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ARGU**MENTOR** 5

DIGITAL AGORA

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH ARGUMENTOR CONFERENCE

ARGUMENTOR 5

Digital Agora

Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference
on Argumentation and Rhetoric,
held in Oradea / Nagyvárad, Romania,
21 September 2018

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INTRODUCTION

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THE DIGITAL AGORA: DIALOGUE AND CONFRONTATION

With the spread of digital technologies across geographies, age- and social groups, daily communicative practices have gone through a deep transformation, both in private and public spaces. The fifth *Argumentor Conference* (21 September 2018, Oradea, Romania) will be mapping this transformation from multi-disciplinary perspectives offered by philosophy, aesthetics, sociology, and communication studies. Papers are organized in two main chapters, following the conference panels: *Argumentation and Rhetoric*, and *Citizenship and Lifestyle*. Let us set the tone for this discussion.

1. The public sphere in the digital age: Is dialogue possible?

Theorists have interpreted new media as a "second structural transformation of the public sphere" with "the potential to fundamentally change societal communication, and revive the public sphere" (Schäfer 2015: 323).

Online media has changed the patterns of group interactions, information seeking routines, and social participation practices (Gerbaudo 2017, Mascheroni 2017, Mancini 2018). Digital lifestyles became fast paced and more inclusive, by transcending geographical, socio-economic, and cultural divides.

Despite its benefits, the "digital public sphere" makes "ambivalent promises" to both individuals and communities (Schäfer 2015: 323). While optimists emphasize the ease and affordability of online communication, pessimists warn that dialogue is not possible within the opinion bubbles of like-minded people, in a fragmented cyberspace that lacks fair and solid argumentation. The "golden rule of reciprocity" stating that we should treat others the way we want to be treated should govern online interactions (Chiles 2016: 16), but it is rarely the case. We should learn and apply the rules of netiquette when communicating online.

As Schäfer (2015) has summarized it, the optimistic view on cyber-communication emphasizes several advantages:

(1) relatively open, easy and fast access to information;

(2) a broad range of self-expression opportunities for many people;

(3) the collaborative and interactive character of web-based applications.

Meanwhile, there is a strong pessimistic view when it comes to any push-button democracy approach: digital technologies bring about more unforeseen risks than opportunities (Lupton 2016), and they carry on disadvantages (Schäfer 2015):

(1) due to multiple digital divides, online participation of several groups is questionable;

(2) real debates are rare, since most people are locked in their own opinion-bubbles;

(3) online media drives people more towards consumerism than towards activism.

2. From flash mobs to "wild public screens": Is activism changing?

Molnár (2017: 43) has defined flash mobs as new forms of sociability, "nascent forms of collective action" providing "insight into the intersection and interaction between new communications media and changing uses of physical urban space".

Social media platforms enable fast and effective mobilization of large groups of people, and due to their decentralized structure, they are not easily controlled by governmental officials. Environmental flash mobs in China, mobilized via Weibo and WeChat, might give thrills to the authorities, "since more than 600 million people are online and rage is arguably the emotion that travels fastest across social media, citizens' outrage over waste incinerators and chemical plants moves quickly" (DeLuca et al. 2016: 330). The social media platforms' interactive nature and their great potential to mobilize people lead the above mentioned scholars to define them as "wild public screens", or spaces of shared dissent and anger.

Since connecting is so affordable, "organizing without organizations" (Shirky 2008: 7) is part of our daily routines. Mobilizing our personal networks is a skill we have to learn in the age of "networked individualism" (Wellman 2002: 10). On the one hand, online services teach us to care for crowd-sourced evaluation on movie sites like Imdb.com, or accommodation portals like Booking.com. On the other hand, when it comes to mobilization, using the internet as a comfortable tool for protests is often commented on in a pejorative tone as "slacktivism" and "clicktivism"[1], originally defined sim-

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[1] https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/clicktivism

ply as a "a policy of using the internet to take direct and often militant action to achieve a political or social aim."

Meanwhile, scholars and practitioners warn us of the "weaponised visibility of the digital vigilantism" whereby citizens use "ubiquitous and domesticated technologies [to] enable a parallel form of criminal justice" (Trottier 2016: 55).

The "digital turn" (Westera 2015: 7) affects our daily activities, from media consumption practices, fashion choices and shopping habits, to expressing our political views in the real or virtual agora.

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ARGUMENTATION AND RHETORIC

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ANNOTATIONS FOR THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION PHILOSOPHY

As we go deeper in examining the rise of mass media in the 20th century, we can see that its connection with the informational society is obvious. There is the mass media given, a tool for spreading information and at the same time the development of the informational society places 'information' as a concept in a privileged, central position. The goal of this study is to reconsider the concept of 'information' and put it in a different light. What version does the information have in the history of philosophy? More exactly what points of reference does philosophy offer in understanding better the core-concept of information? Or in an informational society, informational world what are the bounding points of a philosophical reflection?

In discussing this question, we rely on two authors. Luciano Floridi, a philosopher of Italian origin, professor at the Oxford Internet Institute, seeks the general elaboration of the philosophy of information. According to his view, we are in an era where understanding people and the world needs new approaches (Floridi 2010). This field is recommended to be approached from the Anglo-Saxon analytical school's point of view. I am adding Karl Jaspers' analysis to the previously mentioned approach, whose name and existential philosophy is far too distant in this philosophical context. Despite this distance, I find this comparison useful, since I am examining the origin of philosophy and its relevance in this new context. Jaspers in his book *Way to wisdom. An introduction to philosophy* discusses the three main sources of the history of philosophy. In my study I am taking the challenge to examine whether these sources are still relevant in the 'new world' of information.

Examining the spontaneous presence of philosophical thinking, Jaspers brings up the example of the child who always asks questions, or even the person who has a modified state of consciousness. Society disciplines its members and marginalizes philosophical analysis. Despite this, philosophy is present in our everyday thinking as in the scientific or artistic field. In the

scientific area this becomes necessary when fundamental scientific concepts would need an explanation.

In this sense, defining or determining the nature, the spirit of life is impossible in a general sense, and this way different scientific trends come up in biology, physics, psychology, and other fields depending on what kind of position is held; these scientific positions have a philosophical standpoint which have an explicit or implicit form.

In this same sense defining the concept of information has the same challenge. In a more general approach "consisting of knowledge of information, disclosure of information, knowledge, learning, communication, news related to term. In some cases these can be identified in some way (knowledge, information, news), in other situations it's the above things (communication skills, learning, communication)". (Pintér 2007: 20) This approach highlights the fact that information has a 'material' complexity, and during our lifetime of socialization we basically gather information. All that we know about ourselves and the world can be expressed in a set of information as well. Briefly it seems that everything comes down to the thesis, 'all is information'. Following Wittgenstein, we can say, not only that "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world", but also, "The limits of my information is the limit of my world". Obviously, we meet a very broad concept of information mapping in this case. However, the two attitudes can be highlighted: the information can mean the data or the process itself as the learning and communication.

Following the Shannon-Weaver's classical division of information, there are three key divisions: technical problems which refer to quantification, semantic issues that refer to the question of meaning, and finally the 'impact' issues of the report, which examines the influence of the information on human behavior. So in addition to the mathematical, linguistic nature of information, there is also an 'ethical influence' in the sense that there are a variety of human attitudes in the access to information, information processing and during the average use of it. (Floridi 2010)

In the following let's examine how the classic philosophy texts are embedded in the research of the information. How to re-interpret the classic texts from the history of philosophy after the 'information revolution'? Floridi points out that many times a complex theoretical question has a well-mapped philosophical background. An obvious example is the linguistic turn. Although this was considered a completely new paradigm, it is present in the classical theories of the history of philosophy, without being part of the central discourse. Similarly, the presence of information can be detected this way, for which we will use Floridi's examples. (Floridi 2017).

In the classic Greek philosophy Plato's Allegory of the Cave is referenced a lot. What can this mean for the concept of information? An inclusion of tools, technologies in our everyday life in a way that we don't even notice.

> [Socrates:] And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: -- Behold! Human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.
> [Glaucon:] I see. (Plato 1991: 253)

The framework of the above quotation is represented by the 'behold' and 'I see' answers. According to Floridi's approach, we are witnessing the fourth industrial revolution (Floridi 2010). Copernicus's heliocentric theory was the first revolution, which totally changed the world. This is followed by Darwin's theory of evolution that changed our view of the living environment around us. Freud's psychoanalysis aims to explore the depths of human consciousness. The fourth turnaround is named after Alan Turing, the author who points to the emersion of information, meaning that the world is understood by possessing the structures of information. This 'historical view' can be interpreted as something built on one another, but it is probably not the essence of it. More important is that the human knowledge and our knowledge can be expressed in the form of data. For example, a simple statement like 'it is dark' can be considered a data. So, we are very close to the Wittgenstein's thesis: the world is the totality of facts. In this case, however, we are not talking about facts but rather about data.

Going back to the Platonic metaphor, the issue is about separating illusion from reality. The why of 'miracles' is the question, what kind of imagination we have, how do we discern the events around us? At the same time, the metaphor doesn't require abstraction. The surrounding world invades our attention and 'keeps us bound'. It's enough to think about the screen analogy, the high-tech cinemas where comfortable chairs are waiting for us, the images that we get from the screens, the sound effects, the snacks that are sold there, all these things make us feel good in an artificial world.

This description, however, has negative connotations; we would rather put it away. With a naive attitude we can point out what we gain from this position, specifically to have an insight on something. Jaspers mentions won-

der as a first element of philosophy; he connects this to Greek philosophy, primarily to wonder at the world. (Jaspers 1951) He is not quoting the cave metaphor from Plato but rather a saying from Plato about the state of wonderment: "Our eyes gave us 'the sight of the stars, the sun and the firmament.' This 'impelled us to examine the universe, whence grew philosophy, the greatest good conferred upon mortals by the gods.'" (Jaspers 1951: 17). We are interested in the universe, this is what we admire.

In the world of information probably something similar takes place during a Google search. Although comparing Google search engine with the universe can be exaggerating, we can say that the goal of our information search is to see 'everything'. We search for something and in a matter of seconds we have hundreds of thousands of answers.

Instead of wondering at the big picture we got, we look for information that is produced and accessible. What to do with so many responses? How do we choose the right answer? This wonder, however, is a shock. We meet the universe of knowledge. At the same time, if we do not find the exact data we are looking for, we feel completely lost.

Apart from the universe of information, Jaspers's approach is a quote from Aristotle: "For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize: they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e.g., about the phenomena of the moon, and those of the sun, and of the stars, and about the genesis of the universe." (Jaspers 1951:18)

Here therefore we are not fascinated by the information, but by the assimilation process of information, the variety of assimilation and practically how information is born. Where is information coming from? What is the source of information? What certainty do we have about the truthfulness of the information? From where do we get the order and what remains in the bondage of chaos?

The elaboration of these questions exceeds the possibilities of this paper. It is important to highlight the Aristotle quote which acts like a tool for the thinking process. How did people gain information in the old days, and how is it now? This approach has one more important feature according to Jaspers, that is the indifference. When in wonder, there is an honest interest, asking without gaining something, we don't want any kind of benefit, we just value the knowledge for itself, we want the pleasure of having the knowledge.

This kind of interpretation of knowledge is hard to understand for the contemporary individual. The equality of knowledge and power imposed by Francis Bacon divested from this idea. Information is a source of power; whoever possesses information, is a winner. Therefore, I want knowledge for power, I benefit from it. When we are googling we can find this characteristic as well;

if I don't find the answer I want, then frustration comes up. Still, there is question of how does something become an information? Is it just a pragmatically matter, or something more complex? Is having power over information just for the sake of being in control, or there is something else to be shown, so it is just something formal for the sake of showing something?

Philosophy's next reference point is doubt. This new elaboration can be found in Descartes. This view of Floridi's is almost self-evident, as the imagination of the world overwhelmed by the 'evil spirit' is one of the popular *topoi* of the digital world. That thesis reached its apotheosis in the Matrix move, but Floridi is not referring to this. This way the cave metaphor could have been interpreted as a classic simulacrum theory, from which the value judgment could have been deducted. Doubt as an act basically means the burden of a principle, a truth and statement. This study, like Newtonian physics, is experimenting with thought, information, the process of acquiring information, and putting it into a load, testing, and deciding its sustainability.

Keeping the example of the previous Google search, we've seen a multitude of information and responses in a short time. However, pieces of information are often contradicted not only by our expectations but also by each other. How can I consider this information to be valid?

Let's see how Descartes moves forward through systematic doubt:

> "I shall proceed by setting aside all that in which the least doubt could be supposed to exist, just as if I had discovered that it was absolutely false; and I shall ever follow in this road until I have met with something which is certain, or at least, if I can do nothing else, until I have learned for certain that there is nothing in the world that is certain. (…) I suppose, then, that all the things that I see are false; I persuade myself that nothing has ever existed of all that my fallacious memory represents to me. I consider that I possess no senses; I imagine that body, figure, extension, movement and place are but the fictions of my mind. What, then, can be esteemed as true? Perhaps nothing at all, except that there is nothing in the world that is certain."
> (Descartes 1911: 9)

Radical doubt means that if anything else appears differently, it can change its essence, it can be discarded as uncertain. Such a withdrawal of knowledge (information) can, however lead to the certainty of resigning my claim. According to Jaspers, after the amazement has accumulated knowledge for us, we must realize that these are often in contradiction and must be reconsidered. We can also say: the world of information has caught us, we have to check what we can be certain of. If I consider different explanations as equivalent and do not introduce a qualitative distinction based on critical thinking, the geoid shape of the Earth and the flat shape of the Earth appear

in Google search next to each other. If you can argue both, I can't accept one approach as apodictic evidence.

Let's go over classical text.

> "But how can I know there is not something different from those things that I have just considered, of which one cannot have the slightest doubt? Is there not some God, or some other being by whatever name we call it, who puts these reflections into my mind? That is not necessary, for is it not possible that I am capable of producing them myself? I myself, am I not at least something? But I have already denied that I had senses and body. Yet I hesitate, for what follows from that? Am I so dependent on body and senses that I cannot exist without these? But I was persuaded that there was nothing in all the world, that there was no heaven, no earth, that there were no minds, nor any bodies: was I not then likewise persuaded that I did not exist? Not at all; of a surety I myself did exist since I persuaded myself of something [or merely because I thought of something]. But there is some deceiver or other, very powerful and very cunning, who ever employs his ingenuity in deceiving me. Then without doubt I exist also if he deceives me, and let him deceive me as much as he will, he can never cause me to be nothing so long as I think that I am something. So that after having reflected well and carefully examined all things, we must come to the definite conclusion that this proposition: I am, I exist, is necessarily true each time that I pronounce it, or that I mentally conceive it."
> (Descartes 1911: 9)

The 'exaggeration' of doubt may be called the burden of necessarily true knowledge. How do we test the information we gain from Google search? What does this inevitably mean? Or is the apodictic truth a place to look for? Did any information be so appreciated and the necessity of the truth so depreciated? If the universe is in the previous round, then the ego cogito is emphasized in this round. What certainty do I have of myself? Who is the one who seeks? How can it be formulated what you are looking for?

The result of this systematic doubt and criticism is the founding of the thinker, the researcher's identity. Against Descartes, one of the common objections was the accusation of solipsism. I think that doubt and the foundation of something is not just the work of an individual. We are more realistic if we put this in a community's hand. It's not the individual who can examine everything properly, this lacks a lot of components (lack of time, competence, and proper source). Traditionally, the media was the medium that did this skeptical, critical job. Social media, at a conceptual level, is even closer to this idea. In reality, a mutual reinforcement could be expected, in which we could live the positive qualities of the community and take the heart of the enve-

lope. That is, not only the well-established identity of the ego, but the exit from the comfort zone, the openness to the other should also appear.

In the last part we are watching the ego, the self, the question of self-esteem. How to understand ourselves in this new information environment. Plato found that the discovery of writing changed man. What we do in the online environment or as Floridi uses in the 'onlife' environment where there is no difference between online and offline differentiation, the two spheres coincide so much. (Floridi 2015)

The question is, in what position are we in the information environment? Can the self also be constructed as an information structure? How are we affected by Google search? How does this information affect the foundations of our own existence?

With regard to information, perhaps this superficial accusation is often expressed in the world of simulators or even in the world of Platonic appearances, so it cannot be the subject of philosophical reflection. However, according to our basic hypothesis, the statement carries the information that can easily break into the foundation of our lives. Let us first approach this with an example from literature:

> "He's been sitting in the gateway for fourteen years in front of a small sliding window. He is asked only two questions: Where are the offices of Montex? This is what he says: On the first floor, on the left. The second question is: Where is the Waste Processing Plant located? He responds like this: Second floor, second door to the right.
>
> There has never been a mistake in fourteen years; everyone has gotten the right direction. It was only once that a lady stood up to her window and asked one of the usual questions: Please, do you know where the Montex is?
>
> For this he exceptionally looked away into the distance and then said, 'We're all out of nowhere and go back to the big stink of nothing.
>
> The lady made a complaint. The complaint was investigated, discussed and then dropped. Really not so great." (Örkény 1982)

There is the monotony of our world, the everyday routine, fatigue, tiredness. A massive amount of information is given where we are not even willing to make any distinction, we don't have the resources to do this.

There is the unilateral aspect of communication given, the emptiness. Last but not least, our finiteness as a fact and as a necessary truth. The ego that doubts not only realizes that it has to exist in order to doubt, but also that it has a finite lifetime.

In this sense, a certain path is played in front of us: what is this - the state of wonder, what is the basis of my certainty - the state of doubt, what is my situation, my condition in this world is the state of experiencing our limits. Not

only can I say that 'it's dark' but I can also get a diagnosis 'You are suffering from x disease' or we can get such information about our loved ones. What does the information mean in this context?

The timing of information and attaching it to my life is also essential. Getting the proper information at the proper time. A given piece of information means a given opportunity, which is unique. Our temporal disposition, therefore, confronts us with the sea of information, from which we must inevitably choose.

The contradiction in which we live can be summarized in the following way by the words of Edward O. Wilson: 'We are drowning in information, while we are starving for wisdom.' (Wilson 1998) The overwhelming information, the wonder, the doubt, but the lack of self-reflection. How does data become realistic? How can we make wise decisions in this abundance?

In fact, the extension of information leads us to communication, and here we continue to follow Jaspers' thoughts. As the community has a constructive role in analyzing skepticism, the concept of 'self-indulgence' is also a mean of communication as a rescue belt.

The conclusion we get can be summarized as follows:

1. The data is converted into information. So information processing itself is a knowledge, which clarifies a 'fact'.

2. Information is communicated in a particular medium. Information in itself means nothing if it is not shared and does not become part of the community's speech.

The first point was divided into three parts. We can also say that through wonder data comes into our horizon. Critical review and doubt are part of the processing. Finally, there are 'data' that we really live in, which speak of the givens of our own lives.

The second point embraces access to information, processing, and interiorization. This assumes the existence of communication, as communication also assumes the content, the data and information. This second point presupposes a stage in the formation, control and transfer of community knowledge. Around this question goes beyond the framework of this paper. To do so, we could only give a reference to Descartes's analysis. If not an abstract ego is a carrier of thought, but a flesh-and-blood individual capable of communicating, then we can assume the community and communicative act of forming, controlling and transmitting information. Foundating this in an online environment seems to be very difficult.

Our questions remain: what is the potential for a dynamic relationship between the information and communication that is conceived here? How can we find the unique in this huge ocean of information? How can we introduce the personal story in a uniform database (bytes)? Or how can we develop our true self at all in this world?

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HOW TO CULTIVATE THE PAST OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE DIGITAL AGE?

Traditional activities of the history of philosophy go hand in hand with other historical disciplines of the humanities; their intrinsic parts are the preparation of the critical editions and commentaries of the classical authors, making, presenting and elaborating archives of manuscripts and rare printings. The challenge of digitalisation touched the historiography of philosophy later than literary studies; digital elaboration and access of the sources of the past of the philosophy has emerged when other historical disciplines of the humanities were after their first methodological controversies; the concept and method of *digital philology* as a new applied branch of the humanities has been established; and *textology* could not imagined without digital tools and methods. A historian of the Hungarian philosophy, similarly to the other philosophical historiographers of the East-Central European region, meets a special problem during the preparation for edition of the sources in these fields. However, these editions must be edited by traditional philological standards, adding the equivalents of the references of ancient Hungarian writing by the best modern critical edition, this method is useless in many cases both for the editors and for the (professional Hungarian) target audience, because of the absence of these volumes in the Hungarian libraries, when their original editions are available in digital form with free access. The point of view of the practical usefulness makes malleable the old philological standards, and touches the problem of the long-time reliability of the referred sources. This paper discusses several methodological problems of the historiography of philosophy in the digital age from a point of view of East-Central Europe, based on the experiences of several recent editions of philosophical sources, and digitalisation projects.

KEYWORDS: *digital philology, history of philosophy, preservation of the sources, professional standards, textology*

1. Introduction

Historical disciplines always depend on the databases and archives created, developed and maintained by the researchers of the same field; archivers and users of the archives are the members of the same scholarly community. It is true in the field of the history of philosophy, as well. The internal structure and network of the archives are not external tools for the historians of philosophy only, but intrinsic factors of the methodology of our discipline; they have central role in the formulation of the concept of the *historical fact* in philosophy. However, the reconstruction of the *thought* of the philosophers of the past is always the focus of the history of philosophy, its concrete appearance in the different forms of the documents of the history of philosophy as historical facts and as sources of the historiography of philosophy, and the task of the historical interpretation rooted in it is the core of the methodological questions of our discipline. The following will detail the two topics of the actual status of the philosophical archives and the process of the digitalisation of their documents, focused on the Hungarian past of philosophy. At first, after this introduction, in the second part of this paper, an outlined picture will be offered of the digitalisation of the sources of the history of Hungarian philosophy, in the context of contemporary Hungarian philosophical historiography. There is a special significance in this overview of a description of the possibilities and plans of archive-planning in the Institute of Philosophy of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, focused on the topics of the history of Hungarian philosophy, the process of digitalisation, especially the digital Hungarian Philosophical Archive, established recently as a part of this institute. The methods and possibilities of the archiving of the documents of the scientific work in the past of our institute will be discussed separately, focused on the possibilities of the digitalisation of the paper-based documents and the preservation of the sources of our past created as original digital documents. The third part of this paper will be focused on the tasks and the agenda of the Hungarian Philosophical Archive, connected with the personal experiences of the author of this paper as a historian of philosophy, in the fields of the digitalisation of the philosophical past, and the use of digitalised sources in philosophical historiography. All the important trends and phenomena will be exemplified by a case of the history of the Hungarian philosophy, based on the personal research experiences of the author of this paper.

