverse cultural influences and circumstances.

Eco, for example, set himself a rather difficult conundrum, when he undertook to look for the points of contact between film and television in terms of their

distinctive interpretations (see, e.g., Habiňák & Habiňáková, 2022; Rusňáková & Prostináková Hossová, 2022). He claims that film allows us to find one’s expression with all the connotations which the term entails, whereas television enables communicating at the most, and thus there is as much difference between film and television as there is between art and chronicle. However, he comes to the opinion that this still remains an open question. According to him, the reason lies in the fact that television has its own special technical nature, which manifests itself in a subconscious effort to create the aesthetics of television (Eco, 2007). These ideas have also inspired us to formulate a research problem based on the search for an answer to the question of what the characteristics of the discourse of the expression of pictorial representation in contemporary audiovisual culture are, focusing mainly on film and television, i.e. on special forms of audiovisual utterances. When investigating the matter, we define, describe and analyze aesthetic categories, audiovisual production and socio-cultural circumstances that condition the discursive practices of audiovisual creators and the mental attitude of recipients of audiovisual outputs. In search for an answer to the research question, we use hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches, methods of logical analysis, as well as discursive analysis.

### 1 Aesthetics of Expression in Audiovisual Visualization

The term expression has multiple meanings. It can be used to indicate the emotional state of a person through their face, facial expressions, speech, but also the type of language used when speaking. We believe that in the spheres of current production in areas of high art, as well as mass, popular and media culture, the concept of interpretation has turned into a basic criterion for the evaluation of a received artefact. For instance, in the field of film and television production, the term of expression is linked to the specifics of audiovisual speech. This particularity combines the moving image with the spoken word, music and motions. According to T. Rončáková, audiovisual communication requires the cooperation of picture and word, i.e. two equal components. Based on their combination, a new quality is created, in which, however, the image plays a dominant role (Rončáková, 2011). For individuals, the reception of audiovisual production is a great technical-technological challenge (Thompson, 2004), a temptation for their sensibility, which is stimulated by appealing stories, music, drama, comic or technical tricks (McQuail, 2007). Obviously, audiovisual production is fascinating with its extensive appeal of breath-taking images, narration and fiction. There is no doubt that audiovisual creation is essentially a synthetic art. It involves integrated elements

of various arts, it has a visual and narrative character, and at the same time, it is also a dramatic art and has established genre types. Audiovisual culture is an excellent feast for the human senses as sensors receiving components of audiovisual statements.

According to most authors dealing with the issue of audiovisual media, it is empirically provable that television, despite the phenomenal rise of online media in the Internet space, is still the most popular and most watched media<sup>1</sup> (see, e.g., Blažek, 1995; Meyrowitz, 2006; Postman, 2010; Radošinská & Višňovský, 2013; Radošinská, 2016; Višňovský, 2014; Hudíková et al., 2021; Greguš et al., 2020). Compared to the film, the TV program is condensed and has accelerated sequences. Its task, as well as the mission of any television audiovisual communication, is to avoid dead space and time at all costs. As Monaco explains: “One of the conditions for the success of a television programme among recipients is the smooth flow of consecutive images” (Monaco, 2006, p. 472). In addition, it is also widely known that the advantage of the digitization of the distribution of television programmes is the increase in the

production of individual genre forms and formats and their online availability, which are independent of time. Jiráček and Köpplová (2009) state: “The consequence of this disposition is the fragmentalization and specialization of television companies and television production, as well as the hitherto unprecedented pace of audience segmentation in the sense of its homogenization and fragmentalization” (p. 215). We have witnessed the effects of the convergence of media and the hybridization of genre forms, as well as the internetization of television. The aftermath is not only the democratization of reception models in relation to the media offer, but also a change in the production strategy within the creation of audiovisual communications. According to Prokop (2005) “such a development among media authors and audiences is also a reaction to the overpressure of media production in a competitive media market” (p. 347).