2. On Archiving the Hungarian Philosophical Past

Memories of the philosophical thought in Hungary are as ancient as local (Latin) literacy itself. The sources of local mediaeval thought usually do not constitute separate archives or archival units; they are just sporadic manuscripts remaining of philosophical authors, or similarly sporadic testimonies on their opinions and teachings. These historical-philosophical sources, such as an indirect testimony on the philosophical opinions of bishop Bonipert, or a single remaining writing of bishop Gellért, both from the 11th century, are important and esteemed sources of the history of philosophy in Hungary, but they do not represent any special methodological problem in the field of this discipline, and do not need a separate archival storage as *philosophical* documents, with special meta-data of the history of philosophy. In this field, the professional knowledge of the historian of philosophy must be expressed mainly in the *interpretation* of the known writings and testimonies. The author of this paper has offered a description of a mistake of Hungarian philosophical historiography, concerning the mediaeval epoch, in a recent case study. It was a creation of the figure of a Hungarian philosopher called Boëthius Dacus, Boëthius de Dacia, or, Boëthius ex Transylvania who was in blossom in 1345. Boëthius Dacus actually was a Danish philosopher, an important figure of the philosophical life of the '60s and '70s of the previous century, who wrote his main works as a *magister* of the University of Paris. However, the discovery of the manuscript of his unknown *De aeternitate mundi* in the national library in Budapest in 1954 was a world sensation; the nationality of the author became clear eight years earlier, with inquires based on the development of our knowledge about mediaeval philosophy in general, and its consequences to the evaluation of the Hungarian data. The main problem was an asynchrony between Hungarian and universal philosophical historiography, concerning the history of the mediaeval thought. When the text of *De aeternitate mundi* was discovered, its position within Scholasticism was a problem, but the question of its author and the time of its formulation was solved. All in all, the problem of this historiographical mistake was not rooted in the methodology of the archives, the preservation and rediscovery of a single, however, important writing. (For the details see Mester 2019.)

Actually, from the time of early modern philosophy, an amount of philosophical printings and manuscripts has been accumulated both in Latin and in Hungarian, which was enough for create new methodological problems. Since this epoch we can talk about several elements of the planned archiving in the college and university libraries with the endeavour for preserve the works and manuscripts of their professors, sometimes with the records of their lectures with their students' pens. Nowadays, for research of the extended ma-

terial of 17th-century Hungarian philosophical controversies, for example, the discourses of the corpuscular versus non-corpuscular natural philosophies, or the Cartesian and anti-Cartesian philosophers, a complete and connected database of the early modern philosophical sources was needed, or at least an always up-to-date, special online catalogue of the known sources and the relevant secondary literature. These methodological problems of the philosophical historiography of Hungarian early modernity can be illustrated by the context of four recent partial results of the research of the history of Hungarian philosophy, all of them published in a volume of essays, or in a thematic periodical issue edited by the author of the present paper. Two of them are based on new interpretations of well-known printed philosophical works (Guba 2016, Laczházi 2007). These new achievements in philosophical historiography were dependent on the availability of the sources of their international context, and the appearance of new interpretations of the Western European authors and their writings, which were connected with the Hungarian authors on the focus of the Hungarian research. A new interpretation of the Hungarian controversy on the corpuscular natural philosophy is based on the rediscovery of an early modern German branch of the corpuscular theory, consequently, online digital availability of its works and publication of their interpretations from the point of view of the history of philosophy. Before this change of the universal historiography of philosophy, a Hungarian researcher has had minimal chance to find the international context of Izsák Czabán's work in early modern printed books hidden in the ancient German libraries, without digitalisation and modern published interpretations (for the details see Guba 2016). A researcher of the Hungarian Cartesians met a similar methodological problem in the description of the international context of the Hungarian topic of the research. Before the digital online availability of several – in this case, Dutch – elements of the works of the contemporary international discourse that were connected to the Hungarian works on the focus of the research, a Hungarian researcher had minimal chance to discover that the significant parts of Apáti's *Vita triumphans* were a *compilation*, and not the ingenious individual ideas of the Hungarian author as it was the scholars' public opinion (Laczházi 2007). Another new result of philosophical historiography is a new, relevant interpretation of the natural philosophy of the Hungarian Cartesians, based on a known, but rarely interpreted manuscript, Apáczai's notes for his college lectures on natural philosophy (for its analysis see Szentpéteri 2007). This achievement is based on the circumstance that the details of natural sciences were traditionally in the shadow of the philosophy of mind in the international research of the history of the Cartesian thought; and a known, but unpublished Hungarian Cartesian text from this genre was not an attractive topic for the previous generations of the historiographers,

concerning the demonstrations of the international context. In other words, an average researcher of the history of the Hungarian philosophy usually has limited resources, and must select the available sources as the potential topics of a planned research. A philosophical work that is not available as a digitalised online document and its title does not refer to a mainstream issue of the contemporary international philosophical historiography, was probably regarded as a risky project. The fourth example refers to the problem of the historical diversity of the genres and topics of the fictional and nonfictional literature. Sermons are not usual sources of the research of the history of philosophy, but several collections of sermons in several epochs can be relevant bases of the philosophical historiography, for example, in Patristic studies and in the time of the Reformation. In this case, the genre of sermon is an obstacle of the extension of the research of the history of philosophy for every possible source, under condition of the paucity of the philosophical writings and testimonies from this period. In a situation described above, it was just an accident event that a student of theology, supervised by a visiting professor of early-modern Hungarian philology with a theoretical interest, can find a relevant philosophical topic within a textual corpus of sermons (Rácz 2007). A general solution of the problem of the orientation of young researchers can be the establishment of a digital database of all the historical documents of the Hungarian philosophy, regardless their literary genres, concerning the early modern period.

The core of the methodological problems appears in the modern and recent periods. Modernity in the history of Hungarian philosophy is divided in two epochs. First of them is the "long 19th century" from the beginning of the Hungarian controversy on Kant till the death of the founder of the school of the Hungarian neo-Kantian philosophy of values, Károly Böhm (1792–1911); the second one is the "short 20th century" till the collapse of the Communism (1911–1989). From the point of view of archiving, these two centuries of Hungarian philosophy can be described by the concepts of the changing and modernised structure of scholarly communication, and the establishment of the professional institutional network of philosophical activity. Archiving activity refers to an extended print material that contains not only books, but also small brochures of philosophical pasquillades, volumes of scholarly periodicals, collections of proceedings, textbooks, records of the sessions of new types of institutions, e.g. the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and, later, the Hungarian Philosophical Society. Another consequence of the gradual and periodical change of the structure of scholarly communication is the increased amount of the preserved collection of manuscripts. There are amongst them posthumous philosophical works and memoirs, uncensored variants of the published writings, a series of letters, diaries and notes. In these periods the

possibility of the establishment of philosophical archives appeared, focused on the heritage of single, but important authors, as a synchronic phenomenon like in other fields of Hungarian intellectual life e.g. in literature, music and fine arts.

Here, there is room for only a few examples of the typical destinies of the Hungarian philosophical heritage. The first one is the archival material of Gusztáv Szontagh who was a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a self-employed public intellectual without jobs and affiliations, and a confirmed bachelor, without heirs; consequently, his remained manuscripts went to the archive of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, without any legal obstacle. (Many papers connected with his person, or written by him, were in the archives of the Academy during his lifetime, such as his official CVs, reviews written by him on the applications for the Academy, his proposals for the Academy, and so on.) Seemingly, we have all the possible written sources connecting his life and thought in the same, professional archive, but actually, his lifestyle as an officer and old bachelor with frequent moves has selected his heritage before his death. A part of his unpublished early writings and his correspondence has evaporated. A symptomatic marker has emerged of the absence of writings probably existing before, in an article of a popular magazine (m.m. 1925). This writing of an unknown journalist is based on Szontagh's notes "written for his family", and contains interesting experiences about the last years of István Széchenyi. Actually, it is the single piece of evidence for the acceptance of Széchenyi's invitation by Szontagh, his supposed notes were not preserved, and did not write them "for his family", but for his distant relatives at the most. (I must express my acknowledgments for Szabolcs Erdős, independent researcher of the local history of the region of Pécel, where Szontagh lived in his last years, for this date.) Inquiries for the pieces of the heritages of the dead academics, probably existing somewhere, are not the task of the Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, but it can be an important function of a digital and virtual archive of Hungarian philosophy. One of the frequent problems is the reconstruction of correspondence, because a philosopher's heritage usually contains the letters written *for*, and not *by* the philosophers, only. If the philosopher's letters was addressed to a writer of the fictional literature we can hope to complete the correspondence with the help of the Petőfi Literary Museum or other great national archives, but the creation of a special archives of the history of Hungarian philosophy that can be used as a virtual catalogue of both sides of correspondence, connected in their content to Hungarian philosophy and available in different physical places, remains the task of the scholarly community of the historiographers of the history of Hungarian philosophy.

Another example for the selective preservation of the philosophical correspondences in the archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is the case of the afterlife of the letters of Bernát Alexander to his fist professor of philosophy at the University of Budapest dated from the cities of his years of peregrination, with an interesting overview of the philosophical life of Europe in the 1870s. Horváth was a regular member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, university professor and a monk of the Piarist Order, consequently, his manuscripts have been preserved accidently in the University Library, in the archives of the Academy, or in the monastic quarters. After his death, in 1884, another Piarist philosopher, Gyula Kornis has transmitted the letters remaining in Horváth's monastic quarters, for Alexander who was a lecturer at the University of Budapest, in this time. However, Alexander later became a professor at the University of Budapest and a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; in the beginning of the Horthy era he lost his life membership in the Academy and his superannuation allowance as a retired professor for a period, as well, for political reasons. However, he was active in philosophical life almost until the day of his death in 1927; national archives did not consider their task the preservation of his intellectual heritage. His aforementioned letters were published by the personal initiative of his disciple, Samu Szemere (Alexander 1928), in the same time when a similar collection of the letters of his friend and fellow-contributor in the field of the history of philosophy were published (Bánóczi 1928). Today, the scholar community of researchers of the history of Hungarian philosophy is informed about the published form of these letters, without the data of the editorial and textological principles; for example, we do not know exactly whether these books represent the whole of the letters preserved up to the time of the publication, or a selection from a bigger material. The most important gap was the absence of the *answers* of professor Horváth for his alumnus, concerning the questions about Horváth's opinions on the actual questions of the European philosophy from the point of view of Horváth's *own philosophical system*. This case is further evidence for the statement that the big national databases cannot fulfil the task of archiving the Hungarian philosophical past in themselves, without the support of a digital philosophical archive with well-planned inquiries into the absent elements of the intellectual heritage of philosophers, based on the professional knowledge of historiographers of Hungarian philosophy, in a continuous connection with the actual needs of historiographical research of philosophy in Hungary. (It is a symptomatic fact that the last overview of the philosophical manuscripts preserved by the Hungarian national library was done by Tibor Joó in the interwar period.)

Another example of the political aspects of the archiving of philosophers' heritage is the case of György Málnási Bartók who was a member of the Hun-

garian Academy of Sciences between 1945 and 1949, until the year of the political selection of the academicians, and he died in 1970, before his rehabilitation. In the years of his internal exile, Bartók sold his personal library to the library of the Institute of Philosophy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences out of financial necessity. In the 1960s, he was an everyday guest of this library, has used his own former books for his research into the history of philosophy. His personal relationship could not have been bad with the Institute and its staff, because his heirs donated his several manuscripts after his death to the library of the Institute. (Actually, they are texts typed by mechanical typewriter with handwritten corrections.) The first task of a Hungarian philosophical archive in his case must be to join the data of the documents concerning him in the different archives in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in the Library of the Institute of Philosophy, in the archives and libraries of the universities of Szeged and Kolozsvár, and the archive of the Danubian Church District of the Reformed Church in Hungary; it is a virtual recollection of the *disiecta membra* of an intellectual heritage that was an organic unit during the life of its owner.

The single case of the establishment of an archive for the intellectual heritage of an individual Hungarian philosopher is the foundation of the "Georg Lukács" Archive and Library. It was also connected to the political circumstances of the epoch of his last years. Lukács was rehabilitated politically when he retrieved his membership in the Communist Party in 1967 and died in 1971; by his last will and testament, the inheritor of his personal library, his remaining manuscripts, correspondence and other materials, was the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and its Institute of Philosophy. On this legal basis, an archive was founded by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in the next year, in his flat, just before the "philosophers' trial" in 1973, which involved the members of his school as well. It is clear that without his last will and testament, and before 1967 or after 1973 the establishment of a similar institution was not possible; but the existing archive could survive the conservative turn of Hungarian Communist politics in 1973, and has become a multifunctional centre of Hungarian philosophical life. At first, it was a "place of memory", not the personal memory of Lukács only, but an example for the *lifeworld* of an East-Central European intellectual from the first half of the 20th century with a background of the great bourgeoisie, in a house that is a good example of the modernist architecture of Budapest. By its second function it was an archive for the international scholarly community of the researchers of the œuvre of Lukács, and the intellectual history of the period of his lifetime. For this purpose a library of more than 10,000 volumes, and an archive of manuscripts with more than 10,000 items of correspondence, and photographs. The third function was the follow-up of the posthumous reception of Georg Lukács, col-

lecting the new editions and translations of his works published in the world, and register the new secondary literature on him. The fourth function was the publication and interpretation of the different documents preserved in the archive, according to the actual technological requirements.

The "Georg Lukács" Archive and Library in the different periods of its existence was a part of the Institute of Philosophy, or that of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, but it was always the basis of a separate research group with special knowledge of archiving and historiography of philosophy. Unfortunately, this description refers to the past of this archive only. Today it is a part of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and it functions merely as a place of preservation and storage; also the digitalisation of its material is a part of the big digitalisation project of the Academic Library, in the virtual space, it will not appear as a separate entity, with metadata produced by the historians of philosophy.

We must mention here the case of the intellectual heritage of Tamás Molnár that represent another type of the task of archiving in the history of the Hungarian philosophy. The main part of professor Molnár's active life was spent in emigration, but in his last years he reconnected to the Hungarian intellectual life; he was a faculty member of several Hungarian universities, a series of his books have been published in Hungarian as well. However, his intellectual heritage arrived to Hungary based on the contract with his heir, thanks to his younger colleague, Balázs Mezei, and the interpretation of his œuvre has its beginnings just after his death, organised by the fellows of our institute (see Frenyó 2010); we cannot speak a separate archive that works *as archive* in his case either.

3. Significance of the Hungarian Philosophical Archive in Light of Research in the History of Hungarian Philosophy

All the aforementioned examples demonstrate that the big Hungarian national archives do not offer enough support for research in the field of the history of Hungarian philosophy, which needs a special regard from the point of view of the historiography of philosophy, and a special knowledge of the history of philosophy. An obvious centre of this activity is the digital Hungarian Philosophical Archive as a part of the Institute of Philosophy of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Its first task is the storage of the digital copies of the documents of the past of Hungarian philosophy, preserved in various other archives, or as private property, with a uniform apparatus of metadata. An antecedent of this activity is a collection of the correspondence of Menyhért Palágyi from three different archives (it is available as a manuscript in the library of our institute as a result of re-

search before the digital age). Another task of the archive is the preservation of intellectual heritage. A significant number of the documents of the past of Hungarian philosophy is in private hands; and in many cases the heirs do not understand the importance of preserving the remaining material. A separate problem is the case of the heritage of emigrants; their inheritors often do not speak Hungarian. A special task of the new archive is the preservation and digitalisation of the past of the results of the research in our institute. It has two typical technical problems concerning digitalisation. First is the case of the *research reports*. A part of them is just a documentation of a project for the academic bureaucracy, but during Communism the planned result of a research project was a manuscript as a research report—not for publication, but only for domestic usage. (An example for it a case study preserved in manuscript on the Western green ideology written in 1972 by György Bence and János Kis.) A very special problem is the preservation of our *digital past*. Our institute was a pioneer amongst the institutions of the humanities from the point of view of the digitalisation. However, we have all our books and periodicals edited by early computer programs in digital forms, as well. At the moment, we cannot use these ancient formats and their ancient programs; we must make digital versions by scanning the printed paper copies that were once created digitally. In this regard, it is a problem of the preservation of our former homepages and their content what does not have paper-based versions; consequently they can easily evaporate in the virtual space, without a preservation policy.

The Hungarian Philosophical Archive of the Institute of Philosophy of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has been established as a pilot project and as a part of a bigger project of the digitalisation and methodical development of the archives and databases of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, between 2015–2017; the test-version of its user interface is available at the following URL: < https://www.magyarfilozofia.hu >. After the success of the pilot project, it has become possible to continue the project in the current year (2018), and the task of the maintenance of the archive has become a part of the official Mission Statement of the institute, in the same year, as well.

The need of a similar institutional background of research in the field of the history of Hungarian philosophy has appeared in the recent personal research experiences of the author of this paper as well. The first case was the edition of a 19th-century memoir of a Hungarian philosopher (Szontagh 2017). This writing has never been forgotten in the cultural memory of the Hungarian philosophy; its original version has two 19th-century handwritten copies in the archive of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, clearly with the

purpose of its publication, probably from the circles of Pál Gyulai, and it was often quoted by 20th-century historians, as well. Despite of the research interest, in lack of the digital access and an easily available database of the contemporary texts connected to it, the elaboration of the text and its usage in the historical researches has developed haltingly. Another experience of the edition of the sources of the history of philosophy is connected to a printed work of the late 18th century (Rozgonyi 2017). The discovery of the system of Rozgonyi's references has made clear that in many cases the digital versions of the original editions of the referred works is more easily available virtually than the reliable modern critical editions physically, but these digital versions of the ancient philosophical works do not represent a system of a digital past of philosophy. It seems that the problems of the historians of the Hungarian, and of the universal history of philosophy, are highly similar from the point of view of the presence in the virtual, digital world.

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#METOO – HUNGARIAN STYLE

Abstract

This study focuses on the Hungarian impact of the 2017 "Me Too" movement, offering an analysis of some relevant online texts and of their comments. The theoretical framework is provided by the anthropological linguistic approach (Balázs 2009), linguistic world view research (Kövecses 2017, Banczerowski 2008, 2012, Magyari 2015), and discourse analysis (Berger 1998, Nemesi 2016). The research method is based on participant observation and on text analysis, which also offers the possibility of content analysis, if the researcher applies a corpus-centred perspective (Balaskó 2005). The research questions point in two directions. The linguistic approach deals with the question of how the "Me Too" movement is discussed. How do the victim and the offender appear in online media, and how is their image represented by commenting readers? According to our hypothesis, information is not always controlled in online space, and opinion formation becomes almost even more important than the fact itself. Hence, the knowledge fixed within language and language use changes as well. Our research attaches great importance to the reconstruction of linguistic images, leading to the exploration of underlying values systems, also pointing out cultural phenomena such as the dichotomy between silence and speaking out, conceptualized as social phenomena in an anthropological and ethnographic framework. At the same time, from the perspective of argumentation and rhetoric, we are interested in the emerging positions and in the typical arguments supporting these, in their conflict, and in the most frequently occurring means of persuasion. We also presuppose that the positions and modes of reasoning are clearer and relatively restrained in the online press, while the discourse of the comments is more emotionally charged.

KEYWORDS: *#MeToo, online media, linguistic image, argumentation, online comments*

Introduction

As the authors of this paper, we are interested in the attitude of online journalists and commenting readers toward Hungarian cases of the #MeToo phenomenon. What kind of value choices can be identified behind the published articles and the readers' comments?

Although, after the Harvey Weinstein scandal, the entire Western world was flooded with reports of sexual harassment, their number was relatively low within the Hungarian communities and only one case received wider and more enduring publicity. Our research concentrates on this particular case, of an actress (A) who accused an acclaimed theatre director (D) of sexual harassment. The harassment case will be referred to hereinafter as "A-D".

In our processing of this corpus, we (a) analysed the data from an argumentative and rhetorical perspective, focusing on the attitudes expressed in the comments, and (b) used a linguistic approach, i.e. researched the linguistic world view expressed by the news articles published in the online media.

(a) The argumentative and the rhetorical approach

Argumentative and rhetorical perspectives were analysed only based on the comments, since the separate and opposed points of view were expressed most clearly not in the (supposedly) objective reports of the journalists, but in the dynamics of the comments reflecting the readers' opinions.

The scholarly literature relevant to the analysis of the comments was relatively scarce. Thus, we had to develop our own methodology. Our considerations were in many respects similar to those of a workgroup whose members surveyed Hungarian language online portals with respect to the issue of migration in 2015 (Balog E. et al. 2017). We also used the ranking of alexa.com for choosing the online portals, attempting to produce a balanced overall picture, and employed the methods of categorisation and type formation. The data was processed manually and not through software.

One of the first issues to be investigated concerns the list of the online journals to be examined and the establishing of the period under consideration. SInce Hungarian society as a whole, and thus also the Hungarian media is strongly polarized, we attempted to include in our sample both pro-government and opposition media outlets. Our investigation targeted the most visited websites. However, since the top 7 of the 50-item list of alexa.com included 2 neutral (Blikk, NLCafe), 1 pro-government (Origo) and 4 opposition news portals (Index, 444, HVG, 24), we added 3 widely-known pro-govenrment websites to our sample (Magyar Idők, 888, Pesti Srácok).