It follows from the previous findings that contemporary audiovisual culture can be characterized as a synthesis of diverse creative procedures. The supreme position among them belongs to visual representation, i.e. the dominance of the image. Disregarding the mentioned, wider contexts conditioning the principal status of the picture in audiovisual creation, critics literally speak of an image revolution. Such observations and claims had their empirical rationale, which was an evident increase in

visual manifestations across the entire breadth of cultural practice, not only in the area of audiovisual or other forms of visual art. As Mitchell states (2004) “this is not a fashionable, temporary matter, but a rather fundamental turn in the world of visual culture” (p. 13). Another obvious fact is that audiovisual message, together with other visual media, expands the human sensory apparatus. They provide them with a complete repertoire of means of expression, which shape their perception of audiovisual statements through various means of visual depictions. In this definition, representation can be understood as a display, i.e. an idea or experience in a sense-perceived form through signs. Signs as cultural conventions associated with meanings play a fundamental role in representations. They are not only holders of meanings, but also bearers of aesthetic values, providing the recipient with the expected aesthetic experience from the reception of audiovisual outputs. In this context, Mistrík (2007) understands aesthetic value as “the relationship of a person to an object that has an aesthetic function when it is made in accordance with certain aesthetic standards and functions as an item with a clearly defined aesthetic purpose in a certain culture. If the aesthetic capacity and the aesthetic norm are close, a positive aesthetic benefit can arise. Aesthetic value is traditionally expressed by terms such as, beauty, tragicness, comicality, nobility or ugliness.” (pp. 55-56) From this aspect, it is clear that

the representations of audiovisual communications have their own aesthetic values and functions and, in our times, have acquired a significant artistic-visual discourse. This statement can be supported by a number of conventions and rules, but mainly by the specific aesthetics of the expression of visual representations in audiovisual messages. However, Rancière (2003) expresses scepticism towards the concept of depiction, as it is no longer justified. According to him, the mission of the image has disappeared, the picture no longer makes visible, nor differentiates between the realities of fiction and experienced facts. Nevertheless, Rancière brings forward the emergence of a new hierarchy, in which the image dominates, and the word moves into background. In this context, Mitchell (2007) argues that “the manoeuvring between words and images which have come into opposition is almost always linked to wider social and cultural problems” (p. 89). The mentioned perspectives are important, when trying to understand not only the discourse of the expression of pictorial representations in audiovisual culture, but also the reasons for its establishment. These have a wider socio-cultural anchoring and therefore it is necessary to reflect the significance of socialization and educational processes, when evaluating the expression of images of representations within audiovisual production.

These viewpoints are conceptualized by Vaněk. As he states (1999) “an

individual is able to assess aesthetic values only when they cultivate their wits and senses. Only in this way can they provide judgments that reflect their taste. However, the quality of evaluation depends on the quality of their cultivation, i.e. socialization and educational processes.” (p. 28) Based on their own taste, individuals approach the assessment of works of art, including audiovisual production. The aesthetic values of people are also related to the sense of determining aesthetic values leaning on the achievement of the desired emotional states of the recipients. This aspect is pointed out by Eco (2005). In his view “human beings measure aesthetic values by categories of what they like and therefore often equate beauty with goodness” (Eco, 2005, p. 1). Contemporary discursive practices in audiovisual production point to particular aesthetic benefits and representations. We believe that they reflect the digital technical-technological platform of audiovisual making, the ethos of postmodernity and postmodern, and the ideal of the consumption of experiences as one of the most important qualities of current Western civilization. This is the reason why discursive practices in audiovisual production offer diverse simulations that fascinate recipients by conveying a whole range of captivating emotional encounters. They present them with the aesthetic parameters of the expression of images of representations in audiovisual visibility in the conditions of postmodernism.

## 2 The Ethos and Value Frameworks of Postmodernism

As early as the 1960s, Bell (1999) points out the background of the emergence of modernism with all its characteristic manifestations. He identifies them in several developmental phases – pre-industrial, industrial, post-industrial. Modernism, he argues, was a reaction to two major social changes at the end of the 19th century. The first can be traced to the sphere of sensory perception of the social environment. It is conditioned by technical-technological breakthroughs in transportation and communication technologies. It revolutionised the spheres of movement, speed, light and sound and brought about a crisis in the perception of space and time. The second change can be seen in the understanding of the human self, in the loss of religious certainties, according to him “the loss of belief in an afterlife, heaven and hell, and of a new consciousness of a fixed boundary between life, nothingness and death” (Bell, 1999, p. 68). A lifestyle that was once practiced by only a handful of people from high or bohemian society evolved in the second half of the 20th century into the driving force of a mainstream culture with a radically different cultural habitus. It manifested itself in the exhibition of hip-drug-rock pop culture and in new dimensions of sensibility built on a fetish for blasphemous humour and violence. Bell (1999) points out the new phenomena of post-industrial/postmodern society, such as “pop-