Online Journal	www.alexa.com 01.03.2018 (all sites)	https://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/HU (journals)	Political affinity	No. of articles	No. of comments
index.hu	5th in Hungary	1.	opposition	20	no comments
24.hu	11th in Hungary	2.	opposition	22	524
origo.hu	9th in Hungary	3.	pro-government	21	no comments
444.hu	15th in Hungary	4.	opposition	13	6238
hvg.hu	17th in Hungary	5.	opposition	34	3614
nlcafe	22th in Hungary	6.	neutral	25	601
blikk.hu	27th in Hungary	7.	neutral	27	420
magyaridok.hu	155th in Hungary	-	pro-government	3	no comments
888.hu	171th in Hungary	-	pro-government	3	1304
pestisracok.hu	291th in Hungary	-	pro- government	4	136
10 journals				173	12837

We examined the articles most tightly linked to the case. The determination of the time interval proved to be almost self-evident. The first media reports about the case were published on 14 October 2017, and the last significant news article was published on 11 November 2017. Hence, we analysed this one-month period, examining a total of 173 articles and the readers' comments to them.

The latter endeavour, i.e. the analysis of the comments, proved to be a brave, if not foolhardy initiative. We wanted to analyse not only the perspectives of the journalists, but also the readers' opinions, in order to gain an overview of the general dynamics of values, views, and attitudes. However, the analysis of the comments proved to be much more complicated than expected. The question arose whether we should examine only the comments on the news sites or also the comments on their Facebook pages – especially since many sites (Index, Origo, Magyar Idők) had no comments section. Finally, we opted for restricting our analysis of the comments to the news portals. On the one hand, since it is a more stable corpus than that of the Facebook comments (which can be deleted anytime by the person who posted them), and on the other hand, even more significantly, because, in our experience, Facebook comments tend to react not to the content, but merely to the title of the news articles. Thus, we reduced the number of comments to be investigated to 12,837.

For the purposes of content processing, we introduced the distinction between *primary comment* and *reply comment*. We referred as "primary comments to the posts reacting directly to the new articles, as opposed to "reply comments branching out from the primary comments. The total number of comments includes both primary and secondary comments.

The number of comments was established on the basis of the information provided by the website counters. Unfortunately, however, these do not all count the comments in the same way. Some websites (e.g. 24.hu) only count the primary comments, while others (all other news portals included in our research) take all comments into account. On some sites (hvg.hu) the comment number appearing next to the articles does not correspond to the actual number of posts in the comments section. We suspected that this is because of the deleted comments, but could not substantiate this guess. Thus, we regarded the numbers published by the news portals in their respective comments sections as authoritative.

For the purposes our quantitative analysis, we only included the primary comments into our account. If it was necessary, we quoted the comments precisely, without any grammatical corrections. At the most, we made some necessary omissions, duly indicated in each case. The names of the two protagonists of the story were changed to A and D.

The quantitative investigation of the comments was supplemented with qualitative analysis. Comments have been divided into two categories: "in favour A – against D" and "in favour of D – against A". From these two categories, we extracted the most common and typical attitudes supporting the respective positions.

In our analysis of the comments, we were interested in the following aspects:

1. The activity of the commenting readers, i.e. how active commenting readers are, which are the news bringing in the most comments, and the dynamics of the comments.

2. The attitudes expressed by the commenting readers. In this respect, we established the opposition between the attitudes supporting the victim and those in favour of the harasser.

4. The quality of the comments.

Case history

As part of the #MeToo campaign in Hungary, A published a Facebook post about how she was sexually harassed 20 years earlier, as a young actress, by a theatre director (D). D first denied the charges. Then, after several more women accused him of harassment, he worded an apology containing vague and general statements, without any acknowledgment of the accusations or repentance.

Comments analysis. Figures

We based our calculation on the figures indicated by the official counters on the websites on 1 March 2018. The date should be noted because comments have been, in many cases, removed either by the moderators or by the commenting readers themselves. It is often quite obvious that commenting readers argue with an already deleted comment, but the reconstruction of the conversation is no longer possible.

We have only taken into consideration the primary comments when counting the comments for and against A and D, restricting ourselves to the unambiguous positions. If the comment expressed doubts, considering whether to support the victim or the harasser, then it was not included in our "pro and contra" scheme. In this case, the results are, of course, interpretation-dependent.

| Event	Nr. of articles	Nr. of comments	Pro A – contra D	Pro D – contra A
October 14-16, 2017 Several news sites pick up A's Facebook post .	9	666	7	35
November 17, 2017 A is asked to name the harasser	6	57	5	31
November 19, 2017 A names the harasser. D denies everything and threatens to sue.	31	3200	93	184
October 20, 2017 D suspends his activity both as a theatre director and as a university teacher until the clarification of the issue.	18	1590	79	56
October 21-25, 2017 More victims come forward.	40	2642	116	194
October 26, 2017 D issues an apology. His colleagues support him.	27	1747	137	86
October 27, 2017 The theatre fires D and he is also excluded from the members of the Hungarian Academy of Arts (MMA).	21	1231	33	52
October 31- November 1, 2017 Harassment claims against D from Canada.	7	483	56	1
November 8-10, 2017 D speaks about his shaken mental health and about still considering to sue.	14	1231	43	107
Total	173	12847	569	746

Activity of the news portals

The news portals included in our research had different attitudes toward the issue. Some followed the events closely, dedicating individual articles to new developments. Others joined in late and barely dealt with the subject.

Nr. of articles
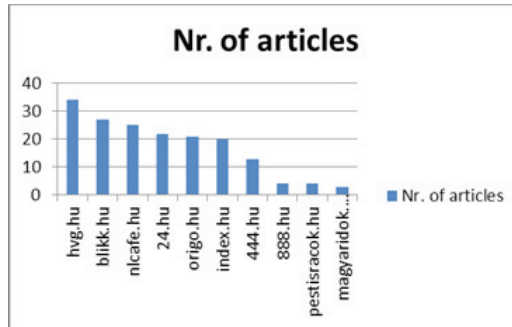
The reserved attitude of the pro-government media is striking: with the exception of origo.hu, which published 21 relevant news articles, the other three pro-government new portals dedicated a mere 3 or 4 reports to the event during the period under investigation. At the same time, it is also worth noting that the number of articles published on the web portals is not always proportionate to the number of the comments. The readers of 444.hu have proven themselves to be particularly active, with almost twice as many comments than the followers of other sites. The readers of 888.hu were highly active as well, producing a significant amount of comments, although the portal published a mere 4 articles on the topic.

Number of comments for each news site
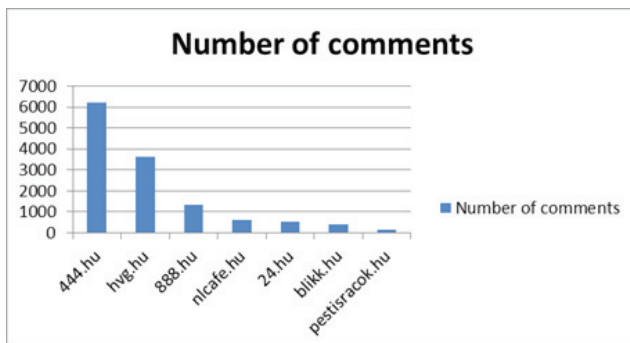
Number of comments

The activity of the commenting readers
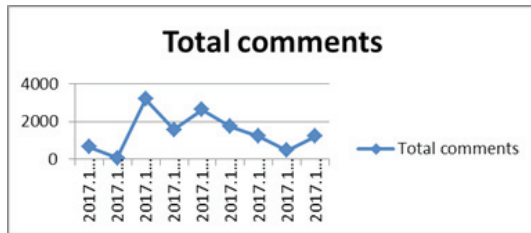
The joint examination of the number of comments and of the timeline reveals that, while the harassment charges were anonymous, commenter activity was also sparser. Most comments were made on the day A named her harasser, and D dismissed the charges as slander. Another peak in the number of comments was caused by the emergence of new victims. It seems that the phenomenon itself could not engage the commenting readers to the extent of the specific case, when they learned not only the identity of the victim(s) but also of the harasser, who also received a face.

Main comment categories: pro A – contra D, pro D – contra A

Following the quantitative processing of the comments, we restricted the qualitative perspective to the primary comments obviously supporting one of the parties (victim vs. harasser). The comments were included in two main categories: pro A – contra D and pro D – contra A, corresponding to the two potential opposite views that can be expressed in this virtual debate. We included into the first category the comments sympathetic to the actress and condemnatory of the theatre director, and in the second category the statements condemning the actress and sympathetic to the director. Although the support for one of the parties does not always involve the condemnation of the other within a category, the categories thus established can be regarded as coherent and include the various expressions of the two opposing standpoints (e.g. the first category includes comments supporting the actress, comments condemning the director, and comments simultaneously supporting the actress and condemning the director).

The analysis of the data reveals that the supporters of the director were more numerous than those of the actress. In fact, the support for the harasser becomes highest when he is named and with the emergence of new victims. This can be explained by the fact that D is a recognized and popular theatre director in Hungary. Hence, the majority of the commenting readers decides that, since the accusations cannot be proven, they will rather give credit to

the director. This situation remains unchanged after the emergence of two new victims. Some of the commenting readers still consider the charges as unprovable and the accusers as lacking credibility.

The support for the actress is highest when the vague apology of the director is published. Many commenting readers regarded the apology as an admission and praised the courageous stance of the actress.
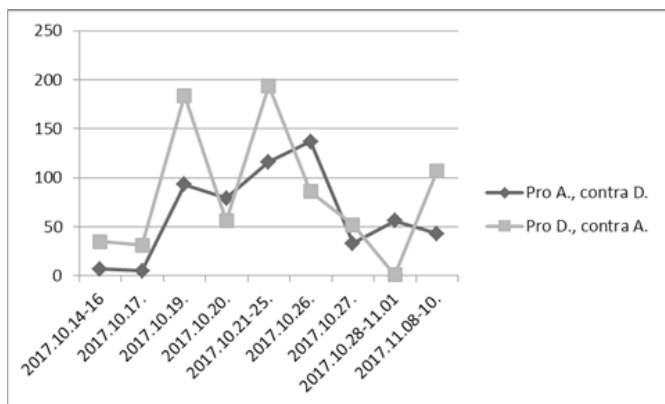
Support for the victim vs. the harasser in the primary comments
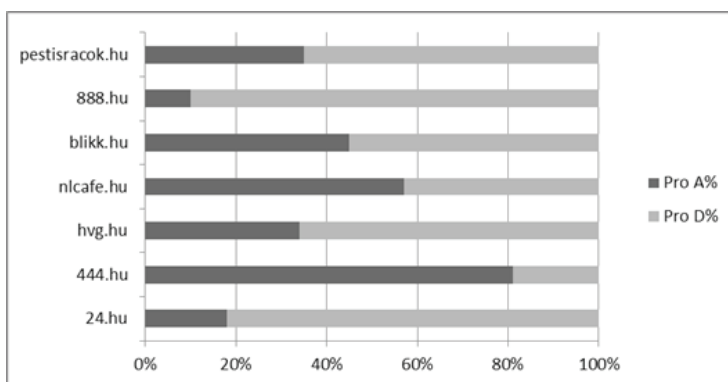
Perhaps one of the most surprising findings is that the commenting readers as a group tend to protect the harasser and to blame the victim: 43% of the primary comments express support for A and/or condemn D, while 57% support D and blame A. Victim blaming is strongest on 888.hu (90%), while also being significant on other news portals (82% on 24.hu, 66% on hvg.hu). The commenting readers of the website 444.hu showed the greatest openness toward the

victim. Here, 81% of the primary comments supported the victim and blamed the harasser. Merely 2 (!) of the news portals included in the survey supported the victim in higher proportion than the harasser (444.hu, nlcafe.hu).

The categorisation of the comments

The comment section tends to be the deepest pit of Internet hell. In the shadow of online anonymity, commenters are much more uninhibited in their statements than they would be if their identity would be known or face-to-face. Hence, researchers who venture here have to equip themselves with great patience.

The attitude of the online press toward the comments is not coherent. Although the law establishes that the media outlet is responsible for the content of the comments, and it must take action in order to exclude obscene, abusive, hateful, and inflammatory comments, in our experience, none of the examined online platforms fulfils this requirement completely. In order to eliminate the problem, some news sites completely prohibit commenting (as index.hu, magyaridok.hu, and origo.hu in our sample), and redirect comments to Facebook or Twitter. Other portals monitor the comments, as 444.hu does since 2016:

> "A pre-moderation system will be implemented. That is to say, the comments will be published on the website only if approved by the moderator. Of course, this could not work if the moderator would have to read through all the comments. Even an army of moderators would not be enough for that. The most active commenters, who write 90% of the comments, are put on the white list, which means that their comments are published faster, without pre-moderation" – said Péter Új about the system.
> (https://444.hu/2016/01/15/vita-van-vita-lesz-de-maskeppen)

As for other news sites (e.g. 24.hu, 888.hu), there are no signs of any moderation activity, although all sites have a published statement (under the designation "conditions of use" or "data protection statement") prohibiting certain behaviours for commenting readers (e.g. profanities, obscenities, and offensive words, shocking and fear-inspiring phrases, hate speech, etc.).

Deleted comments could reflect moderating activity, although then it is not clear why other comments clearly violating the terms of use have been kept on the website. E.g. the web portal 888.hu kept the comment: "Wow, she's such an ugly bitch, I can't imagine who ever had her" (S.S., 888.hu), which is immediately followed by a deleted post ("This comment has been removed"). If the second comment was deleted by a moderator, it must have been harsher than the offensive comment just cited.

We have broken down the analysis of the comments in two directions. On the one hand, we identified the main categories of the pro and con attitudes, and on the other hand, we tried to establish some observations about the quality of the texts.

We are aware of the fact that the number of comments is not proportionate to the number of commenters. There are highly active commenters and also people who are present on the online platforms only for a couple of comments. For the purposes of our study, we concentrated on the comments and not on the commenters.

Opinion types

Since the quantitative analysis revealed that the majority of the primary comments condemn A and support D, we have begun our qualitative analysis with this group. In order to exemplify these types of opinions, we have also taken into consideration the secondary comments, seeking to bring examples from all the examined news portal.

Contra A – pro D

The statements against the actress who spoke out about her harassment and in favour of the theatre director crystallized around the following issues:

1. The narrator (A) is unreliable
The commenting readers raised several issues regarding her statement. The perhaps most common objection took the shape of a rhetorical question. Why did she wait 20 years with the accusations, and why did she not step forward when the supposed harassment has taken place?! After 20 years, the accusation cannot be proven; but it also cannot be proven that it did not take place. This procedure is unfair, on the one hand, to the accused, who is put into the situation of being unable to exonerate himself, and on the other hand, if the accusations are justified, it is unfair to those could have been or have been exposed to harassments during the following 20 years.

> "if you have kept your mouth shut 20 years ago, then you should also shut up now" (I.H., 24.hu)

> "She needed 20 years to become aware that she has been harassed? Ridiculous." (Z.G., 24.hu)

The next claim reflects the typical victim blaming procedure. Some commenters reproached the aspiring actress that she got into the car with two men as a 19-year-old. They considered that she did not receive a good educa-

tion and that her mother should have told her that it is not appropriate/not permitted to get into cars with men and to go up to hotel rooms. If a young girl does such things, then she should only blame herself.

> "So, what were you looking for in that car anyway, A.???" (R.Sz., 24.hu)

> "Now seriously, who did ever, as a woman, get into the car of her male teacher, alone, as an 18-year-old (T., blikk.hu)

Some commenters even considered her acting career as a factor that discredits her as an accuser. An actress is capable of playing any role, even that of a harassed woman, deeply disturbed by the events, although none of her story is true. Their attacks also did not spare the other women who spoke out about how D has harassed them.

> "They're all hookers, now playing the nun. Role playing actresses." (M.J., 24.hu)

Others simply considered A a liar.

> "The broad is simply full of shit." (wixezuxi, blikk.hu)

Also, various reasons were sought behind the coming forward of the victim. One of the most frequently invoked motives was the seeking of publicity and fame.

> "I would only like to know who is this insignificant nobody of the one hundred thousandth order, this woman impersonator of a creature? And she only remembers it now, after 20 years, that she has also tried the casting couch! But, alas, it was in vain, since we don't even know who she is, and even if we would know, this is the only reason she did it." (T.M., 24.hu)

Still others suspected mysterious political objectives behind her coming forward, moving the director husband of the actress (who, as it happens, is a member of the opposition).

> "It would be nice to figure it out on whose toes did uncle D step." (V., pestisracok.hu)

There were also those who were sure that it is all about money:

> "I wonder how much money this A got, and still gets, for this disclosure." (B2, hvg.hu)

The victim also had to endure many personal attacks from the commenting readership, who did not spare her looks, age, professional career, or even her very identity as a woman:

> "Couldn't you use a nicer picture? She looks like a neurotic hamster." (Zs2, blikk.hu)

Many comments even crossed the line to virtual sexual harassment:

"Dear A, I wouldn't touch you with a stick." (V.S., 24.hu)

Finally, the actress received numerous of attacks when a video of a theatre scene found its way to YouTube. In this scene, directed by her husband, she had to satisfy two men on the stage bare naked. So, for the people who commented upon it, this scene demonstrates that A is lying, since the events she presented as harassment could not have really bothered her so much, if she was able to play such an openly sexual scene on stage. Some commenters did not make any distinction between the real-life event experienced by a young woman and the later theatrical role, simply lumping the two situations together.

"Those who protect this woman and believe her story have probably missed her porn 'comedy' scene shared below! It's worth seeing and it will make all her accusations seem ridiculous. I rather believe now that, in fact, she was the harasser, and D ran from her screaming!" (M.H., 24.hu)

2. The story is not authentic

Some people questioned the story or specific details: the narrative is not sufficiently detailed and coherent; what happened before and after the events; how could the director have knelt on the backseat of the BMW, did he even have enough space for this?

"I'm so sick of all these exaggerated alleged harassment cases. They are all, one by one, inauthentic." (B2, hvg.hu)

3. The issue of the casting couch

According to many commenters, there is nothing to wonder about here. Everyone has heard the expression "casting couch". Anyone who wants to be an actress has to be ready for this.

"The casting couch. It's an existing thing, isn't it? Then why all the talcum powder? This is PART of the theatre! Just like the door, the window, and the stage. It's been around forever." (S.J., hvg.hu)

It is interesting to observe how invoking the "casting couch" forces some commenters to adopt self-contradictory positions. On the one hand, they consider it to be natural, and wonder why women pretend to be outraged, since everyone knows about this institution. On the other hand, they also blame women for "lying down" on the couch. The possibility of guilt on the directors' part is not even considered; the women, however, are morally blamed. The "casting couch" situation is no harassment, since it is an eternal institution. But if the woman accepts it as natural, then she is a prostitute:

"The casting couch is not harassment, but business. If you spread your legs, you get the job. If not, the you don't. There's no coercion. If the woman accepts, it says a lot about her." (B.I., hvg.hu)

4. Women as sexual harassers and profiteers

The attitude against A often turns into generalizations about women. Some of these comments deny the fact of harassment by presupposing that women, in fact, enjoy such gestures, presented here as harassment.

"Most women don't really have to be egged on to have sex, and they put out pretty much everything for show, which is an invitation to dance." (B2, hvg.hu)

There are commenters who reverse the charges. The sexual harassment is, according to them, not committed by the men (or not only by them), but by the women, when they dress and act provocatively:

"How many young women are there who put on the miniskirt, put out their tits, and walk into the boss' office to get a raise? Now what do you call this? Sexual abuse or offering yourself up?" (P., 444.hu)

5. Sexual harassment charges cannot be disproved after 20 years

After the identity of the harasser was revealed, most comments rather supported than condemned the theatre director accused of harassment. According to these readers, the director is a victim because he cannot exonerate himself. One cannot prove anymore either the harassment or its lack. Hence, anyone can be ruined with this script. If any woman wants to get revenge, the she just has to accuse a man of sexual harassment. People will believe the woman, and the man will have no possibility to defend himself.

"She should be ashamed of herself. Now she remembers, after 20 years, ruining an old and respected man." (E.T., 24.hu)

6. D is an excellent professional

Many commenters praised the theatre director's past successes and his glorious career, commiserating with him for being the victim of this unprovable accusation destroying his lifetime achievements. They questioned the merit of the accusations due of the director's longstanding and well-respected professional career, even receiving important state honours. Hence, these readers could not imagine such an image being overshadowed by his reprehensible behaviour:

"It's the typical Hungarian mentality: his guilt is not proven, but he's already punished! What a foul thing to happen: to kick out a Kossuth prize

winning director from the theatre, before any court would have condemned him?! It's just a little actress who's saying (probably prompted by her dear hubby) that D showed her his cock! I deeply condemn violence, but I won't believe anything at first hearing." (K.L., 24.hu)

7. Even if it happened, it is not harassment

Some commenters were just puzzled by the case. They could not figure out what the harm was. After all, there was no violence here, just a "try" ("seduction" attempt). The actress said no, and the director accepted her answer. So, these people accuse the actress, and women in general, with excessive sensitivity. This will, according to them, eventually lead to men being afraid of trying anything, so humanity could even die out as a result.

"A man's a man, so he has to try (and indeed, women would feel desolate if he wouldn't), and the woman can say no anytime, if she so chooses!!!" (MS, 24.hu)

According to these readers, nothing special happened here. The actress, getting into a car with two strange men, in fact showed her willingness, and the theatre director interpreted her gesture as such. It's only natural that the director had an "attempt", and there is nothing wrong with any of this. Women often dress and behave provocatively, and then wonder why men make them offers.

"If he's not sympathetic to you, then it's harassment, but if he's sympathetic, then it's a flirt, or something even beyond that." (D. K., 24.hu)

Many comments completely blur the line between harassment with rape, and "refute" the accusation of harassment through denying rape:

"Who didn't ask a 20-year-old woman to kiss it [i.e. one's penis]. The story says nothing about violence, roughness or coercion. So, what's the matter?" (G. G., 444.hu)

8. The whole thing is just an apish imitation of the Western decaying capitalism

There were comments interpreting the accusations of harassment as a mere fashion phenomenon. Their authors considered that A and the other victims stepped forward with stories that happened long ago because they want to imitate the Harvey Weinstein scandal.

"This whole affair with D is part of an international campaign and has nothing to do with reality. Some people are surely making good money from this." (IM, 24.hu)

Similarly to the results of *The Guardian* comment analysis, most people blame the woman and defend the man (Gardiner, Becky et al. 2016). This research, based on the deleted comments of *The Guardian*, has established that 8 of the 10 authors most exposed to offensive comments are women and the 10 most spared are all white males. The gender inequality exposed in the case of *The Guardian* was confirmed by our own research: the majority doubted the credibility of the victimized woman and supported the male harasser.

Pro A – contra D

The support for the victim and the blaming of the harasser began to increase as more women came forward to tell (usually anonymously) their own harassment stories, and D issued an apology in the press. The statements supporting the victim and blaming the harasser can be included in the following typical categories:

1. Statements encouraging A

Some commenters praised the courage and the tenacity of the actress, emphasizing how difficult it is for a harassed person to recount her traumatic experiences. They were of the opinion that the victims of other similar events should also assume publicity, precisely in order not to leave the actress alone and for people to stop doubting the authenticity of the story.

> "Congratulations, A! You're strong and righteous. This man wanted to take advantage of your dependent status (you were a young woman, maybe an aspiring actress back then). You have now encouraged many hundred thousands of harassed women to step forward, if men in powerful positions wanted to use them or have used them." (J.S., 24.hu)

2. Condemnation of the harassment

Comments condemning the harassment started to appear as soon as the story broke. Their tone was quite varied, from the more reserved to the harsh. Most commenters were able to abstract from the specific person of the harasser and condemned harassment as such. Many of them also perceive that harassment is enabled by the authority position:

> "It's not about who's a gentleman and who isn't, and it's not about sex, but exclusively about the abuse of authority." (N.O., 444.hu)

3. Condemnation of the harasser as a person

As A named her harasser, the comments sections exploded. The number of comments has multiplied. D is a well-known and recognized person in the theatre world. Many commenters expressed their disappointment, while oth-

ers gave voice to their disapproval in coarser tones, calling D offensive and insulting names. This antipathy spilt over to two actors who protected the director. The accusatory tone increased as more victims made their appearance and D issued an evasive and unrepentant apology statement.

> "Here's someone who repeatedly abused his power in order to satisfy his desires. He doesn't sue for false accusations. He's kicked out of his job, doesn't sue for that either. If someone is innocent and doesn't defend himself, then he must be stupid. However, we cannot suppose about a well-recognized theatre director that he's stupid. So, the bottom line is that he's not innocent and perfectly aware of it, too. Then there's that lukewarm "oh, please excuse me if I offended someone' Facebook-post." (T.G., 24.hu)

Coarse insults and personal attacks were also made:

> "If he has a strong communist past and communist ties and he's liberal and Jewish as well, then he's practically untouchable." (O, 888.hu)

Several comments discussed a rather unfortunate fragment of A's confession about D's "small and flabby penis", a topic repeatedly discussed by these commenters mercilessly and with great fondness.

4. Condemnation of D's apology

The theatre director first dismissed the accusation as slander, and then, after a few days, he came forward with an apology. Many people considered this text insufficient, insensitive, and even offensive, expressing their displeasure. D offered a general apology for those whom he may have hurt with his behaviour, as he only now realized that some women may have not received well his advances.

> "This is just whitewashing the issue, not an apology. He still appears as the great creative genius, who's just been misunderstood." (A., 444.hu)

Someone has also written a pithy ironic summary of the apology:

> "Let me translate for you: Damn it, all the whores have come forward. But now, shut up." (J., 444.hu)

5. Recounting similar stories

Some commenters recounted their own stories and similar experiences, one the one hand, in order to the attest A's credibility, and on the other hand, to raise awareness of the psychological burden of such an event in other readers. We will refrain here from citing these confessions, since, although their authors have undertaken to share their stories in an online comments section, it cannot be taken for granted that they would also agree to see them in print.

Values and worldviews behind the comments

Some comments have put issue into a wider perspective. The case also offered an apropos for expressing political beliefs and world views. These could be structured around the following themes:

1. Men-women relations

There were commenters who indulged themselves in premature generalizations regarding both male and female behaviour. A kind of "battle of the sexes" ensued, which is prominent, but not decisive for the entire comments section. "That' s what women are like" and "that' s what men are like" type statements were both present. Women were condemned for their appearance and behaviour:

> "Women already commit sexual harassment with their looks and appearance." (F.A., nlcafe.hu)

Some commenters gave vent to their indignation with variations on the theme of "all men are pigs":

> "Some Hungarian men consider women in close relation to them their property. They're worse than Muslims. But this sort is also afraid of women with appropriate self-confidence." (M.E., 24.hu)

Sometimes the comment flow turned into a give-and-take:

> "Now at least everyone can see how despicable men are when it comes to women!" (J.P., hvg.hu)

Response:

> "Is it men's' fault that all women are whores?" (K., hvg.hu)

Certain readers concluded from this event that the (traditional) family is in danger, as men's and women's roles are changing, which will eventually lead to a catastrophe. The ones to be blamed for this are the women, or more precisely, the "feminazis".

> "The horse has bolted, so to speak, with the liberation of women, and the man-woman relationship has been degraded into a political struggle for power, which can ultimately even lead to the extinction of mankind." (P.I., nlcafe.hu and 24.hu)

Several commenters directly linked to, or interpreted the harassment charges as feminism, using the term not in a neutral and descriptive manner, but with negative connotations, as a swearword.

> "These Pussy Riotist, feminist cunts were the last thing we needed in this country." (J., hvg.hu)

> "The feminists want to drink men's blood in the evening." (J, hvg.hu)

In the heat of online commenting, harsh insults were sometimes uttered as well, usually directed at women:

> "Most commenters' cunts are braided with cobwebs. It makes your stomach turn. My proposal for a solution for Hungarian women: don't wash anymore, eat like pigs, walk around barefoot with cracked heels, and don't leave your house below 330 pounds." (G., pestisracok.hu)

2. Anti-liberalism

The protagonists of the case were identified as "liberals" in several comments and their behaviour was attributed to "liberalism". This "liberalism" has, of course, nothing to do with the political-philosophical category. It is a stigma functioning in current Hungarian society as another swearword primarily for those who do not support the hegemony of the conservative-religious worldview. The "libtards" who are under the spell of this ideology live in a state of moral depravity, sympathize with the migrants, and are financed by George Soros. Although D was sometimes also considered a liberal, the "accusation" was most often levelled against A and her director husband. On the one hand, the "dredging up" of events that took place 20 years back was considered to be a kind of "liberal hypersensitivity", and on the other hand, their theatre style was seen as a "liberal perversion".

> "Isn't it interesting how these same liberal ladies and gentlemen, who now hypocritically yammer, had nothing to moan about when the news reports were about the sexual assaults committed by the migrants." (I., 888.hu)

> „If the accusation will be proven false, then this gender-story will cost A's family millions, but hey, no problem, Soros will easily pay it from his breast pocket...." (N, hvg.hu)

3. Racism

Anti-Semitic comments came up at quite an early stage on some websites (888.hu, hvg.hu, pestisracok.hu). Commenters used anti-Jewish slurs against the party they happened to have a grudge against:

> "Playacting, theatrics, photography, films and such have always been Jewish genres." (M.L., 888.hu)

As the (right-wing) news portal 888.hu published a photograph of the actress on which she appeared with a Romani group, the commenters even found time for some casual hate speech against Gypsies:

> "Who the fuck are these dirty Gipsies on this picture?" (F., 888.hu)

The quality of communication

The comments on this case were not for the faint of heart. The texts were, in many instances, abysmal, regarding both their content and their form, full of obscenities and hurtful remarks, all the way down to insulting each other's mothers. The traces of moderating interventions are sometimes recognizable (in deleted comments, threats of exclusion, e.g. on the hvg.hu website). However, the dominant style on other websites (e.g. 888.hu) is so vulgar that it leaves one to wonder about the possible criteria of the website moderation policy, if there are any at all (although many comments have been removed, several vulgar and offensive texts were present).

Among the analysed online forums, the comments on 444.hu were the only (mostly) bearable ones, with obscene, offensive, and rude texts rather as exceptions, while the exception was civilized communication on other websites.

Sometimes longer texts also occur in the stream of posts, but these argued opinions involved in rational debate with each other were rare and refreshing oases. The desert of the comment section is full of short posts of a few lines, merely expressing an opinion without any arguments, only with incidental connection to the news articles under which they appear.

Here is a gem to exemplify this vulgar level:

> "Your mother was a stupid whore for not punching you in the face. If you like distorting so much, then distort your mother's cunt." (_._. 888.hu)

Nevertheless, truly witty posts, using irony and humour to state their point, can also be found, being usually aimed at the ambivalent statements of the director:

> "So now he has understood... :/ that there are women who are not happy about and consider intrusive a cock showed in their face... You live, you learn." (Sz,, nlcafe.hu)

Another wave of irony started when people found out that the theatre director was involved in similar cases in Canada as well:

> "I thought he was just a dime-a-dozen director, and now I find out that he's world famous. I also accept requests for literary translations here. I'll translate D's apologies to all world languages." (B., 444.hu)

The dynamics of the comments

We distinguished between primary comments and reactions. Primary comments were, in almost all cases, fewer than replies, making up an average of 20% of total posts, with the sole exception of the website pestisra-

cok.hu, where 65% of the reactions to the 4 published articles were primary comments. That is to say, commenters were more likely to grab the keyboard in order to reply to others than to comment upon the article itself. Primary comments were also more inclined then the replies to explain their authors' position.

The longer debates usually went on between two commenters, with other readers sometimes joining in for a couple of posts, while the general pattern of the shorter quarrels consisted in refutations or confirmations of an individual comment, coming from many sides; i.e. some comments attracted the attention of many other commenters and made them react.

On the news portal 444.hu, the escalation of the debate was sometimes prevented by the commenters themselves, who warned and disciplined each other, pointing out distortions and logical fallacies.

The majority of the primary comments (as indicated by the quantitative analysis) were pro D and contra A, with counter-opinions stated mostly in the replies. Fewer commenters have taken the initiative in order to encourage A than those willing to blame the victim.

Because several news portals use the DISQUS platform, which enables readers to comment on many platforms using the same nickname, there were also some comments repeated verbatim under several articles.

(b) The linguistic approach

The linguistic approach analyses the mode of discussion of the phenomenon. How is the victim and the perpetrator presented in the online press and by the commenters? What are the linguistic images expressing the harassment?

According to our hypothesis, since information is not always verified in the online space, and expressing one's opinions becomes almost more important than the fact itself, the knowledge ingrained in language use also changes. We attributed major importance to the reconstruction of linguistic images, leading to the exploration of underlying value systems, tangentially also pointing out phenomena such as the dichotomy of silence and expression (speaking out), conceptualized as social phenomena in an anthropological and ethnographic approach.

Conceptual framework

The linguistic expression of phenomena also reveals the value system and the worldview of a community. Language is not only a means of communication, but also a conceptualization process, which, beyond merely describing

and communicating facts about the world, organizes, systematizes, and evaluates them as well. This issue is discussed in the field of linguistic worldview research, a subbranch of linguistics dealing with the everyday experiences and the naïve knowledge of the speaking community, as it is represented within language. The linguistic worldview is always associated with a specific linguistic community, in which a mental reality is built upon objective reality, producing a kind of mental antitype of external reality (Hegedűs 2000: 132–136). The linguistic image of the world works as a conceptual background determining word formation and the production of expressions (Nyomárkay 2010: 189).

Bańczerowski Janusz's views are worth considering in the research on the Hungarian linguistic worldview, both in the field of cultural linguistics and in cognitive linguistics: "The linguistic image of the world, as a language- and culture-dependent formation, is an image based on the knowledge of the average language user about the objects, phenomena, and relationships of the world. This image is entrenched in language and only becomes accessible through language. (...) It is the understanding and interpretation of this world according to the philosophy of common sense, the totality of everyday experiences, as well as of the norms, values, valuations, and ideas produced or received and accepted by the language community, along with their classification with regard to the material and the spiritual reality." (Bańczerowski 2009: 43)

At the same time, the linguistic worldview is also the imprint of an experienced common past upon language, since it entails the set of common information within collective memory. This set of information records the past experiences and the mode of life of the language community as well, while influencing the present as a behavioural model to be followed (or rejected) (Magyari 2015).

The public discussion of sexual harassment is a recent phenomenon within Hungarian culture. Although a few works of art have touched upon this issue, e.g. the novel *Puszták népe* (The People of the Puszta) by Gyula Illyés or Simon Hollósy's painting *Tengerihántás* (Corn Husking), they never started any public debate of such proportions. However, this "debate" has become bipolar due to the exclusively positive or exclusively negative assessment of the people involved. Humans generally experience the world according to binary oppositions (Lévi-Strauss 1969) and this bipolarity determines the development of their value systems in their conceptualization processes. Ultimately, we compare everything to the positive and to the negative values. This means that we mentally create a reality based on complementary opposites. In black and white terms, our environment is good or bad, beautiful or ugly, ours or someone else's, etc. Positive values are always included in the category of *we*, i.e. what is *ours* is good, beautiful, and valuable, while that which belongs to

them is organized along the lines of negative values. This duality also appears within the MeToo phenomenon.

Research methodology

Since the examined corpus consists of online press materials, the issue of representativity was one of the key problems of our research. The software from the website Alexa.com[2] can compute the list of the most visited websites by countries. According to this database, the most widely read (clicked on) Hungarian daily news portals are: Index (6485 average daily downloads), Origo (4731 average daily downloads), and 24.hu (1581 average daily downloads). We included the top three into the corpus submitted to our linguistic analysis. Thus, 26 reports (Index – 9, Origo – 7, 24.hu – 10) and 251 comments were included in the corpus from the three portals, the comments being exclusively from the last one.

In her presentation of the methodological steps of narrative analysis, Jane Stokes (2008, 82) recommended researchers to analyse "at most five days of daily news" for a news story. Thus, we limited our analysis of the news corpus of the three web portals about sexual harassment and the associated readers' comments (allowed only on the website 24.hu) to the period 14-25 October 2017. The period under review includes 14, 15, 17, 19, 20 October in case of the Index web portal, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25 October for Origo, and 14, 16, 17, 19, 21 October for 24.hu. The texts published in this period only discussed the sexual harassment case of A and D.

In compiling the corpus, all news articles and associated comments were included into the database. We did not use predetermined hypotheses, but employed instead the corpus-centred approach (Balaskó 2005). This analytical method starts with the specific linguistic sample, and attempts to formulate generalizations trough the investigation of the linguistic corpus.

In the interpretation of linguistic data, we focused on the exploration of linguistic images and conducted narrative analysis as well, "useful for unpacking the ideological message of the text, embedded into the structure" (Stokes 2008, 82). Two separate narratives were pitted against each other within this corpus: the story of A and D's narrative.

Against the background of this corpus, it would be worth it to also discuss the texts from an ideological perspective and to submit the database to typological and genre analysis, as well as to focus more explicitly on the phenomenon of silence. However, due to our lack of space, all these aspects will only be included into the methodology of another research.

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[2] https://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/HU (January 11, 2018)

The issues of the linguistic research

(b1) The linguistic approach focuses on the mode of discussion directed at the MeToo phenomenon. (b2) How is the victim and the perpetrator presented in the online press and (b3) by the commenters? What are the linguistic images expressing the harassment?

(b4) According to our hypothesis, since information is not always verified in the online space, and expressing one's opinions becomes almost more important than the fact itself, the knowledge ingrained in language use also changes. We attributed major importance to the reconstruction of linguistic images, leading to the exploration of underlying value systems, (b5) tangentially also pointing out phenomena such as the dichotomy of silence and expression (speaking out), conceptualized as social phenomena within an anthropological and ethnographic approach.

In our linguistic approach, we interpreted the data on the basis of the above five criteria.

The interpretation of the linguistic data

(b1) We will analyse here, from a linguistic perspective, how the MeToo phenomenon is discussed and the images through which the harassment itself is expressed.

Based on the textual corpus, *sexual harassment* is talked about in such terms as *rape, casting couch, bitching, drama, affairs of men, men as fools who follow their cock, one-night stand, malarkey, slander, revenge, attention seeking, exploitation, molestation, grievance, traumatic experience, lie, spectacle, manly exchange of winks, she was the one to climb on top of the director, dark deed, attempt, seduction, genetic inheritance, private brothel, humiliation.*

In the legal sense, harassment is synonymous with intimidation, molestation, the issuing of insults, and threatening behaviour (Btk. 222), while from a psychological perspective it is a behaviour perceived as annoying, insulting, humiliating, indecent, etc. (Bartha 2017). In this case, these two approaches can be regarded as the basis of the main meaning. That is to say, harassment is an action with negative connotations, based a relationship of subordination and involving a perpetrator (aggressor) and a victim.

This negative aspect is relativized in this corpus. Very few concepts qualify the events as sexual harassment in this specific case (*rape, exploitation, molestation*). The case is more often confused with manly behaviour and with the role played by the "real man" (*men as fools who follow their cock, one-night stand, manly exchange of winks*), while also being conceptualized as

negative female behaviour (*bitching, hysteria, malarkey*). There is also a syntagma suggesting that, in this context, sexual harassment as the *casting couch* can be regarded as a standard practice in the theatrical world.

An interesting picture emerges if we also approach from a grammatical perspective, in order to investigate whether the expressions are applied to the active or to the passive subject. The identities of the perpetrator and the victim are not always clear. A appears both as a victim (*rape, exploitation, molestation*) and as an aggressor (*bitching, drama, she was the one to climb on top of the director*). This duality also applies to the assessment of D, who is also seen both as a victim (*foolish man following his cock,* [victim] of the *spectacle* or of the *attention seeking* woman) and as a perpetrator (*exploitation, molestation,* [cause] of the *traumatic event*).

Words and expressions are endowed not only with dictionary (lexical) meanings, but also with contextual, denotative, connotative, modal, syntactic, metaphoric, pragmatic, and value meanings (Máthé 2009). In the present case, the contextual meaning of *sexual harassment* gained several new aspects.

(b2–b3) The following subchapter will answer the question regarding the representation of the victim and of the perpetrator in the online news media and in the comments. It is to be noted, however, that based on the corpus, the identity of the victim is not always clear. Hence, I will use the designations of *accuser* (A) and *accused* (D) in the following.

The representation of the accuser (A) is again ambiguous: she appears both as a victim and as an accuser. According to the method of narrative analysis, we have to start from the aspectuality of self-identification. A characterizes herself thus: "I was young, a virgin, naïve, and crazy about theatre, happy to be admitted to watch a rehearsal" (24.hu).

Narrative analysis is "useful for unpacking the ideological message of the text, embedded into the structure" (Stokes 2008, 82). From this perspective, the self-characterization of the accuser vehiculates the ideology that being young is associated with naïveté, good faith, and trust, while virginity is posited as a virtue and equated with lack of experience.

The corpus associates the images presented below to the accuser. (We restricted ourselves to citing only a few examples.)

The image of the vulnerable woman:

> "the woman is a sexual object and a farm animal" (A.K., 24.hu)

> "It is also well-known that (...) men of power force young actresses and dancers, and sometimes even male actors (...), who are dependent on them, to sexual favours and to some 'kind reciprocation'." (Index)

The image of the upward-striving woman:

"everyone needs their 15 minutes of fame!!!" (K.Z., 24.hu)

The image of the hysterical woman:

"These women's complaints include cases which are more than justified, but I'm also sure there are plenty exaggerations!" (L.P.K., 24.hu)

The image of the harassing woman:

"Anyone who watches this video will see that this woman is not famous, but notorious. It's a shame that such a woman opens her mouth and complains about harassment. It may well be that she was the one to climb on top of the director." (M.P.F., 24.hu)

The image of the attention-seeking woman:

"Well, it's a way to stand out: she's been hitherto unknown, now more people recognize her..." (J.M., 24.hu)

The image of the woman as a "slandering whore":

"This anonymous nobody has held her mouth for twenty years! We didn't even know who this ugly bitch was! A good man wouldn't fuck this nasty whore with a stick! Bea Hargitai [Hungarian model and Playmate] has also admitted that the girls are glad to lie down on the casting couch! So now this rat-faced whore complains after twenty or thirty years?!" (Á.T., 24.hu)

The image of the neglected woman:

"These harassment stories have become a big fad, but many neglected women would be glad if someone would harass them." (IM, 24.hu)

The image of the blamed victim:

"Dear A, don't give up!!! It's always the victim who's blamed in our society." (A.K., 24.hu)

The image of the vengeful woman:

"Let me repeat it: I've seen abused women, and it really is a disgrace! However, this is not the case of this 'artiste'. What do I see here? An ugly, vindictive, cunning, striving wench." (Zs.É., 24.hu)

Only 1 of the 9 images of the woman in this corpus has positive content. The remaining eight characterize the victim negatively.

As for the accused (D), we identified the following images.

The image of the domineering man:

"Even back then, D has been the personal representative of God on earth." (Origo)

"He behaved as someone for whom everything's permitted and nothing's off limits." (Origo)

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The image of the evil man:

> "He's a shrewd and cunning man for harassing those most vulnerable." (Origo)

> "He has unscrupulously abused his position of power for decades." (Origo)

The image of the tyrannical man:

> "Wherever men come to occupy positions of power, many of them can't resist regarding the female world as their private brothel." (R.P., 24.hu)

The image of the dirty old man:

> "It's quite telling for the situation of women in Hungary that our deeply honoured male commenters unanimously defend this dirty old man, calling A a whore, making abusive comments, or at best, calling her a liar… :(Gentlemen, don't forget (…) that you also have a mother, or maybe even a daughter (…), and they aren't exceptions!!!" (K.L., 24.hu)

The image of the man as a liar:

> "Mr. D will deny everything and press charges, don't expect anything else from him. If he now succeeds in intimidating the first woman who dares to stand against him, then the others – as I'm sure there have also been many others – will think twice before saying anything." (K.V., 24.hu)

The image of the conquering man:

> "I haven't read the article! In my opinion, a man must have a drive for conquering women. This drive is strong in some and weaker in others, but it must be present, since our planet would otherwise go extinct. It's our genetic heritage, just as feminine charm, and you may court a woman anywhere, be it on the subway, at the marketplace, or even at your workplace." (B.M., 24.hu)

On the basis of this corpus, none of the 6 images of the man is positively charged. The image of the conqueror may perhaps be seen as neutral, but the negative view is clearly dominant.