<sup>1</sup> Authors' note: The viewership and popularity of television media is attributed to its ability to engage the viewer with audiovisual statements, imagined participation in the events, for example, during news broadcasts, but also passive comfort when watching programs, or making other activities more enjoyable, for instance, when doing housework.

hedonism”, “psychedelic culture”, “counterculture” and their fundamental influence on the formation of new lifestyles and dominant values. Obviously, Bell’s observations in the 1960s remain valid within the conditions of the composition of the mentality of a modern person. He namely draws attention to the emergence of a specific way of life, as a result of preferring an economy unilaterally focused on the development of individual consumption. The logic of understanding the market and the economy began to shape a hedonistic lifestyle dominated by the desire to satisfy all kinds of needs and the idea of freedom equated with rebellious unrestrainedness.

From the viewpoint of defining these factors qualifying the cultural and mental changes of individuals in the second half of the 20th century, it is not surprising to feel a certain degree of metaphorical scepticism, with which Nelson and Schiff operate according to Bhabha (2004). They consider the postmodern discourse to be a posthumous announcement of the end of modernity and at the same time a birth announcement of the origin of the presence of our own time. However, as viewed by Bhabha, it is still being born with effort. Nevertheless, Welsch (1993) perceives the postmodern discourse differently than Bhabha. He understands it as a readable phenomenon in full bloom. He perceives postmodernism as a socio-cultural category, as a world full of boundless action, in which it is permitted to taste everything, and in which individuals try to distinguish themselves from other people at any

cost. He attributes postmodernity to the change of discourse in artistic culture. It identifies it wherever a fundamental pluralism of languages, models or procedures is implemented, not only in different consecutive works, but also in one and the same production, i.e. the mixing or hybridization of different approaches. Thus, artistic imagination is a way of grasping this world through the discourse of postmodernity (Welsch, 1993). Bauman (2002) considers the period after the Second World War to be a continuation of modernism. He does not see the end of modernism but recognizes the next stage in the development of modernity. However, it is not a phase that brings greater positives to humanity, rather many more contradictions or a greater loss of illusions. He proposes theses about the way of gaining power through the luring and seduction by popular culture, media and consumerism (Bauman, 2002). Bauman offers a different perspective on postmodernity, which he does not imagine as something that is particularly new. He presents it as a modernity devoid of illusions, as a continuing, but different modernity. This is a period of reawakening from the consequences of modernity, when we humans have witnessed the aftereffects of the processes of “privatization, deregulation, fragmentation”. It is marked by the transition from one form of capitalism to another, to the so-called “liquid modernity”. In this evolution, an individual is confronted with the moral crisis of the modern age. People are thrown into postmodern society and have nowhere to escape, they are

confronted with their own elevated responsibility, which leads them to principled wandering and despair (Bauman, 1995).

Lyotard (1993) recognizes the transformation of the ethos and value orientation in the clearly crystallized characteristic attributes of postmodernism. They are changeability, consumerism, individualism and globalization. Postmodernity offers three ways of thinking. The first method questions the scientific progress, the second approach results from a change in the aesthetic paradigm, and the third idea emphasizes the situation due to social transformation. He considers the aesthetic paradigm insisting on eclecticism as a zero degree of general culture. Lyotard explains: “People listen to reggae, watch westerns, eat out at McDonald’s, wear French perfume in Tokyo and in Hong Kong they get dressed in line with ‘retro’ fashions, knowledge is the subject of television competitions... art flatters the confusion that governs the ‘taste of the art lover’” (Lyotard, 1993, p. 22). Maffesoli (2002) offers a view of postmodernism through the lens of everyday life, in which he uncovers the layers of aesthetic perception or the social roles of emotions. In contrast to modernism, he contrasts postmodern dynamism manifested in value flexibility. He talks about the phenomenon of modern nomadism, the consequence of which is the disintegration of institutions. The fate of the postmodern nomad is movement between different groups, among which they build and maintain social ties. The destiny of human beings is the acceptance of theatrical

behaviour as a mode of everyday communication, as an existential condition. They must look attractive, have to be visible, need to submit to the social imaginary. According to Maffesoli (2008) their transformative identity is mainly formed by the mass media, which have the ability to evoke wild, “Dionysian” emotions in the audience.