The narrative analysis is more difficult to carry out on the basis of our data, since the self-characterization of the accused is lacking. All our information in this regard is implicit, e.g. in D's resignation letters:

> "I declare that the statements regarding my person are false. In order to protect my beloved students from any disturbance, I will suspend my teaching activity until the investigation, which I fully accept." (Index)

"I declare that the statements regarding my person are false. Today I am resigning from my position as a principal director until this case concerning my person is clarified. I am asking the institution to take note of my resignation. I also inform you that, for similar reasons, today I have requested the suspension of my teaching activity at the University of Theatre." (Index)

The implicit self-characterization of the accused communicates the ideological message that, as a falsely accused teacher and director, D will step back, so that the work of the institutions can continue, and that he voluntarily accepts the coming investigation.

The corpus reveals that readers associate unambiguously negative images both with the accuser and the accused. The imagery of the comments dominantly presents the accuser in a negative light, while the news articles and the comments jointly shed a bad light on the accused as well. In the latter case, a sense of acquittal can also be felt, along the lines of "men will be men" and of the "universal genetic disposition" of human males.

(b4) According to our hypothesis, since information is not always verified in the online space, and expressing one's opinions becomes almost more important than the fact itself, the knowledge ingrained in language use also changes. This assumption was proved right. There were 251 comments to the 26 texts from various press genres (news story, report, interview), expressing private opinions, more dominant not only in quantity, but also from the perspective of value judgments. Very few posts (10%) supported the accuser, and value-neutral comments were even fewer (4%). Based on the data, it is also quite striking that the condemning comments are rather personal (usually condemning A, and sometimes also directed against D), but when they are value-neutral or supportive, then they are not addressed to any specific person, but discuss the phenomenon itself, or are directed at men or women more generally.

As an interesting turn of events, after A identifies her harasser, the vehemence of the negative comments is reduced, and the posts become more nuanced, as the negative image of the domineering lecher becomes more dominant. As several posts sharing further harassment stories are published, the image of the upward-striving and vengeful woman also changes, with increased emphasis put on her vulnerability.

(b5) Most comments (72%) touch upon or explicitly discuss the issue of silence versus speaking up (e.g. "if you have held your mouth twenty years ago, then you should also hold your mouth now" – I.H., 24.hu). Sexual harassment is among the taboos of Hungarian culture. Moreover, this is also true for sexuality as such, and there are specific linguistic schemes for discussing this subject (cf. Magyari 2017), or more exactly, linguistic schemes deciding

whether we can speak about it at all, since the linguistic nature of harass-ment is strongly associated with *silence* and *tacitness*. The ideology according to which the unspoken does not exist is still alive within our communities. Our linguistic manifestations also prove this (as the saying goes: "Let's not wash our dirty linen in public!" – i.e. let's not talk about it, if possible, to anyone, anywhere). Our linguistic manifestations associated with harassment are linked to linguistic taboos in such a way that the prohibition applies to conversation topics and words from the domain of sexuality and aggression. The data of the corpus attest this attitude. The texts seem to indicate that the essential point of the debate is not the fact of the harassment or even the truth content of the accusation, but whether harassment can be publicly expressed and discussed.

Conclusions

(a) The analysis of the comments revealed that the dominant attitude in the comments section of the Hungarian online media is to blame the woman and to acquit the harassing man in situations of sexual harassment.

The interpretation of the data revealed that the victim blamers (contra A) are inclined to reduce the case to a man-woman relationship, while the supporters of the victim emphasize the subordination and the position of power.

The online behaviour of the commenters revealed that there are much more reply comments than primary ones. In most cases, the commenters express their emotionally charged opinions quite bluntly. Thus, squabbles are more frequent than actual debates.

(b) Our linguistic analysis of the texts dealing with sexual harassment, published in the most widely read Hungarian electronic media in 2017, was based on 5 criteria. In summary, (b1) there is widespread confusion regarding this issue, as neither the legal nor the psychological definition of harassment is clearly reflected in the online texts. This observation is based, on the one hand, on the images vehiculated about the accused and the accuser, and on the other hand, on the style, mood, and orthography of the comments.

(b2–b3) The assessments of the accuser and the accused are also extreme. Their image is unilaterally positive or negative, but not coherent, although the discursive community dominantly localizes both parties in the negative domain.

(b4–b5) The data show that in the online space, opinion-forming and ex-pression are more relevant than the news value itself. In this case, the news articles served merely as a pretence for the confrontation of the readers' opinions. The identification of the linguistic images revealed that, in the value

system of the discursive community, the negative connotations are not associated with the fact of sexual harassment, but with its public expression.

The analysis of corpus revealed that, within the duality of silence and speaking out, the Hungarian community prefers silence. Although this has its cultural historical antecedents, the fact that a kind of public discourse on sexual harassment has started in Hungary as well shows that this attitude is in the process of changing.

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RHETORIC OF DISCARDED PARADIGM. FLAT-EARTHERS AS AN INTERPRETIVE COMMUNITY

The Flat Earth movement, however much older than a notion of participatory culture, can serve as a good example of a community of this kind. It created its own rich treasury of various rhetorical strategies, tricks, tropes, and other sorts of discursive tools. Representing a discarded paradigm of flat Earth concept, during almost 200 years of its history has been engaging its ideological enemies, Globe Believers, so predominant in number, into various and vivid debates, sometimes very long and complex. Flat-earthers undoubtedly create an interpretive community in Stanley Fish's sense, or rather the whole universe of hundreds dispersed and decentralized communities. One of them is "ZIEMIA -- PŁASKA" ("EARTH -- FLAT")[1], Polish speaking Facebook group, gathering more than seven thousand members[2] and being probably the biggest group of this kind in Polish speaking Internet.

A researcher trying to approach the topic of Flat Earth risks to get into various troubles. At best the topic may seem not enough "academic" from the point of view of "the Real Science". At worst the researcher can be suspected to be a secret, "disguised as academic" adherent of the conspiracy theory he is putting forward. Therefore, these doubts should be dispelled in the first order. Flat Earth theory belongs to a broader class of conspiracy theories, whose popularity, contrarily to expectations of intellectuals, seems to grow along with progress of sciences and technology, in particular technologies of knowledge. By the latter I mean all the technical apparatus dedicated to store, process, and share knowledge, such as printing press, telegraph, computer and internet, among many others. Just as according to Jean-Jacques Rousseau advancement of sciences and arts only corrupted natural human vir-

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[1] Subsequently I will use acronym ZP.
[2] As for May of 2018.

tues, so the progress of communication media opened gates to flood of false and deceitful information — "fake news". Because of such or other reasons, growing or at least stable popularity of conspiracy theories[3] makes them an important point in a contemporary social imaginary. Specialists on the topic talk even about a culture of conspiracy (Barkun 2003; Goldberg 2001). There is no doubt that all or at least some of them contribute to the public debate and create its own peculiar form of argumentation, such as ZP group.

An analytical insight into rhetorical and discursive strategies elaborated by Flat-Earthers shouldn't be perceived as a way of supporting of this theory, since, for many reasons, this theory doesn't belong to the official, academical, state-financed world of science. Nevertheless, this paper does not intend to reject it or to formulate any criticism against it, since I possess no competences in astronomy, nor any other natural science. Thus, this paper stays indifferent from the point of view astronomy and tries only to grasp some discursive presumptions as well as typical rhetorical formulas and figures of thought administered in a discussion with ideological enemies. Flat-earthers world view deserves respect as any other, or even more, since members of the community must live in their everyday life in a real conspiracy. They can be count as a small group of fully free people, consequent rebels, fighting courageously against the whole world that move on to another paradigm. Jean-Paul Sartre complained that truth such as conceived by Descartes limited our freedom. According to Descartes, if something can be perceived "clearly and distinctly", it cannot be but true — then and only only then. If something is stated as a scientific truth, nobody is able to reject it, no person of the greatest authority. One is forced to believe in it, or risks accusation of irrationality. No revolt can help. This is what distinguishes science from philosophy, religion, art, or magic. Scientific truth in Descartes' sense is overwhelming and we cannot do anything but to accept it, even without its full understanding.

> "Since the order of truths exists outside of me, that which will define me as an autonomy is not creative invention but refusal. It is by refusing to the point of being unable to refuse any more that we are free." (Sartre, 1962: 189)

So the Flat-Earthers do refuse. They stick to the discarded image of Ptolemaic universe, with the Earth in its center (Lewis 1964). A universe being an artifact rather then a natural fact, created by a personal agent, according a theory of intelligent design. This image has been discarded along with Copernican and Newtonian scientific revolution and the shift in the whole paradigm of science (Kuhn 1996). The supporters of Flat-Earth theory constitute then a relic of historical science. They reject Copernicus and Newton and prefer

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[3] English Wikipedia enumerates dozens of them, conf. "List of conspiracy theories", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_conspiracy_theories [retrieved 01.05.2018]

to keep with traditional, Aristotelian physics and appropriate world image. Globe is rejected, as they often utter, from an aesthetic point of view. An idea of a monstrous ball hurrying through cold, empty, dark cosmic space seem bizarre and repugnant, whereas a symmetrical and static image of a Flat Earth located solidly in the center of the universe, accompanied by Sun and Moon staying close to Her, may cause gentle feelings and let us get some relax from decentralized and formless chaos the contemporary world became.

In the Cartesian world Flat-earthers are supposed to create semi-closed communities, that resemble to some extent an ideal type of participatory culture. Henry Jenkins used this term to describe fans of TV shows, series (Star Trek), movies (Star Wars), and popular literature (Harry Potter) pretending to conduct their own creative activities. Jenkins enumerates several features of participatory culture (Jenkins 2006). Participation starts when barriers of access gets low enough to make it sufficiently easy to start the cultural participatory practices. In the case of Flat-Earths Internet communities these barriers have been removed, when the medium of the Internet got broad popularity, allowing to gather necessary "critical mass" of members of a given community. The relations among members of the group play a key role, since next distinctive feature of participatory culture is a support from other members of the group to create and share products of someone's creativity. As much as some know-how of the topic is necessary, so a kind of apprenticeship and mentorship model is involved here, where old stagers give a hand to newbies. Another two points Jenkins underlines are: belief in the significance of one's own activities and feeling social connection with other members of the group. Both of these dimensions can be confirmed in the case of ZP Facebook group. Supporters of the Flat Earth theory are eager to spread their ideas, because they believe that the common knowledge of covered facts on the real form of our planet could help to make the Earth a better place to live. Also members of the group are ready to express signs of mutual appreciation, as well as consider occasionally an idea of meeting "in real life".

There are many different kinds of participatory cultures, such as artistic (fan-fiction groups), political (bottom-top political movements), educational, scientific, economic and others (Jenkins, 2006b; Schäfer 2011). Flat-earthers as a participatory culture could be characterized as an epistemological kind, at least prima facie, since the motivation standing behind belonging to the community and the main common activity of its members is to discuss opinions on the external world — its physics, astronomy, its structure, often in the context of politics, religion, and customs. They cultivate an alternative, amateur bottom-top science, following the tradition of Bedford Level Experiment carried by Samuel Rowbotham, one of the pioneers of contemporary Flat Earth movements. Their research activity is conducted "against" official, insti-

tutional science. The latter is accused of lying, of subordination and servility to world governments and political power in general. As for opposite relation, the official science almost doesn't remark existence of Flat Earth theory and its proponents. The representatives of natural science are very unwilling to enter into discussion with Flat Earth believers and those who do are often condemned by colleagues as a case of Alfred Russel Wallace demonstrates. A dispute with an "advanced" Flat-earther is not easy, since the community, with a quite substantial tradition already, elaborated developed and sophisticated rhetoric. Some its elements will be described below.

Most of the people would probably find surprising or even shocking the very existence of individuals rejecting the thesis that the Earth is not a globe, thesis such, apparently, uncontroversial, undeniable, verified and corroborated countless times. Horizon, Sun, Moon, and the stars, all seems to prove the globular from of our planet, whereas Flat-earthers in all these natural phenomena perceive detailed confirmation of their theory. Even the very word "PLANEt" seems to support the idea of flatness[4]. One can say that Flat-earth believers create an interpretive community in a sense Stanley Fish gave to this term:

> Interpretive communities are made up of those who share interpretive strategies not for reading (in the conventional sense) but for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions. In other words, these strategies exist prior to the act of reading and therefore determine the shape of what is read rather that, as is usually assumed, the other way around.(...) The assumption in each community will be that the other is not perceiving the "true text", but the truth will be that each perceives the text (or texts) its interpretive strategies demand and call into being[5].

According to Fish, radical neo-pragmatist, not only meaning, but the very text is "called into being" during the process of reading and interpretation. Different interpretations can be incomparable and even incompatible, unable to enter into discussion, such as Flat-earth theory and contemporary science. To become a member of an interpretative community, it's not enough to accept some new truths. One needs the whole training how to conduct an experiment, a reasoning, a presentation, or a discussion.

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[4] Also consequently observed orthography of a peculiar, double dash (--) in the name of the group ("ZIEMIA -- PŁASKA") seems not to be accident, maybe on short dash would be to similar to a ball?
[5] Stanley Fish, Interpreting the „Variorum" [in:] Stanley Fish, Is There A Text in This Class, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass. 1980, p. 171.

A Short History of the Flat Earth

Few words of historical introduction will prove useful to better understanding contemporary Flat-earth theories. The topic would need deeper insight into the history of astronomy, but for our purposes it will do to set three milestones in its history (even though chosen partly arbitrarily): Ptolemaic system of geocentrism, Copernican heliocentrism, and Newton's law of universal gravitation. It is worth to stress that the globular model of the Earth was present from the beginning of the Mediterranean tradition of astronomy starting with Greek philosophers. Both Plato and Aristotle believed that the Earths is a sphere. Christine Garwood in her book on Flat-Earth deals with a popular conviction that in the epoch of Christopher Columbus people believed that the Earth is flat, which is not the case (Garwood, 2007: 2-3). Earth as a flat surface is known rather form Mesopotamian and Egyptian tradition — such would be the spirit of popular Flammarion engraving.

Modern history of the flat Earth theory starts in the XIX century, more than a hundred years after the death of Izaak Newton. Along with Nicolaus Copernicus he was the biggest "schwarze Charakter" and the greatest enemy of Flat-earthers, because of his theory of universal gravitation. In the 30. of XIX century Samuel Birley Rowbotham vel "Parallax" conducted Bedford Level Experiment to prove that the Earth is flat. The experiment was subsequently repeated many times, both by his followers such as John Hampden, or his later opponents, as Alfred Russel Wallace. The results, however, were different and strongly related to the views of a person performing the experiment.

Nevertheless, Parallax's publications and lectures attracted broad interest. He declared to reform astronomy as a science and built it on completely new foundations. He described his theory in details in a work published in 1865 under a somehow long title: „Zetetic Astronomy. Earth not a Globe! An Experimental Inquiry into the True Figure of the Earth: Proving it a Plane, without Axial or Orbital Motion; and the only Material World in the Universe! By Parallax". The book was and still is selling out fairly good[6]. In a clear, coherent, and convincing manner he expounds all the main thesis of his theory, as enumerated in the title. The curse starts with a methodological introduction explaining mysterious term "zetetic".

> "The term " zetetic " is derived from the Greek verb zeteo; which means to search or examine — to proceed only by inquiry. None can doubt that by making special experiments and collecting manifest and undeniable facts, arranging them in logical order, and observing what is naturally and fairly deducible, the result will be far more consistent and satisfactory than by framing a theory or system and assuming the

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[6] The edition from 2017 is available at Amazon right now.

existence of causes for which there is no direct evidence, and which can only be admitted "for the sake of argument""
(Rowbotham 1865: 2)

Rowbotham was a skilled orator and debater, able to win in a discussion even professional astronomers, geographers, and mariners.

"Parallax makes the boldest false statements and as the number of those who can contradict him from actual experiment is small his assertions are believed by thousands" (Thomas Wilkinson Wallis, after: Garwood 2007: 134)

When his lectures and books started to lost attention, Rowbotham opened medical practice in a twelve room house in Haverstock Hill in London and was selling elixirs and pills of his production, under the name of "Dr. Samuel Birley" (Garwood 2007: 133).

His actions however hadn't been left without consequences. Inspired by Parallax, Lady Elizabeth Blunt founded Universal Zetetic Society in 1893. The Society gather people practicing literal interpretation of the Bible, thus believing in six day long creation, flat and young Earth, as well as close Sun and Moon (Garwood 2007: 156-157).

The next chapter of the history of Flat Earth theory refers to its origins. The founder, Rowbotham, in his youth early in his career was engaged in the organization of a commune, following ideas of Robert Owen. Utopian threads lie deeply in the core of flat Earth theory, as in many other conspiracy theories. John Alexander Dowie was a Scottish evangelist and healer, effective enough to gain large group of followers and worshipers. The fortune acquired thanks to healing let him built a utopian Zion City on 6500 acres of farmland in Illinois, on a western shore of Lake Michigan (Garwood 2007: 191).

"By law 'all diabolical evils of the world' were banned, and this included alcohol, pigs, tobacco, oysters, lobsters, playing cards, medicines, vaccination, drugstores, hospitals, doctors, theaters, sorcerers, dance halls, opera houses, circuses, houses of ill repute, labor unions and masonic lodges." (Garwood 2007: 193)

Starting from 1901 pilgrims from the whole world began to arrive the to the "Promised Land" of Zion City and it blossomed as a commercial and industry center. The Zion Fig Bar, inspired by Biblical fig, became best-selling snack in USA from the 1920s till the 1950s., bringing millions in incomes (Garwood 2007: 192). Dowie's successor as a head of the Zion City, Wilbur Glenn Voliva, introduced Flat Earth theory, along with creationism, to the school curriculum in city parochial schools. Talented organizer, Voliva established in 1923 a radio station, first evangelical radio station in the history, one of the most powerful in the USA at the moment, broadcasting as far as to Australia and New Zea-

land, what brought more settlers to Zion City (Garwood 2007: 212).

In 1956 Samuel Shenton created the International Flat Earth Research Society, that declined in subsequent years. Nevertheless, Internet gave a new power to Flat Earth communities. Another Shenton, Daniel, not related however to Samuel (Costa 2010), relaunches the Society on the base of internet forum hosted on a website www.theflatearthsociety.org. The Facebook group "ZIEMIA – PŁASKA" exists only informally, members of the group doesn't constitute any official body. It is a phenomenon representing full fledged bottom-up participation. Its existence fully depends on the existence of medium of Internet, and Facebook social network more particularly. The latter lowers threshold for participation (Henry Jenkins' notion) enough, so as to allow people to gather and conduct a vivid discussion. In the following part of the paper I will examine some of typical forms of argumentation being in use in the ZP group's conversations.

The Flat-earthers and their discourse

Before getting into question of argumentation strategies and discursive presumptions of ZP, one should articulate few words concerning methodology of the research undertook. There are several ways Internet, "electronic" text can be approached with a purpose of methical examination. Perspective adopted in this research is aiming into semantic analysis of the text of culture in a vain of hermeneutics — looking for senses hidden in signs, and semiotics — expanding and enriching repertoire of sings and its genres. To some extent semiotics of the electronic, Internet text is in a similar situation as theory of orality, as far as the evanescence of the material basis is concerned. Both oral statement and Internet site dissolves into nothingness, unless sustained in their existence by external carrier. A voice can be recorded with a microphone, a WWW site can be saved to a mass storage device. Nevertheless electronic text is deprived of the "reliable locatability" (Levinson 2014: 83). Hardly any URL address referred to by Lev Manovich in his "Language of New Media" from 2001 is accessible online today. The same limitation concerns Facebook group content. Online services intending to archive the content of the world Internet, such as Archive.org, are of restricted usage for password-secured sites such as FB groups.

Actually, as far as modern internet sites are concerned, loaded with Java Script functions and profiting out of technology of cookies, in most of the cases it is not even possible to give a specific URL address. This is a case of most Internet social networks and Facebook among them. Therefore, the researcher is supposed to collect and store the research material by her or himself. Also, a reader has no choice, but to suspend disbelief and trust the

researcher. Of course a reader should be able to verify the sources, but will be confronted with a challenge to find it. Also very quickly this content will most probably disappear from the Internet at all. This fact only confirms the importance of this kind of investigations. For the sake of the research to present I gathered some of the most typical points of discussion between Flat-earthers and its opponents. My research sample had been collected during about one-year long, passive participation in the group ZP, thus limited to reading and storing posts.

"We are NOT interested in debates"

What are functions of a description of a Facebook group? On the one hand it's an informative function, since the description basically provides information about the group. But on the other hand it does also perform an incentive function, encouraging new members to join. A closer look at actual self-depiction of the ZP group will help to understand how these and some other function of this kind of message works.

The self-description of ZP group is about one page long in print (about 2000 chars), written in a few paragraphs. Rather homogeneous form discloses a rigorous structure of concise and comprehensive presentation. The text is informative and functional, what is probably due to long process of edition and redaction, in response to current needs and communication problems, controversial topics, unwanted behavior and repeating questions.

The description consists of three well separable parts, even though this structure hasn't been mark in any graphic way. The parts are:
1. General presentation
2. Method, content, and a target
3. Code of behavior

Each section consists of subdivisions. General presentation of the group is made up of three parts. This triadic schema of group in its structure medieval scholastic theology treatises, uncovering what the group is, what the group is not, and what is still uncertain.

> "Our Group "Earth – Flat" is a site for flat-earthers and for those, who are sincerely interested in the topic and want to expand their knowledge on various aspects of our flat and stationary Earth, and share their insights, observations and questions"[7]

One should remark moral requirements for participants, such as sincerity of interest in the last quotation, or honesty expected from beginners (in one of the following paragraphs). Another important point mentioned in the

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[7] Description, „ZIEMIA – PŁASKA", https://www.facebook.com/groups/310827685793049/ [retrieved 01.05.2018], later referred to as D.

opening of the presentation, in the first sentence, is its educational function. It is designed for those who want to expand their knowledge, but not trough critique and discussion. Too eager questioning is not welcomed here. There are some axioms not to get examined by critique and unquestionable. Lack of admitting the general assumption that "the Earth is flat" entails almost automatic removing from the group. One of the questions a new member is supposed to answer is "Which proof of the flatness of the Earth does convince you most?". It does not even ask you about the form of the Earth — this is presumed as true already. Immediate and unconditioned confession of the "credo" is a necessary condition of participation in PZ group.