McGuigan (1999) points to a new cultural situation, in which a commodified, hybrid and personified culture has arisen and developed. The plurality of approaches and the breaking of conventions allowed the creators to cross the hitherto protected boundaries of genres and at the same time erase them. The distinctions between high, middle and low art culture have been blurred, the plurality of cultural forms, images, narratives have become the new canon. In this context, Pavelka (2004) speaks of the crisis of historicism, liberalism, humanism, reason and universal values. In theoretical and artistic reflections, new principles gradually take the place of development, order, systemicity, symmetry or meaning. In his opinion, these are, in particular, “discontinuity, chaos, paradox, asymmetry and nonsense”. He relates the emergence of mass and popular culture to the process of commercialisation, domestication, popularisation and giving publicity to art. The consumer, according to him, turns into a dictator. The creator and the media submit to them, but this dictator is also “the author, who objectifies and anchors the work of art in reality” (Pavelka, 2004, pp. 235-237). The position of popular culture in society

is constantly being strengthened. According to Jameson (1991), popular culture is inspired by postmodern art, advertising, mass-produced films from Hollywood, detective stories, science fiction and fantasy genres, etc. The driving force behind these tendencies, as stated by Lipovetsky and Juvin (2012), is the phenomenon of commercialization. They consider it to be a significant tendency, penetrating in an accelerating manner into all areas of human activity. It has perfectly seized control not only over things and goods, but also culture, art, time, communication, procreation, life and death. In connection with the development of lifestyle commercialization, he describes the evolution of the stages of constituting the role of a customer with hyper-consumer purchasing habits in a hyper-consumer society. Individuals expect entertainment and distraction from consumption behaviour. In fact, consumerism is a response to an existential threat. It is also an expression of a person’s pleasure in changes and the desire to experience everyday life more and more intensively. Such encounters are the sources of a constant increase in consumption (Lipovetsky & Juvin, 2012). The commercialisation of the European media means a significant alternation in their mission as they submit to market conditions and financial profit. As stated by Hallin and Mancini (2008), the media’s primary objective is no longer to disseminate ideas and shape social consensus, but to produce entertainment and information that is sold to the consuming public. These trends encourage homogenisation processes, undermining the traditional

plurality of media systems in nation states and helping to establish a globalised media practice. “The rise of television and radio, together with the commercialisation of the press, contributed significantly to the transformation of Europe into a more individualised consumer society in the 1960s, and this process accelerated in the 1980s” (Hallin & Mancini, 2008, p. 300). If this process accelerated in the 1980s, in Lipovetsky’s terms it can be stated that it has now stabilized following its hyper-turbulent phase.

#### Instead of Conclusions: Discourse of Expression of Image Representation in Current Audiovisual Culture

As early as the 1960s, Bell reflected a fundamental turn in audiovisual culture as part of wider popular culture. The nascent phenomenon of pop-art also enforced attention (Honnef, 2004). It should be noted that Bell had many incentives for this claim. On the one hand, a generation of artists began to revolt experimentally as a reaction to the manifestos of the avant-garde of static modernism. The new artistic expression of visual interpretation was the result of multiple inspirations. These were popular forms of media art, film, advertising or perceptible impulses of everyday life that seduced individuals to enjoy consumer society and media entertainment. In the spectrum of these circumstances, Bell’s statement that the most relevant feature of the nature of mass culture is the obvious fact that this culture is mainly a visual culture is justified (Bell, 1999). On the other hand, it is clear that the twist in audiovisual culture, which meant a preference for the image,

is a consequence of technological improvements and broader possibilities for working with the picture in terms of camera work, editing, as well as the rapid development of television broadcasting. The boom in television broadcasting repressed the listening sensors of the radio receiver – the ears – and brought another sensor – the eyes of the television viewer – to the forefront. Despite the big popularity of new media, it is without doubt that traditional media, and television in particular, will not leave the pedestal of popularity and viewership for a long time to come, notwithstanding the rapid evolution in multimedia technologies in the post-millennial decades. In accord with Malík (2008), contemporary television “has become the most effective anaesthetic” (p. 15). It offers complex stimuli to the eyes and ears, and this feature – audiovisuality – has made it the most popular and most watched medium. It has all the prerequisites for the most effective effect on an individual’s emotions.