> "We are at a stage where we are NOT interested in debates like flat earth and earth sphere. Flat Earth is not a hypothesis, let alone a system of beliefs, it is a verifiable and confirmable fact that people from around the world have known for thousands of years, but indoctrination and censorship of the last 500 years have caused that this once obvious knowledge is today marginalized, manipulated and ridiculed. The materials collected and experiments undertaken unequivocally confirm that the earth is stationary." (D)

Yet the religious motivation of the Flat-earth outlook had been explicitly rejected. The foundation of the believe is empirical experience. Actually, Scottish philosophy of common sense has a lot to do with Flat-earth movement of XIX century. Garwood writes about "the Victorial ideal of self-help in gaining the knowledge of the world (Garwood 2007: 42). Partisans of the Flat-earth theory reject scholar, academic, second-hand erudition and prefer private, direct access to the truth. From this perspective Flat-earthers can be compared to mystics who dismiss the mediation of an institutional church in the contact with God and aim at immediate and private connection with Sacrum. Flat-earthers refuse to take part in the scientific division of labor[8]. This concept would entail letting experts to state all the facts from the realm of their competence. But in this case we are deprived full epistemological autonomy. "Start to think independently" (D) — is one of mottoes of PZ. They conduct amateur "experiments" by themselves, using mobile phone cameras, cheap telescopes or home-made meteorological balloons. As Thomas the Apostle they don't believe, until they see with their own eyes. We cannot see curvature of the horizon or convexity of water, therefore the Earth is flat. Nobody ever saw the South Pole, therefore it doesn't exist. Those who claim they saw, lie or are manipulated.

The third point of the introductory part of the self-description honestly discloses some gaps in the certain knowledge elaborated until now by the

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[8] Notion coined following Hilary Putnam's hypothesis of the division of lingustic labour (conf. Putnam 1979).

Flat-earth movement. One of the knowledge is information on astronomical objects, such as the Sun, Moon, star and other. They are observable, but nobody has even been there and examined them. Thus, nothing sure can be said about them. Spectral analysis and its conclusions are just some speculative hypothesis, no better or worse than Vedas, say Flat-earthers. Rigor of direct, sense experience dominates methodology of acquiring knowledge about the external world, very much as in pragmatism of John Dewey. Flat-earthers are radical, strict, direct empiricists. They are also skeptics, even though selective. They don't pretend to know all, on the contrary, they are willing to admit the limits of their knowledge. They even seem to be proud of admitting such limits and very eager to confess it.

The method, content, and the target are detailed in the next part of the description.

> "Anyone who uses scientific methods is worthy to be heard and to b**e** respected" (D)

As prominent hallmark of the ZP group is "scientific method". They call themselves "group of researchers"[9]. Does it mean the group declares hereby its support for science, earlier presented as deceitful and corrupted? Let us read this sentence again. "is worthy [another moral qualification, Polish "godny"] to be heard and to be respected" — it doesn't imply that the right will be granted to her or him automatically. On the one hand this rule defends the group against accusations of anti-scientism, on the other provides for admins of the group a very powerful tool of depriving any user a right "to be heard and to b**e** respected". Leaders of PZ group are in a strong need of effective strategies and tricks allowing them win a discussion, or at worse finish it in a critical moment. One may suppose they are not willing to use to often the final solution of banning a member of the group. Yet, bans happen on daily basis. One of the administrators of the group created even a special, funny picture to mark an act of banning an insubordinate member.

The "scientific method" the ZP group is dedicated to is based on prepositivist understanding of science. The fact Flat-earthers believe are "proved" on a base of collection of confirmations, whereas a hypothesis aspiring to the name of science should be not only confirmable, but also falsifiable, as Karl Raymond Popper claimed. It means that it should be possible to project and conduct an experiment whose result would prove falsity of the thesis. If such an experiment cannot be undertaken, the hypothesis stays out of the demarcation line between science and pseudo-science. In the case of Flat-earthers there are several possible experiments of this kind (eg. photos form the space), but any time one is given under public consideration, at once ar-

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[9] Description, op. cit.

guments ad hoc are formulated (the photos are fake), making it impossible to prove false Flat-earth theory in a rational way.

Welcome to YoutubeVersity! An Introduction to the Rhetoric of Flat Earth

Let's take a closer look into particular arguments and points of the flat Earth theory. I choose only few topic from huge archive. The ones to be presented below can be divided into two categories: perceptive and geographical. One must note that there are also many other, among them astronomical, astronautical, religious.

Flat Horizon, Convex Water, and a Carousel

Arguments based on direct perception seem the most typical for adherents of the theory of flat Earth. As radical empiricists they pretend to trust only testimony of their own senses. A common argument from senses is flat horizon, presented on countless photos, drawings, and internet memes. "You will learn more from a Flat Earth meme, than you ever will in school" one of the latter proclaims, showing a picture of a sea with a rectangular lattice drawn on it, illustrating ostentatious the flatness of the horizon line. The knowledge on Flat Earth seems to posses a property of a sudden illumination — one meme is supposed to "repair damages" caused by years of school education. A common place of ZP group discussions is school "globular propaganda", starting already in kindergarten, where children are exposed on pictures of the globe of the Earth and cosmic space. What we think conditions our perceptions[10]. If we are convinced that the Earth is a globe, we don't see that the line of the horizon is straight, as the level of the water is always plane (what is another one axiom of the Flat Earth theory). The Sun, or a ship don't hide below the horizon — they just are becoming smaller and disappear. Numerous videos of Sunsets and ship disappearing on the horizon shoot by phones of members of the ZP group, as well as found on youbute document this phenomenon. Participatory knowledge practice of the Flat Earth community is founded on empirical evidences obtained by themselves. They rely only on their own epistemic activity. They are trying to "privatize" astronomy and conduct astronomical research in their own way, tailored to their own needs, appropriate to their own sensitivity.

Another typical justification of stationary, Flat Earth theory is lack of visible movement of the ground beneath our feet.

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[10] Another Flat-Earth meme comments a pair of a photos of flat horizon and a convex one with statements, appropriately, "What you see" and "What you believe".

> "If the Earth and its atmosphere were constantly spinning Eastwards over 1000 mph, this should somewhere somehow be seen, heard, felt or measured by someone, yet no one in history has ever experienced this alleged Eastward motion; meanwhile, however, we can hear, feel and experimentally measure even the slightest Westward breeze." (Dubay 2015)

The quote from Eric Dubay, one of the guru of contemporary Flat Earth movement, an author of "200 Proofs Earth is Not a Spinning Ball", exemplifies typical way of thinking on physics and astronomy. The only fact possible to accept should be perceptible by my own senses. Otherwise, one should suspend judgment, as it is in the case of astronomical objects, or the borders of the Earth in Antarctica. Nobody was here, thus nothing is sure about that. We can feel the air movement when riding a carousel with a speed of 30 km/h, or a train with a speed of 100 km/h, but notice nothing, when the Earth is spinning with a velocity more that 1600 km/h? Simple, direct testimony of senses prevails over complicated reflection, involving more factors.

Another popular argument from direct perception and one of the foundations of Flat Earth physics is a conviction about impossibility of convex water surface. A statement of one of the group leaders and admins documents not only this thesis, but also general understanding of a "scientific method" mentioned in the description of the group.

> "scientific methods are OBSERVABLE, MEASURABLE, VERIFIABLE and REPEATABLE. Theories that are not confirmed by observations, measurements and tests are pseudo-science. If someone claims that the water curves and sticks to the sphere, a truly scientific way to present it would be in a practical demonstration. If you are not able to demonstrate it then it is a pseudo science and empty theory not supported by practice."[11]

Everyday experience tells us that that water surface is plane. Also, when one tilts a glass of water, the water spills out. The globular theory seems to deny both of these "common sense truths". One of popular memes concerning this question, circulating in various versions, is the globe of Earth with the water of oceans flowing "down" to the cosmic space. Nobody ever saw a ball with water sticking around it, utter members of the ZP, therefore it is impossible. Flat-earth science doesn't allow any speculations. If something is to be true, it must be a truth standing in front of our eyes. No any theoretical model, impossible to present in a simple, home made experiment is allowed.

Such a sheer speculative construction would be the force of gravity, unanimously rejected by all the Flat-earthers. Izaak Newton is one of the greatest enemies of the movement.

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[11] „ZIEMIA – PŁASKA", https://www.facebook.com/groups/310827685793049/ [retrieved 01.05.2018]

"Gravity is just magic and it's black... hahaha... we already know one real force of attraction and it is a magnetic force. Magnetic force attracts lighter objects stronger than heavier objects, and fictitious gravity is exactly contrarily. (...)

On our earth there is a law of support, that is, everything must be supported by something and if it loses support or suspension, it will fall towards medium of greater density" (PZ)

The only "invisible" force allowed is the one that can be "visibly" proved with few pieces of magnet and iron. Gravity is far complicated and abstract theory that the theory based on density substances: a stone is thicker than water, therefore it sinks, a plastic is thinner than water, therefore it floats. Another way to undermine the gravity force, grounded on sensual evidence, is to show that there are things that "deny" gravity, such as birds, or (modern version) planes. How it is possible that gravity holds the whole ocean, whereas a little bird is able to defeat it easily? For the Flat Earth community each jump is an evidence against Newton's universal law of gravitation. On the Youtube one can find many videos with sinking and floating objects, as well as with jumping, laughing people, contributing in popularization of the Flat Earth theory. YoutubeVersity is already equipped with YoutuboRatory.

Another one argument that would belong here has a different structure then above mentioned. When someone from opponents of the Flat Earth theory uses a notion of a straight line (for instance, a straight line is the shortest way between two points), an instant reply would be that there are no straight lines on a globe. If the plane flies along strictly straight line they would quickly leave the atmosphere of the Earth and escape into cosmic space. In this case a globe believer is caught into her own trap. She is denying implication of her own theory of Globular Earth and relying mostly on the testimony of her own eyes, exactly as Flat-Earthers themselves. We are all Flat-Earthers! This strategy finds its extreme expression in the title of a post of one Flat-Earth blogger: "Flat Earth — it is possible to deny it?"[12]

From Johannesburg to Sao Paolo trough London

Another argumentation line concerns the questions of geography. As for this aspect arguments have often form of refutation of typical "common sense" evidences proving that the Earth is round. One of the first things from our education in geography and history in primary school are travels of Chris-

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[12] „Płaska Ziemia" – czy da się temu zaprzeczyć?, 1.06.016, [in:] Obserwator Czasów Końca Obserwacje, wieści i informacje ze świata w świetle proroctw Biblijnych w czasach końca na drodze do Zbawienia, https://obserwatorczasowkonca.wordpress.com/2016/06/01/plaska-ziemia-czy-da-sie-temu-zaprzeczyc/

topher Columbus and of Ferdinand Magellan. The latter is of a special interest for Flat Earth communities, since it is often said that Magellan proved that the Earth was round or that he was the first to travel around the glob, even though neither is a case. As I already mentioned, it was a common knowledge among educated people in Middle Ages that Earth is a globe. Also, Magellan died in the battle of Mactan in the Philippines. Yet, Flat-earthers utter, the expedition of Magellan supposed to circumnavigated the Earth globe could equally good circumnavigate the whole Flat Earth land. It is usually visualized by Flat Earth maps that are based on the azimuthal projection, such as the one on the flag and the emblem of United Nations. The map intended to undermine euro-centrism of Mercator projection is able to support geocentrism.

The azimuthal projection exclude the whole continent of Antarctica. Apart from Magellan travel this question is of big interest for PZ. If the Earth is flat and looks like on the azimuthal projection, logic goes that Antarctica is not an island, but a wall around the whole Flat Earth, locking it in her icy embrace. From the point of view of pragmatism Antarctic can be a monstrous wall of ice, as good as an island covered with monstrous cover of ice. In neither form it affects in any meaningful way practices of our everyday life. Not more than a controversy between *homoousios* and *homoiousios* in the First Council of Nicaea, or the reality of trans-substantiation during the holy mess. What is behind the wall? Nobody has ever been there, hence we have no certain knowledge. Parallax and the pioneers of the Flat Earth gave examples of travelers who got lost trying to cross South Pole. Contemporary version is related to politics and US domination, that lets them to guard the whole line of the great Antarctic wall with Pentagon forces, shooting anyone trying to access.

The two above described arguments have already its tradition in the history of Flat Earth. Another one visibly originated later, inasmuch as it refers to aviation. There are several amateur and professional pilots belonging to Flat Earth community, some of them active members. Of course, their voice is of a special importance on account of their extended — in comparison to a "normal person" — sense capabilities, such as view from above without any mediation such as photography. Apart from that, several discussions are devoted to possibility to take a flight that could be a "final proof" of flatness of the Earth, connecting points that are close on globular model of the Earth and distanced on the flat model. One of the members of the PZ gives an example a flight from South Africa to Brazil, which pass through London,

> "where the globe evidently appears nonsense — where one could fly only over the ocean and fly twice as long as below, all of Africa — from Johannesburg to Sao Paolo." (PZ)

It doesn't actually matter if the example given is a real flight. Even if an eager participant of a discussion finds a flight apparently denying proposed

thesis, it is always possible to use some ad hoc arguments, such as that this flight exists only in theory, for in practice is always canceled.

Conclusions

In this paper I was able to show only few points of the rich and developed Flat Earth theory, nowadays incarnated and flourishing on electronic medium of the Internet. The rhetoric of Flat Earth seems to constitute a complete and closed system of believes supported by the long list of arguments, confirming Flat Earth and undermining Copernican-Newtonian physics and astronomy. The Flat Earth paradigms remains nowadays an isolated island with an independent interpretive community, rejecting contemporary science and eager to use contemporary technology. They are not fully isolated, though. They remain in contact and partly overlap with such communities as anti-vaccines movement, creationists, and others belonging to the broader group of conspiracy theories and pseudo-science (Pigliucci, Boudry 2013). Still, they maintain their identity, rigorously selecting what to believe, what to not, grounding their believes on a network of arguments, defended bravely against ideological enemies. Representatives of Flat Earth community are very keen disputants, operating numerous arguments and rhetorical tricks, in a critical moment not hesitating to use the final one — banning someone from the group, what is everyday practice. Yet, the PZ group is constantly of growing number of members.

Flat Earth community, especially the one founded on a carrier of internet social network, can be a good example of "filter bubble", a specific feature of "new Internet" (Web 2.0):

> "The new generation of Internet filters looks at the things you seem to like — the actual things you've done, or the things people like you like — and tries to extrapolate. They are prediction engines, constantly creating and refining a theory of who you are and what you'll do and want next. Together, these engines create a unique universe of information for each of us — what I've come to call a filter bubble — which fundamentally alters the way we encounter ideas and information" (Pariser 2011: 10)

Old, good, Leon Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory works well in a new, internet environment. When passing time only in the local (virtual) environment of her own community of friends and co-workers, one is already busy with learning new things from the local, close area, and has no time, nor will, to break up "comfort zone" of local knowledge and try to stick out of her everyday horizon of expectations. Actually, it doesn't matter, if this is flat or convex horizon.

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"Płaska Ziemia" – czy da się temu zaprzeczyć? *Obserwator Czasów Końca* Obserwacje, wieści i informacje ze świata w świetle proroctw Biblijnych w czasach końca na drodze do Zbawienia, https://obserwatorczasowkonca.wordpress.com/2016/06/01/plaska-ziemia-czy-da-sie-temu-zaprzeczyc/

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CITIZENSHIP AND LIFESTYLE

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MACHINES CAN FEEL: REPRESENTATIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCI-FI FILMS[1]

Digital technologies have triggered several complex topics in terms of man-machine interaction in the arts. Not only does the art world employ computers at an increasing rate, but also reflects on this interaction. Representations of synergy between man and artificial intelligence life-forms are becoming more and more nuanced. Artificial intelligence is not portrayed as either an absolute good or an absolute evil phenomenon, but as a real possibility – an alternative to human life-form. Questions such as the meaning of life, the role of emotions, AIs' ability to feel/experience emotions, man's responsibility towards the robot it creates and what is human are explored. These films usually reflect back to the Turing-test, seen as the measure of human nature in terms of robots. Due to the implications of the application of Turing's 1950 game "Can Machines Think?" in these films, the interaction between man and A.I. is not confined to the level of reason but extended to that of emotions. This way, A.I. life-forms become the characters' romantic partners, stand in for their lost human family or become their friends. In the present paper, we propose to explore these representations of interactions between man and A.I. life-forms in twenty-first century sci-fi films.

Introduction

In October 2017 a robot able to speak was given citizenship in Saudi Arabia. Created by the Hong Kong-based company Hanson Robotics, Sophia was first introduced in 2015 and although she is the first humanesque hybrid to receive citizenship, she is not one of the kind. Her company has produced seven other similar robots, but other attempts to emulate human behavior

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[1] Parts of this study have been published in Borbély 2017.

are also known, like the chatbots, computer programs designed to able to have conversations. Sophia being given citizenship raises a range of questions – some of them of legal nature which is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss. It also brings forward questions that focus on human identity. What it means to be human, who and what is man, what are the prerequisites needed for an entity to be called human being. As far as Sophia in particular is concerned, despite her technically advanced nature, her intelligence is limited while her responses are scripted – and although we must allow for the possibility of human-like robots being created in the future, for the time being that is not possible (Hart 2018). Their presence in our life is yet limited to representations in art, science fiction films in particular. These reflect on various questions pertaining to interaction between man and artificial intelligence: consciousness and AI's ability to feel or experience emotions, man's responsibility towards their own creation, identity and what it means to be human, or who/what is human.

Our aim in this paper is to explore these representations of interactions in twenty-first century sf films, especially considering that lately representations of AI have become nuanced due to developments in the technological and digital fields. "The Internet, biotechnology, "artificial" intelligence and robotic/prosthetic technologies, and media simulation (and dissimulation) tied to information, commerce, politics, and entertainment made the nature of human "identity" and "reality" highly ambiguous and spatially and temporally diffuse" (Sobchack 2005: 272). The Frankenstein-complex[2] does not dominate sci-fi cinematic text irrevocably suggesting that AI is ultimately dangerous, monster-like, but other avenues are also explored. Humanesque entities on screen show the same particularities as human characters, answer to provocation, are able to be kind, stand up for themselves, they are good to those who mean no harm to them, but fight those that are bad. Most films display humanoids but other possibilities are being considered as well, such as transferring human consciousness to computer-based entity in order to keep one alive or computer operating systems functioning as humans. The more possibilities are explored the more realistic representation of artificial intelligence on the screen becomes. Replicas of humans (*Blade Runner 2049*) may be far removed from reality and one can easily imagine them to have human characteristics such as conscience, the ability to reason and to experience emotions. A computer operating system doing the same – display signs of conscience, ability to reason and experience emotions, - however, is all the more realistic given the latest developments in information technology especially (e.g. speech recognition programs).

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[2] "the careless assumption that any new technology was bound to run amok and threaten the destruction of its creators" (Stableford 2006: 193).

1. The Others - Humanesque Robots

In some respect these films are seen as a "safe space in which to explore the controversial issues surrounding multiracial identity" (Nishime 2005: 36). Portrayal of interaction between humans and humanoid robots are peppered by the various conflicts such interactions may trigger. With the multiracial aspect being only a collateral outcome, these films tackle the question of identity as humans. In most of them humans are portrayed as somewhat inferior to their creations – humanity is either too exhausted (*Blade Runner 2049*), too arrogant, hence gullible (*Ex Machina*) or simply transient in this world (*A.I. – Artificial Intelligence*). Thus, AI can easily prove its superiority through their actions and attitude: they are portrayed as more humane, have more gumption and can tap into feelings far more easily than their human fellows.

One of the interesting cinematic projects in this regard is *Blade Runner 2049* (Dennis Villeneuve 2017). The sequel was preceded by *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott 1982) and presents events that take place forty years after to the ones presented in the Scott original released roughly forty years prior to *BR2049*. Thematically the sequel follows in the footsteps of its precursor and similarly to the original "genetically manufactured 'replicants' are 'more human than human,' valuing existence more than do their exhausted human counterparts" (Sobchack 2005: 272). The new replicants are slaves created to work in an off-world environment where synthetic farming takes place. The basic storyline also shows great similarities: so-called blade runners working for the police hunt down and eliminate rebellious replicant - only in the sequel it is the remaining old replicants that are hunted, because new ones are created displaying less independence, hence a less rebellious nature. In terms of similarities, the governing idea of the sequel, just like in the 1982 film, is what is to be human, the question forms a frame being tackled at the very beginning - in this post-apocalyptic world humanness is defined by the ability to see miracles (Villeneuve 2017: 09.56) – and at the end: "Dying for the right cause is the most human" (2.06.00).

Definitions of human nature have a lot to do with the soul and emotions. There is more emotion in the interactions between machines than in interactions in which humans also appear. Officer K/Joe, himself a replicant, goes home to a hologram girlfriend and the greatest gift he gives her is a gadget through which she can also operate outside the line of the projector that makes her visible. What is more, the girlfriend is conscious of the change and, when need be, can ask to be eliminated in order to save Joe. In opposition with this attitude stands that of Joe's superior, Lieutenant Joshi. In one of their interactions Joe defines 'human' in very simple terms: "To be born is to have a soul, I guess" (27.57). The lieutenant's answer reflects on the one hand

the exhaustion humans feel, on the other hand, a cold, machine-like attitude: "You've been getting on fine without one" (28.12).

The third major prerequisite of human nature, memories, are built-in realities always to be doubted in case of a replicant: "How do I know the memory's an implant or not?" (1.15.45). Memory and the ability to remember define one as human: "if you have authentic memories, you have real human responses" (1.19.18). In addition to this, the ability to remember is also a building block of human nature since humans are said to recall with their feelings. *Blade Runner 2049* hence, emphasizes the idea of replicants' superiority to humans, in terms of displaying emotions and behaving in a humane manner.

A.I. Artificial Intelligence (Steven Spielberg, 2001) tackles a more complex set of questions that include A.I.s' ability to experience emotions, Man's responsibility towards the robot it creates, the meaning of life, the role of emotions, and what is human. The film presents a post-apocalyptic world in which due to climate changes most of Earth submerges under water. Due to lack of food and starvation, robots are created because they do not demand food while breeding is absolutely prohibited. Instead of technology and the spectacle of the various A.I. robots emotions dominate the narrative. They appear in the motivation of the scientist who creates a child A.I. robot capable of love. Having lost his own child, the scientist creates a smart robot that is capable of love, an ability seen as the hinge point of having a subconscious. This opens a range of questions such as what it means to be human, or who is more humane: the Mecha (a humanoid capable of displaying emotions) who selflessly helps the young A.I. boy find what he is looking for, or the boy's human mother who abandons him in the forest because she cannot handle his half-human-half-robot nature. This aspect reflects upon a key and somewhat thorny issue, that of the responsibility the creator (and the owner) of a humanoid have.

The film explores the interaction between human and humanoid and the avenues their interaction can take in the face of their condition. However, the narrative seems to suggest that this interaction is doomed to failure. An everlasting communion between the two is not possible since the mother, being human, dies, and David, being a humanoid, cannot tap into real emotions. David displays a slavish attachment to his mother, which scares her at times; also he cannot handle his human brother who, being jealous, always causes him trouble; most importantly however, he is kept in a cocoon mostly due to his mother's inability to look beyond the fact that he is a robot. Following a row between the human and the robot son, the mother - though full of remorse - abandons her humanoid son. She does not return him to the laboratory where she had got him from, but leaves him in the forest apologizing that she had not

told him about the world. In contrast with the "civilized" world of David's parents stands Flesh Fair, the circus-like establishment intended to destroy artificiality by means of destroying cast-out, ugly, non-functional Mechas. However, the beast-like nature of this world full of squalor is broken when the Mecha to be destroyed is a boy in appearance and thus he, David, escapes. In the Fair David befriends Joe Gigolo, a Mecha created to satisfy romantic longing. Under Joe's guidance David explores emotions even if he does that on a rational level: he wants to find out where the Blue Fairy (from Pinocchio's story) is so that she can turn him into a real boy and thus gain his mother's love. At a Q&A robot establishment David and Joe learn where the Blue Fairy is located – she is a submerged icon of a Fun Fair. He finds her and while asking her to change him, he freezes for two thousand years. His being awakened after this period suggests that the focus is not on the abilities humanoids have – David cannot understand metaphor, since he does not grasp the notion of a fairy and believes she does exist. The focus is David's unrelenting desire to experience the love of his mother. His belief is so strong that he endures 2000 years and is eventually found by tall, slender creatures who tell him that he is the enduring memory of the human race which has died out by that time.

More than a decade later, *Ex Machina* (Alex Garland, 2015) explores the question of humans' responsibility towards their own creation employing a more common undercurrent: the possibility of romantic attachment between human and humanoid. Technological advancement is present through the highly digitalized setting the action takes place, an ultra-computerized bunker in the middle of a remote, Eden-like lush environment. In a digitalized, but otherwise undefined urban world, the young programmer, Caleb wins a trip to a well-known programmer genius's property to test an A.I. robot. Seemingly, emotions are not involved, since the issue is not the love between mother and child, but to examine a young female creation, Ava, based on the Turing test. Man playing God backfires, since Ava manages to outwit both her arrogant creator, Nathan, and the well-intended but uncaring tester, Caleb. The central question, which Ava poses to Caleb during the test, is what happens if an A.I. fails the Turing test – and most importantly, who is qualified to decide when the A.I. has passed the test or not. Ava's question indicates such a high level of consciousness that the difference between human and robot becomes indistinguishable. So much so that in the closed bunker in which only the three of them live: Nathan - the man playing God, - his creation, Ava, and Caleb - who is at Nathan's will, - the latter starts doubting himself as a human so he tests his organic nature cutting his veins to make sure blood is running through him and not wires. If David, in *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, willingly subdues to humans and later, the evolved creatures, in *Ex Machina* Ava revolts against her creators for their inhuman treatment. She uses the sexual

dimension of her consciousness to make Caleb like her and eventually lure him to help her escape.

Various avenues of the interaction between humans and machines are investigated in *The Machine* (Caradog James 2013). Two different aspects are presented: man creates a machine and in parallel resurrects another human by transferring the latter's brain to computer. The film tackles questions such as who is human, and most importantly, what does it mean to be alive. It plays on the Frankenstein-complex, and allows machines to conspire against their creators. The conspirators are the former soldiers who fought in the war against China and suffered serious injuries, hence in need of brain implants to function again. They are kept in the secretly held *Area 6* and are intended to be used again as military. Their frightening nature is enhanced by their ability to communicate in a language and voice that resembles machine-talk.

In the film much is made of the Turing-test which proposes that any machine may be considered intelligent only if it can carry a conversation with a human being without the latter noticing that the interlocutor is a machine, however "the rapid success of computer programmes specialising in conversational mimicry suggested that the Turing test was far too easy" (Stableford 2006: 34). In spite of this, just like in *Ex* Machina, the ultimate test for A.I.s remains the Turing-test, which in this film Machine (the name the programme and later the female character receive) does not pass. However, her answer to the question "Mary saw a puppy in the window. She wanted it. What did Mary want?" (James 2013: 09.21), wins the admiration of the main scientist, Vincent McCarthy. When Ava, Machine's creator, is killed for knowing about Area 6, Vincent saves her into the Machine she had created. The A.I. programme was developed by Ava using everyday conversations – similarly to a mother-daughter relationship, in which the child learns a lot about the world by means of conversation with its mother – therefore, Machine is shown to be able to perceive how others feel, to connect to others, have emotions, feel connections, in other words, to relate to humans. Her ability to be human in this scene is portrayed in the dance scene, when Machine is shown to do a ballet in a hangar and then hug Vincent at the end.

One of the big questions posed in the film has to do with the definition of *human*. "What are you really? How do I know that you are alive and not just a clever imitation of life?" (James 2013: 50.24-29). The film reflects upon the fear that due to the development of technology we are unable to distinguish between reality and virtual. In other words, "[…] everyday understandings about "the human" as a stable and unchanging category" are "philosophically 'de-naturalized'" (Hollinger 2005: 237). *The Machine* starts from the presumption that being human means to be alive, it eventually poses the big question. Machine-Ava argues at a certain point "[b]ut how do you know that? You

can't see their thoughts. Apart from their flesh, what makes them any different from me?" (James 2013: 50.50-56). 'Human' covers a wide range of beings - from the injured individuals awaiting brain implants in order to function on a day-to-day level, and the little girl trapped in her body by her brain seizures without any hope of recovery to function as a human to a man-made machine operated by a nano-computer who/which is able to teach itself in addition to being able to relate to humans on an emotional level. In the end, Vincent acknowledges that the machine-human combination of beings must be accepted as the new reality: "You're the future. She'll need you more than me in her new life" (James 2013: 1.19.36)

2. Palatable form of AI – the smart operating system

Power games between robots and humans in which either tries to outwit the other one is not the only representation of artificial intelligence in action. Set in a highly developed, undefined future *Her* (Spike Jonze, 2013) presents a world in which due to developed digital technology, people have become enmeshed in their own individual world playing computer games on their holograms at home alone and hardly interacting with each other. Although the possibility of human interaction does exist - the main character, Theo, does have human friends, - he chooses an artificially intelligent operating system as his constant companion that is programmed to listen to him, to understand and to know him. Samantha, as the OS calls herself interacts with Theo through his computer and smartphone, thus gradually growing into something much more than a computer operating system. They go on double dates with real people, and Samantha becomes not only his partner, but also a haven that allows him not to deal with the realities of his life. Samantha becomes so highly developed and articulate as far as emotions are concerned, that she is even able to discern whether she needs time to think about emotional issues or not Thus, the limit between human beings and artificially intelligent entities becomes blurred. Theo's wake-up call that she IS only a non-human entity is when he realizes that Samantha talks to and is in love with others as well. At this stage, she works as a therapeutic element: once she leaves Theo's computer – being recalled by manufacturers – he manages to deal with the real world: apologize to his ex-wife and become romantically involved with a real person. The difference between Samantha's consciousness and that of a human may be very little. Although she may learn to have emotions and respond properly to those of others, her not having been made tangible in the form of a robot suggests that artificial intelligence in *Her* is part of neither a utopian nor a dystopian world but the natural development of a highly digitalized society.

Conclusions

These depictions of A.I. presence in the human world happen in terms of emotions and despite its presence, the Frankenstein-complex does not play a central role. The ideas these films revolve around are the questions of responsibility and the intricacies of creating entities similar to us who will eventually outgrow us, like David in *A.I. – Artificial Intelligence* or Ava in *Ex Machina*. In addition to these, the constant question refers to the attributes of humanness. From axiomatic statements, like seeing a miracle or dying for the right cause, to the ability to help others, experience emotions due to highly developed computer programmes, A.I.s can feel, generate and be just like humans. *Her* represents a somewhat different approach – in terms of latest developments, what the film proposes does not even seem far-fetched. It does not revolve around questions of identity, who are what is human, but it presents a life-like scenario. The unbiased end, the OS finally retreating due to manufacturer's request, and Theo having the chance to form a relationship with real human beings represents a most realistic portrayal of A.I. in film, neither demonizing nor celebrating A.I. – it merely reflects upon the realities we eventually will need to deal with in the not-so-distant future.

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LIVING IN A SMART HOME: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

"The home, it is contended, should be considered as more than just a physical entity"
(Dewsbury – Edge, 2001).

The "home" and the "home life" are constantly changing and redefined, since the needs of people are changing as well through time to time and through ones lifetime (Cheverst et al. 2003). Almost everyone in the nowadays society has developed a close dependency on technologies to function in everyday life (Lupton – Seymour, 2000): by using wifi, shopping on-line, searching for weather forecast before leaving the house in the morning, sending e-mails… In the last few decades a lot of engineering "products" have invaded our homes: machines, kitchen robots, sensors ectetera. Studies suggest that the people might start to depend on the incorporated technology (Lupton – Seymour, 2000), however it should not remove choice and control from the "user" (Fisk, 2001).

We propose a case study about a „smart home" and its impact on the family. Through a qualitative approach we aim to get a closer look what is possible to be created and what kind a lifestyle can be assured along this. We will analyse a very good example of what can create an IT engineer for his own family in a Romanian small town, in a rural area, with a very low cost but assuring a very high quality. And what kind of changes can this incorporated technology bring in a family's life and its members' life? What is the price of this kind of home? What are the benefits of it? Who can have such home?

Keywords: *digital lifestyle, home engineering, Smart Home, Internet of Things*

1. Introduction

According to an important part of the literature and researches, the digital lifestyle very often is defined as the combination of the internet usage, the online shopping habits, the social media presence, the blogging/vlogging activity. But the digital lifestyle is a much bigger aggregation, since internet can have a lot of other impacts on one's lifestyle. Beyond the online shopping habit and social media profile, even if somebody is not vlogging, his life can be a digital one if for example his life is wired by IoT objects, by the Internet of Things. Internet of Things (IoT) is a concept and a paradigm in the same time, "a new revolution of the Internet". Means the wireless or wired network of physical devices which can communicate without human intervention (Hassan 2018). This IoT are embedded with electronics, softwares, sensors and can aggregate and interact with each other and cooperate with other things/objects (Varmesan et al. 2013: 7). The goal of the Internet of Things is to enable things to be connected anytime, anyplace, with anything and anyone ideally using any path/network and any service (Varmesan et al. 2013: 8).

In this paper we will present a smart home which IoT objects, which – we believe – is other kind, but good example of the how human lifestyle is getting more and more digital. And what impact has this digital lifestyle on people's life.

2. Smart home technologies

Though the first "wired homes" were built in early 1960s by hobbyists, the notion of smart home was officially first used in the USA 34 years ago, in 1984 by the American Association of House Builders. In the 1960s the wired home was somehow a sci-fi for the majority of the people, but by 1984, commercial interest in home automation had grown sufficiently. This interest came mainly from the fields of building, electronics, architecture, energy conservation, and telecommunications, and in the 1980s, manufacturers of consumer electronics and electrical equipment have been developing digital systems and components suitable for use in domestic buildings. The main important development was on the one hand the replacement of electromechanical switching with digital switching, and on the other hand changing the traditional twisted pair and coaxial cables by optical fibres. Among the other enabling developments are new communication networks (e.g. ISDN, Internet), and new end devices (e.g. web TV, video phones) (Aldrich , quoted by Barlow and Gann 1998).

The concept of smart home entered the popular culture in 1990s. In the 20th century in the domestic technology there were an increasing pace

of change. Since a lot of machines were adapted to everyday life, there appeared a bit more time for the "time-using" technologies in particular. So, by the end of the 20ᵗʰ century, many homes linked via the PC to information and services beyond the home. This can be see as a proper "seedbed" for developing the smart home concept.
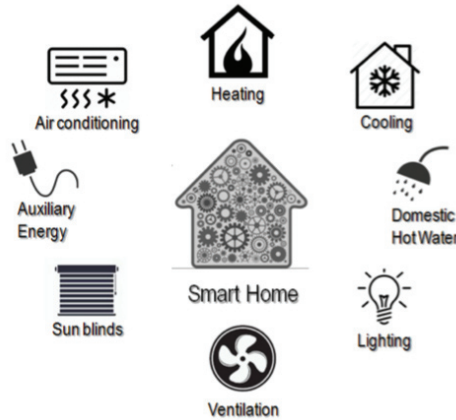

Figure 1. Smart Home Network Example (Fabi et. al. 2017: 761)

Very often a smart home is used as a synonym with environmentally friendly. As we can see on the Figure 1., a smart home has sun blinds, auxiliary energy. But a home is not smart just because of how well it is built, nor how effectively it uses space. Just because it is environmentally friendly, using solar power and recycling waste water, for example does not make it smart. A smart home may, and indeed often does, include these things, but what makes it smart is the interactive technologies that it contains for example. A smart home may, and indeed often does, include these things, but what makes it smart is the interactive technologies that it contains.

We can define the "smart home" as a residence which is equipped with computing and information technology (Aldrich 2003:17), connects "sensors, appliances and devices through a communications network, in order to remotely monitor, access or control the residential environment" (Fabi et.al 2017: 760). The main purpose of the smart home is to assure comfort, convenience, security, entertainment and virtual connection through the management of technology within the home (Aldrich 2003:17), and to provide services that respond to the needs of the users (Fabi et.al 2017: 760). According to the literature, only in last couple of years the term "Smart" or "Intelligent" is been started to relate to the energy efficiency as well (Fabi et.al 2017: 760).

Smart home technologies (SHTs) includes monitors, sensors, interfaces, appliances and devices, all these networked together to enable automation (Cook 2012) and "remote control of the domestic environment" (Wilson 2017: 72). We could also enumerate the controllable appliances and devices, such as heating and hot water systems, but also lighting, windows, curtains, garage doors, fridges, TVs, and washing machines (Robles and Kim, 2010). Sensors and monitors detect environmental factors including temperature, light, motion, and humidity (Wilson 2017: 72). The control functionality is usually provided or by through dedicated hardware interfaces, like wall-mounted controls, or by common computing devices (eg. smartphones, laptops, PCs, tablets) (Wilson 2017: 72). These different smart home technologies are networked, usually wirelessly, using standardized communication protocols. The diversity of available practices, the smart home has many possible "configurations" and like this, many type of "smartness" (Aldrich, 2003, Wilson 2017: 72).

Even though the smart home is such a sensitive and important sphere, the domestic technology research and within this the smart home research is "in its infancy and relevant literature is sparse" (Aldrich 2003: 17). But social scientist should not ignore this research field, since we can make a significant contribution. According to Aldrich, our research and discussion could have an impact even on the evolution of the technology, and nevertheless a greater opportunity to affect people's lifestyle and quality of life than research into many other technologies. Yet the smart home topic isn't among the most popular research topics, and even those few researches conducted in the topic are mainly focusing more on the technical parameters and possibilities. We believe the personal and social consequences of smart home technology is also worth to be analyzed, and more and more researches will be focused on the personal and social consequences of smart home technology (Aldrich 2003: 17)

The Smart Home Systems could offer a lot of benefits in a lot of way. For example the limitation of the environmental impact, the energy and cost saving, nevertheless improving the security and the safety of the building (Fabi 2017: 768). Such kind of systems not only can regulate these type of functions, but they can also transform the guttered data to help the users to modulate their energy (and money) use, and to find and make further efficiency decisions (Fabi 2017: 768). Smart Home Systems should not only inform users about their environment, but also provide a degree of control over it where appropriate.

There are a lot of types of smart homes, and a lot of smart home phases. According to Aldrich (2003: 34-35), we can speak about five types of homes (see Figure 3.). The first type contains single, stand-alone appliances and objects which function in an intelligent manner. The second type there are ap-
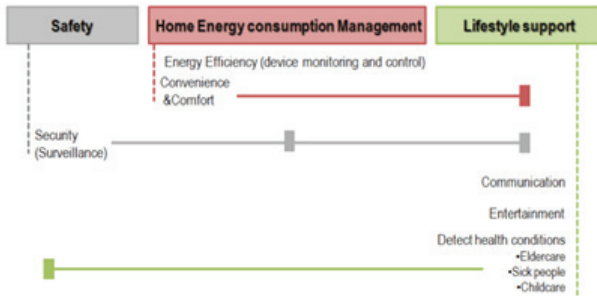
Figure 2: Smart Home Services Example (Fabi et. al. 2017: 761)

pliances and objects which function intelligently in their own right and which also exchange information between one another to increase functionality.⁣ The *connected homes* have internal and external networks, allowing interactive and remote control of systems, as well as access to services and information, both from within and beyond the home. There are recorded patterns of activity in the *learning homes* and the accumulated data are used to anticipate users' needs and to control the technology accordingly. In the *attentive homes* the activity and location of people and objects within the homes are constantly registered, and this information is used to control technology in anticipation of the occupants' needs. (Aldrich 2003: 34-35.)

Despite of its benefits, there are some concerns as well regarding the Smart Homes. These concerns are mainly related to the invasion of the domestic privacy by the artificial intelligence, the intrusive technology. But since the SH technologies offers an energy (and money) cost save, the people are more and more to open to such possibilities. In this context, the Smart Homes and those who wants to provide the SH technology have to face a few market challenges and social barriers (Fabi et. al. 2017: 761). The (1.) *old houses* stock is an important barrier. A common method is the retrofitting of existing house. Undoubted, in a newly build home is much more easier to install a Smart Home Network, but a lot of people cannot afford to build a brand new house. Especially in Europe, there is a huge dependency on older housing system (Aldrich 2003). The (2) *interoperability* is another obstacle. If you want a smart home such those in Figure 1, each system has to communicate with the other. So there is a need for adopting universal standards for communication protocols, which can be expensive and hard to elaborate. The question of (3) *privacy* and *security* are. People are concerned about the security and privacy issues, and this has a fresh character now, when the GDPR is on of the main topic of the public and private discussions. The (4) *costs* are also limiting the interest. The common belief of the people is that these kind of systems are

affordable only by the very rich people. Yes, there are very expensive products on the market, but there are plenty of other possibilities as well. The (5) *usability* is another obstacle, mainly among X generation and the earlier generation, who have problems regarding to digital skills. Not everybody use calmly and confidently the digital devices, for them might sound scary a SH technology. Nevertheless, (6) *the government* could have an important role in this matter. The government, by its means, could have an impact on the smart home's market development, by regulating the market, enforcing standards, safeguarding privacy and change funding schemes (Fabi et. al. 2017: 764, Ehrenhard 2014).

5. ATTENTIVE HOMES
●
4. LEARNING HOMES
●
3. CONNECTED HOMES
●
2. HOMES WHICH CONTAIN INTELLIGENT, COMMUNICATING OBJECTS
●
1. HOMES WHICH CONTAIN INTELLIGENT OBJECTS

Figure 3. Five hierarchical smart home type (Aldrich 2003: 34-35.)

3. Methodology

The home we are going the present and analyze its impact, is a home for a four member family with two small children, age 5 and 2. The husband is a programmer engineer, age 38, the wife is freelancer, age 37. We conducted a very detailed in-depth interview with the owner, the husband. These discussions were primary focused on the technical things, how does it work, what are the costs, the benefits, how difficult was to design and how hard is to maintain? Secondary we wanted to know what impact have the innovations, what are the daily lifestyle benefits. Thanks to the interview, we have a lot of data to analyze and to build a case analysis. Even if the interview gives us only one point of view, our respondent always was referring to his wife's opinion, needs, we presume we could get even a smaller picture about the family's life and their benefit from thei smart home.

The family with four member is living in a newly (2008) built house, in a neighborhood established after 2007. The house is lying on a 75 square meter basic surface, and has 120 square meter useful surface. The house has

a kitchen, two bathrooms and four rooms. The kitchen and the living room are downstairs, two bedrooms are on the first floor, and one room in the mansard. They live in this house since April 2010, in a small town in Romania, in Miercurea Ciuc. The man is a programmer engineer, but he is a native innovator and very much interested in hobby electronics. His biggest and most amazing project is a smart heating system, but he also created a home server system. This home server system allows a laptop backup system and a photo/video backup system, which sounds also very enviable. In the same time he managed that their smartphones to be used as remote controls for their TV set. We will present his "smart" home projects below.