The television viewer receives the images served to them by the programmes in their typical schemes, production standards and genre forms. The imagination of the radio listener was replaced by the fascination of the viewer with the image. If the radio listener involved their imagination and fantasy via auditory reception, the film and television image took it away from them. Television offered them its own vision of reality. From this aspect, Flusser (2002) refers to the television as a window, or a periscope, through which the recipient receives images and sounds as if they were traditional representations. The picture

is dominant, as it proclaims whether the following images mean facts, as in news, or imperatives, as in advertising. In his opinion, there is no difference in meaning from the visualisations themselves, and the announcer can also be fictitious, for example, when an actor represents, that is, plays the announcer. Flusser (2002) says: “Consequently, the receiver is indifferent whether they are informed factually, fictionally, or imperatively: in any case, they decipher the received images fictitiously as if they were not technical representations. Since they pretend to see pictures of the world flowing out of the closet, they do not care at all whether this world is factual or imperative.” (p. 140)

From this perspective, it is possible to understand the critical reflection by Postman (2010). He argues that television is not a message, rather a metaphor. In order to understand media metaphors, in his view, we should grasp “the symbolic forms of the information they convey, the source of that information, its speed and quantity, and the context in which we encounter it” (Postman, 2010, p. 22). In the case of TV media, it is vital to comprehend the first attribute – visual code, by means of which we become aware of the world based on series of pictures. Illustrations, as opposed to words, suffice to be recognized, but written words need to be grasped. On the basis of this perspective, Postman expresses strong belief that images restrict our rationality, as it is possible to understand them without deeper analytical thinking that is of importance in decoding meanings of language signs. The

second aspect describes television as a medium depicting everyday reality in a series of mutually unrelated events. There exists no causality and media reality, conveyed by television, is thus incomplete, fragmented. What is missing is the logic, order, compactness and ability to mediate relevant knowledge. “Television is not an extension or reinforcement of the culture of scholarship. Television attacks it” (Postman, 2010, p. 92). Television suppresses the order of rationality, it is chaotic, because it destabilizes reality by shaping particular models of the organization of sociocultural reality. Through its own technical-technological, visual and narrative given facts, it leads recipients to understand the world as a kaleidoscope of disordered fragments that are meant exclusively for entertainment.

Bordieu (2002) draws attention to journalists’ peculiar views on reality. This specific vision of existence leads them to notice certain events and interpret them in their own way through their own construction. The basic measure of selection is the choice of what meets the requirements of sensationalism and spectacularism. The televised interpretation of events is therefore dramatically heightened, exaggerated, and tragic (Bordieu, 2002). In addition, conforming to Ramonet (2003), television is a dominant medium, as it imposed its own deviations on other means of information, especially its fascination with images. Current newscast is today dominated by events that create strong images, such as, violence, wars, disasters or suffering. However, they

are promoted at the expense of other topics, even if their importance is secondary. Television images create an emotional shock, especially pictures of grief, suffering and death. It is an excitement incomparably bigger than the bump that other media, which do not have the power of an audiovisual statement, can cause (Ramonet, 2003). Current television is therefore “necrophilic”, as it “lives mainly on blood, violence and the death” (Ramonet, 2003, p. 148).

Baudrillard (2001) also deals with the issue of the true statement of audiovisual communication. He defines the term simulacrum to refer to the deceptiveness of signs in mass media communication as a result of new technologies. He criticizes the fact that a perfect crime is being committed against media reality and against its recipients by virtue of the effect of new technical and technological innovations of information systems. Instead of the audience’s illusion of reality, the “simulacrum” has taken its place. The term simulacrum is a mirage in meaning. This delusion prevents the recipient from recognising true reality, because it blurs the distinction between it and the signs. Simulacrum expresses the result of the process of tarnishing the contrast amid the existence and elements. As stated by J. Baudrillard, this fact is a significant feature of the new digital mass-media representation. The modern technical-technological platform has made it possible for the simulacrum to hinder the recognition of reality. The principle of simulation has become the universe of media representations. It is omnipresent since it has suppressed

the possibilities of depicting reality. The existence recedes into the background of the interest of media creators, replaced by an illusion that penetrates the recipients, as it has evolved into a habitual way of making the world more transparent (Baudrillard, 2001). In addition, Baudrillard perceives the influence of the ethos and the value definition of postmodernism. The consequence is, for example, the formation of ideal human beings due to the possibilities of digital technologies, as people seek their own pleasures in the search for improved images of themselves and others. A female media celebrity can be transformed into an ideal visualisation so that her image suits the aesthetic taste and norms of the given culture. As a result of people’s efforts for the greatest possible delight of their own senses and the feelings of other people, a new reality is created, which is much more attractive and impressive than real existence. The picture offers people a much more appealing, colourful and striking world, where their ordinary life turns green with envy and smells of boring dullness. The only possible exception can be their secondary lives on social networks. In any case, people accept simulacra, because they fulfil their imaginations and satisfy their needs, even as their fantasy atrophies. This situation has gone so far that J. Baudrillard defines simulacra of the third order, which currently generate hyperreality, i.e. only a simulation of the real world. Hyperreality only imitates existence, it is no longer inaccurate or distorted. This is a new reality of the model that seems more genuine than existence itself (Baudrillard, 1996).

It turns out that due to the media interpretation and meaning frameworks, the contemporary person is voluntarily and willingly trapped in a media hoop of simulated hyperreality. Baran (2002) believes that the cause of this state lies in the obsession with images and effects, in the visual compulsion of the contemporary. As reported by him, the current media society has been dominated by images enhanced by colour, size, motion and effective light accompanied by words and sounds. The image that gets in our way, in front of our eyes, travels behind us in various media formats (Baran, 2002). The coeval empathically experiences visual fascinations thanks to the enormous potential of audiovisual creation and audiovisual narratives. These offer pleasures of various kinds, including diverse emotional states. Postmodern audiovisual production likes to show the world in fanciful colour. This is because every unusual, or even hitherto unseen image of simulated reality, fascinates all participants in media communication – authors and recipients alike. Baran, in connection with the formation of the mentality of a person influenced by media obsessions, even talks about the tendency to create new modern myths, which tend to make a “world turned upside down”. According to him, the early images were formed on the basis of myths and legends, the contemporary ones turn against humans. The consuming picture of media-image fascinations in present-day society returns people to a new myth. An individual is namely shaped by advertising, film, television, and the synthetic reality offered by literature.

The outcome is the fact that old literary characters and models are transformed into a modern image of a new conception. Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* is turned into a girl for sale in the current production of the National Theatre, Alexander the Great is a homosexual in an American mega-film, heroes are converted into anti-heroes (Baran, 2002). There are heroes and anti-heroes, whose image is created in the spirit of the new reality of the colourful model, and which appears more realistic than the existence itself. The discourse of the expression of visual representations in contemporary audiovisual culture has clearly defined parameters of original approaches and reception expectations. There is no doubt that the current mindset of individuals is a guarantee of the survival of those audiovisual media that apply such captivating discourse in production. It remains questionable where the boundaries of the production of audiovisual hyperreality lie, whether it is permanently preserved in its visual delusion. Or, if such a hyperreality of a colourful model will one day encounter a revolt of other creative accesses, desires and emotional expectations of the recipients, which will change the current discourse of the expression of pictorial representations.

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### Authors

Prof. PhDr. Hana Pravdová, PhD.  
hana.pravdova@ucm.sk  
Orcid: 0000-0001-8804-5016

Mgr. Magdaléna Ungerová, PhD.  
magdalena.ungerova@ucm.sk  
Orcid: 0000-0002-3061-8704

University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava  
Faculty of Mass Media Communication  
Námestie J. Herdu 2  
917 01 Trnava  
SLOVAK REPUBLIC

### Profile of the Authors

Prof. PhDr. Hana Pravdová, PhD. specialises in mediology and culturology. She works as a university professor and pedagogical researcher in the field of media studies. Her research and teaching activities focus on the areas of media culture, games and gaming principles in cultural history, the media and cultural industries, globalisation and media localisation, journalistic genres, cross-platform journalism and editorial systems in the media.

In terms of scientific research, Mgr. Magdaléna Ungerová, PhD. primarily deals with the issue of political correctness in English and Slovak, especially as reflected in media language. She also focuses on media linguistics, mainly on the processes of forming English neologisms, their presence in media language and their penetration into the Slovak language. In addition, she has successfully led two projects KEGA, whose outputs include academic textbooks in English for students of mass media communication, while taking an active part in several other projects as a researcher. She is also active as a language proofreader.

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