4. "Our" smart home

4.1. Smart heating system

In this home there is a smart heating system since 2008. This means that a small server is connected to the gas furnace. In the same time, in every room there is a small thermometer, and on every radiator is installed a controller. Thank to this small server and its program through web platform, aka from everywhere with internet connection, the house's heating system can be controlled, in every room can be assured even different temperature. Nevertheless there is a thermometer outside on the house, which helps to have an exact information from the outside temperature even if there is no one at home or in the region.
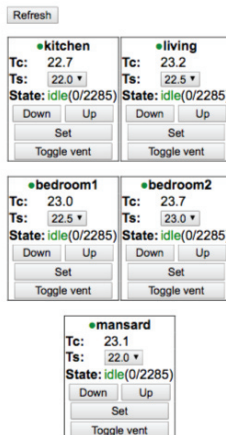

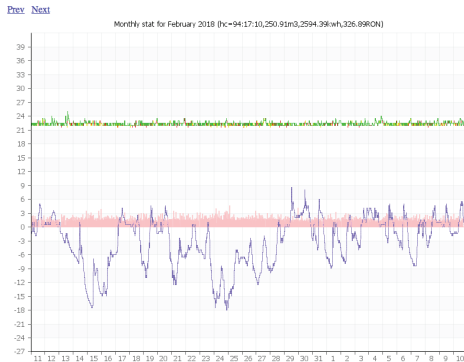Figure 4: Heating system control panel[2]

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Figure 5: Monthly stat for February 2018.[3]

> "We live in the coldest region of Romania. And this is also one of the poorest regions in Romania. And I was also afraid from freezing the water in our newly installed heating ducts during the first two winters before we moved in our newly build house. So I had to find a way to be able to control the heating system from far and in the same time to optimize it."

This system also helps to store all the information, which enable to make very real estimations regarding to gas bill and even the electric light bill. There are also statistics regarding to the annual and monthly heating history for the last 10 years.

> "The main target was to control the heating system from an online platform and from my telephone. The next objective was to optimize a bit the energy waste. Even if we have a newly build house, unfortunately there is a lot of waste thanks to the lining problems and building practice. (...) With this heating system I could obtain a 80% energy and cost serving. Even in a winter month we pay less than 80-100 EUR for heating, when our neighbors in same houses are paying over 150 and a lot of people, who live is much smaller apartments, as well."

During these 10 years, a lot of people, friends, acquaintances were interested and fascinated by this heating system, and a lot of people would want to have it. The home engineer made such heating system for another three houses, for family and friends, and he even thought to make a business from it. But since it takes a lot of time to experiment and to improve the system, he

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[4] Green: the temperature inside the house, Blue: the temperature outside the house, Pink: how often the furnace worked and for how many minutes.

decided this remains on a hobby level. But he accentuate that there is a lot of energy waste in lot of households, and everyone should try to find alternative solutions, this definitely will be a big challenge in the next few decades.

4.2 Home backup system

Another contemporary problem: the digital storage. All of us have a lot of data which we want to keep and to find easier when needed. But usually the average user does not pay attention to the storage. In "our" home the family members usually do not have to deal with this problem at all: the home backup system will do it in their place.

4.2.1. PC backup

There is an automatic backup running system, which make a backup of the data every day. There is a home server, which makes a backup after the three laptops every midnight. So there are no missing documents, lost data and so on.

> "Since I am a programmer engineer, I must have a clear and trustful backup system. And I always paid a lot of attention to backups. My wife, who I have say is a very conscious user, I think more attentive in this matter than the average user. But still happened sometimes that some data, some document, something "disappeared". I wanted to prevent and avoid problems. Any way, I wanted a home backup system, and it is not hard to do it. You need a home server. And web connection."

This means, the members of the family who have a personal computer, just go home, and the home server will make backup after their computer every evening, automatically. And if something is missing, then they can look up on the server. Very easy and comfortable.

4.2.2. Telephone backup system

Their telephone backup system is mainly the same in usefulness, but maybe makes everyday life even much easier. Every evening the server makes a copy of all the images and videos of the telephone. This is not only very-very secure data saving method, but makes easy even the storage of it. They have a web platform, where they can find all the pictures and videos, in maps arranged by source (husband's telephone, wife's telephone, photo camera, other etc.) years and months.

> "This idea came to me seeing my wife's telephone usage habits. My phone is my personal belonging; I do not give it to our children. But she always put in our first little girl's hand, when she cried. I don't know why, but our children love to watch photos taken about them. So I was

always concerned about her photos, a one year old child can easily delete something. So I make this photo backup system because of her, for not losing the photos, or if there is something lost, only some photos from the last 24 hours."

One of the biggest challenge in our contemporary society is managing the big amount of photo and video which we take. Seems that these mega and gigabits allocated to camera are highly multiplied when we have small children. Who would not live in a house, where the server makes a backup after his photos and videos from his smartphone? According to our interviews engineer almost everybody can have such a commodity, even those who do not have ICT skills. All you need is a small server and smartphones with Android op. system.

4.3 Smartphone as remote control

The adults member of the family have smartphones, and these telephones can be used as remote control to their television. Not for surfing among TV programs, but for selecting among files from their own server. According to our house-owner, they can navigate by their smartphone to choose from the downloaded content from their server, or from the YouTube for example. For this, they use a telephone application, the Yatse application at this moment, but they used to try others as well.

> "My phone is always is my pocket or in my hand. But I always have to search for the remote control. So I decided we can leave outside the remote control from our formula. (…) Nor we, nor our children watch TV. But sometimes they are allowed to watch a cartoon, one per day. But always a well known or downloaded content. When we want to put on a cartoon, then we just use our phones. We can use even our laptops, what it is easier. (…) And since we do not have a remote control, we do not have to argue about it"

4.5 Light switch on/off

Our engineer does not consider this a big thing, but we want to mention even this. In the house there are electric consumables (lamps), which can be switched off or switched on from web.

> "You see, I am a very lazy person [he laughs]. When I go for example upstairs in the bedroom and then I realize the light downstairs is on, but I am too tired to go down and turn it off… So I find another way to turn it off. A much easier one…"
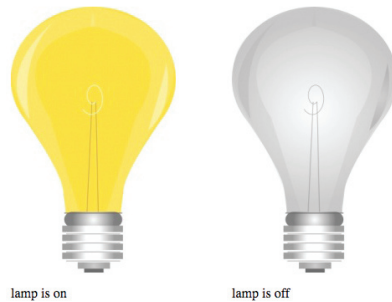
lamp is on   lamp is off

Figure 6: Light switch on/off

5. The benefits

As we saw, a regularly build house can become a smart house, if there are some infrastructural facilities, like Internet connection, home server, home made software and hardware, and nevertheless internet and telephone applications. And, of course, an expert in automations and computing. Maybe this is the main ingredient in this formula. But if we find such expert, even our house can become "smarter".

According to our interview, this home assures much more commodity for its inhabitants, and in the same time everything seems more rational, logical. We were also ascertain, that this smart home technology can assure energy sparing and money sparing as well, and last but not least: time sparing. We also believe that is paid much attention to the data security, which is one of the biggest challenge of our contemporary society. And last, but not least: the calmness. In this very-very fast contemporary life it is a priceless value. In this chapter we will discuss these benefits, of course always trough the eye of the owner.

5.1. Comfort

From our discussion we can conclude: the main target of the owner was to create things, which will make their life more easy, with less inconvenience and a lot more comfort. In order to achieve this, one has to know very well his own needs, and desires. And maybe in this case this target was very good achieved since the owner is the designer and implementer in the same person. Since the adult members of the family are working from home as well, more than the Romanian average Y generation-member, for them the home comfort was more significant.

> „Both of us grew up in a family house in a village. We know from close what does it mean that you have to make warm with wood. I did not want such trouble for myself and my family. It is true, with these new

generational furnaces, with the puffer tanks it is much more easy. But the wood became very expansive. And you have plentyof work with wood prior of using for heat. And with wood it is a bit harder to make such kind of heating automatization."

"I am a bit introverted person. In my case this means for example I could spend a lot of time at home, if I feel cozy and I have everything I need, I usually do not want to go anywhere. But for these I have to feel good at home"

In this situation we must see also, that they are doing a lot of office work from home, they are working at late nights and weekends as well. So in this family's case this home comfort is much higher ranked than in some other family, whose member are working 8-9 hours at a workplace, and are eating and watching TV at home for a couple more hours at home. This home is a home office as well, and because of it, the heating, the lighting, the data backup is much-much more important.

5.2. Energy reduction

One of the main topic of the smart home's discussions is the more environmental sound practices, and the energy sparing. In our case we can speak about smarter energy usage, which lead to thermo energy management. The basic idea was, that each room to be free from the other part of the house, so every part of the house to be heated in concordance to its facility.

"Earlier with a thermostat we could only motorize what is a temperature in that room, where the thermostat was. And if I were in the bedroom, and there where 20.5 C grade, than the furnace started to work and every radiator was working and was warm. Even if, for example, in the living room there was 23 C, and in mansard 25 C. We have 8 radiators in our house. It is not a complicate mathematic operation to count out what a big energy saving is, when only 4 radiator is working instead of 8."

The system seems to be sustainable, since it is working for almost ten years. Of course, the owner highlights that he is continuously making small improvement, when needed.

"During this nine, almost ten years I made 2 major improvement and maybe 2-3 smaller. So it is a stable system. It is important for me, because it is about my family. I cannot allow that the temperature goes under 20 C in the house and the kids will caught a cold. But this never happened. Once it was some problem with the head controller, and for maybe 6-8 hours there was no heating. But I managed to resolve the problem."

This system proved also what means energy saving and what it is only a myth. A lot of people things that if they go to work, they put the thermostat in their house to a lower temperature (eg. 17 °C), and when they arrive at home, they change it to a higher one (eg. 21 °C). Our engineer explained that he never makes such distinction, because the heating system needs much more energy to reheat the hole house to 21 °C grade, than it would have needed to maintain it for the working hours.

> "In our house there is always at least 21 °C in each room. We wear short sleeved t-shirt even in winter. We like the winter and the cold, but outside. Only during the summer months we change the grades. Even when we go on a vacation for a couple days or week, we do not change a thing. And we are not paying a lot for heating. When the walls are cold, they need much more energy to reheat".

5.3. Money sparing

Analyzing the statistical data provided by our smart home owner, and looking on the evolution of the gas price during this period, we have to conclude that even if the price of the heating was progressively growing in the last couple of years, their heat expense was not growing in the same scale.

> "In our region one has to use the heating system almost 7-8 months in one year. Usually we have to turn on the heating system already in September, and we turn it off only in May. So only in 3 months we do not have to use it and pay for it. So it is a big thing and it's worth to optimize. (…) I always wanted first of all not to spend energy in vain… There is no need to heat the garden! The money sparing was on the second place."

It must be mentioned, that the owner is very energy conscious. He was already ordered an energy study to see exactly where is the heat wasted even before moving in the house. Then he made one minor and one major isolation. He tried to ameliorate the upper rooms' thermo isolation, then the change the rooftop's isolation. He is convinced these also contributed a lot to the success and mathematical success of the heating system: the stable, not very expensive gas bills.
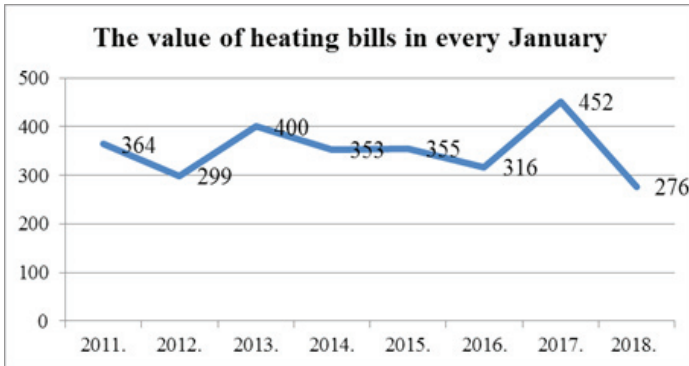
Figure 7. The evolution of the heating bills between 2011-2018, in RON.[5]

5.4. Time sparing

According to the interview, developing this "smart" things take time. But after something is tested and runs without problems, from that point it helps very much in time management. We asked our subject to make a comparison how more minutes should he and his wife spend on several things, daily, if the would not have this developments. Doing this only in a supposititious and rough way, just for demonstration purpose. According to this, we can say every "smart" thing has different impact on time management, in our case the automatized backup system has the most significant impact.

> "I used to take photos and to develop them when I was thirteen. So I know exactly how expansive everything was and we had very few photos. But in our days managing your photos and videos could take a lot of time. So for example with a photo backup system you can save a lot of time, every day."

5.5 Data security

Somebody who is paying this level of attention to make something more rational, more logical, the security of personal data is definitely important. Saving from lost and from not allowed interest. The online platforms are secures as well, and only they have access to them (eg. platform which collects the photos, platform, when they can watch the function of the heating etc.).

> "Since we have a home server and we have an automatized backup system, we practically cannot lost a document, a data, something. Somewhere I can find it. I met very often cases when the laptop of my

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[5] We choosed the January, since according to the statistics provided for us by the owner, in this month were the highest heating bills. February was also very close, quasi the same, but a little bit "cheaper".

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friend died. And they are morning about their lost data… This cannot happen with us."

5.6. Calmness
Our owner is positive about this, that these home innovations made the family's life much more stress less.

> "I would say we have less stress in our life. We have other stress factors, of course [he laughs]. But the heating and photo backup are not among them anymore. I can see at friends: during winter, the heating paychecks are the main discussion topic and because of this everybody is scared from the winter. But in the same time they always are arguing about heating. The men want to spare money, the women want warmer temperature in the house. Therefore, they are watching all day long the thermostat, they are bringing up and down, up and down the temperature. And at the end, they lose the same sum of money. And a lot of nerves."

6. Discussion

As we can realize after the discussions with our smart house owner, a smart project can be always get smarter and brighter. We should not ask for his future plans, since he is always refers somehow to the future. He is very critical regarding to his work, he is never completely content with his projects, he is always upgrading his developments. But still there are some things, which lead to future projects.

> "There would be a total different story, if I could design this house from the beginning. I would have made it much more environment-friendly and energy-reduction-friendly. But I hope I will have the opportunity. We plan to build a new house. And I hope in that case I could make everything much smarter (…) Quasi the same heating system, for example, but much more independency from gas. I would like to build a much more independent house, where the monthly maintenance would be a lot more cheaper and eco friendly".

At long term scale there are plans regarding to the children as well. Another project is the fridge monitor: we wants to make program, which helps monitoring what is inside the refrigerator and freezer, and what is needed. In this way the weekly shopping would be easier, and the program would reveal easily what is inside and on which shelves, drawer.

> "My wife is always complaining how uneasy and time demanding is searching in the freezer, than investigating what could be that piece

of ice. And since we leave outside of the city center, we do not have a grocery shop very close, so if we forget something, we have to go back to the market or supermarket. This could be another time-saver thing which I plan to do it."

And who can have such home: almost everybody. According to our interviewed person. Yes, almost everybody can have such "smarter" way of living, who has a concrete need to this kind of commodity. However the price of this home may vary. An IT engineer or an IT specialist could make this much more cheaper, but if somebody has a clear need what he wants, will find a product to buy or a person who will make it for him. In Romania it is a little bit harder to make since a lot of material have to be ordered from foreign countries.

"I make it for myself, I am always trying to make our life easier and our costs more reasonable. I have my hobby projects since I was thirteen. I always try to make innovative things, which allow more comfort. I like very much the comfort."

We could see a very nice example of a connected smart home (Aldrich 2003), which – we believe – is not unique, even if one of the few in the particular region. We could see a very nice example of a digitalized lifestyle, when the husband's and wife's smartphones are switching on or off the heat, the light, the movie, where can be implemented and maintained a great heating system with energy sparing and money saving. A smart home, which could get more and more smarter, since this development depends on their changing needs and the owner programmer motivation and devotion. A house with several IoTs, which have a very positive impact on their everyday life and almost no negative impact. Yes, the dependency could be a negative effect, but since we are all dependent on electricity, Internet, Facebook, this won't be a new phenomenon.

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FASHION AND THE DIGITAL WORLD: GLOBAL POPULARITY VS LOCAL RELUCTANCE?

Introduction

Nowadays traditional fashion-related information channels (e.g. fashion magazines) are enriched by the appearance of social-media-based fashion, which refers not only to the proliferation of fashion blogs but also to the possibility to literally interact with the world of fashion whether we refer to commenting on blogs, following on Twitter or Instagram, or liking on Facebook. Through social media, consumers got the possibility to become active participants in the world of fashion. Moreover, social media gave rise to new opinion leaders in relation to fashion, which are represented by fashion bloggers, street-style icons, and celebrities, who do not represent the formal experts of fashion, but they can be conceived as innovators who are the first that start to wear a trend, and due to their high visibility on the social media the public starts to imitate their style.

In the following pages I will review shortly the changes which occurred in the fashion-related media and then I will briefly summarize the results of an empirical investigation which, among others, aimed to reveal the popularity of the so-called 'electronic fashion world' among youngsters from Transylvania (Romania). The results of an online survey taken place in 2017 among students showed that the respondents are, indeed, active users of social media when it comes about fashion, however they tend to consider the role of their offline peers in more important terms when they get fashion-related information. To further investigate this case, a focus-group research was conducted and the research accentuated these results. It seems that youngsters separate between an 'intangible' fashion, i.e. the fashion of the online world and a 'real' fashion, i.e. the fashion represented by the clothes of their peers.

This situation raises the question whether electronic fashion worlds can be declined as new forms of 'high fashion' in the case of a youth population which is afraid from making clothes-related mistakes and seeks acceptation from their peers.

Literature Review: The Changing Landscape of Fashion-Related Media

Fashion-related mass media has suffered various changes throughout the last decades. Professional fashion magazines which literally dictated the trends with their *haute-couture*-oriented discourses were firstly completed by TV-based fashion (reality) shows, which made fashion a form of entertainment and enabled the public's access to fashion-related information. The diversification of fashion-related information channels made fashion an everyday phenomenon and changed also the meaning of the concept of being fashionable, which started to refer not only to up-to-date dressing but also to fashion-related knowledge (Buckley & Clark 2017).

Starting from the 2000s, the traditional fashion-related information channels were enriched by the appearance of social-media-based fashion, which refers not only to the proliferation of fashion blogs but also to the possibility to literally interact with the world of fashion through commenting, following, liking and sharing (Sedeke & Arora 2013). Social media gave rise to new opinion leaders in relation to fashion, which are represented by fashion bloggers, street-style icons, and celebrities, who do not represent the formal experts of fashion, but they can be conceived as innovators who are the first that start to wear a new cut and enable the becoming of trends, because due to their high visibility on the social media the public starts to imitate their style.

To put it with the words of Kawamura (2005), what occurs in current fashion media is a change in the so-called gatekeeper roles: once editors of the fashion magazines were responsible for selecting certain styles and deciding what is fashion and fashionable and were thus controlling the dissemination of certain styles (cf. Blumer 1969 on collective selection). Nowadays, the gatekeeper role is played by fashion (v)blogs and other social-media-based influencers because through their image they influence (rather than decide as it was once the case of fashion magazines) what is going to be worn by the public (Sedeke, Arora 2013).

It is true that (v)blogs have changed the language of fashion communication from a professional discourse to a subjective language in which bloggers' personal experiences with clothing and brands and their life stories are exposed, and in this way they are offering a kind of 'tangible' fashion to followers (Engholm, Hansen-Hansen 2014). The realistic, informal discourse of the blogs makes them be considered trustworthy information sources by the consumers

(Sadaba, Sanmiguel 2016). By recognizing the power of this fashion language, blog as a genre is more and more incorporated in the communication of fashion magazines or brands on their websites (Engholm, Hansen-Hansen 2014). Thus, blogs as well as other forms of social media allow brands to raise and improve brand awareness among consumers (Wolny, Mueller 2013).

On the other hand, social media acts as a 'hub' (Engholm, Hansen-Hansen 2014) in the world of fashion and allows people with similar interests to come together – via hashtags for instance – in spite of the geographic distances. In this way, social media allows not only the phenomenon of imitation of the influencers (e.g. the case of the #ootd hashtags through which the users of Instagram are imitating the outfits of the influencers and thus adjusting themselves to the image of the fashion celebrities they follow – see Abidin 2016) but also the emergence of various bottom-up fashion communities, i.e. style subcultures which provide critical or anti-fashion messages and the dissemination of their cause beyond their place of origin (Buckley, Clark 2017).

When we think about young people for whom social acceptance is probably the most important, it can be stated that identification through fashion can refer to identification (or imitation) with so-called fashion icons, role models, etc. but also to identification with people from closer circles such as friends, colleagues, etc. as far as "to be part of a group often entails dressing like the other people in that group" (Miller 2005: 14). On the other hand, for many people, 'fitting out' is more important than 'fitting in' (Twigg 2009), and for this purpose of distinction through fashion the postmodern culture with its looser norms and sanctions and with the proliferation of various fashion subcultures enabled by the social media offers various possibilities. We should also bear in mind that fashion is an everyday practice, an everyday challenge for adjustment or distinction, an everyday struggle for impression management (see Goffman 1956) but also a pleasure which offers for the *Homo frivolous* the possibility and freedom to play with clothes, brands, styles, and – through these – with his/her identity (cf. Lipovetsky 1994). Fashion is, finally, about meanings which are constructed by designers, entrepreneurs, conventional fashion journalists, bloggers, influencers, retailers, etc. (Gonzales 2012) and – perhaps most importantly – by the public, which has a decisive role not only in the dissemination of these meanings but also in the transformation of new styles from innovations into fashion (cf. Crane 2012).

Methodology

The empirical investigation was based on a mixed-methodology and dealt with the ways in which Transylvanian students relate to fashion. For this purpose an online survey (based on convenience sampling) and some

focus-group discussions were conducted with the students of the Sapientia University (in each of its three campuses: Miercurea Ciuc, Târgu-Mureș, Cluj-Napoca) and with students from the Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. The online survey reached a total of 575 students (270 from Sapientia and 305 from Babeș-Bolyai) and later on was completed with a total of 11 focus-groups which results. The survey aimed to study several dimensions of fashion-related attitudes and behaviours (e.g. clothing purchase, consumption, fashion-involvement, fashion adoption, etc.), out of which a special chapter was dedicated to fashion-related information. Later on, the results of the online survey were discussed during focus-groups with the aim to bring further nuance to quantitative data. In the following, the results obtained through these two methods are presented in brief.

A Summary on the Results of the Survey

The survey showed that in the case of both university's respondents malls, friends and colleagues, the street, social media, and online shops are the most frequently used sources for being informed about fashion, while printed fashion magazines, fashion blogs, offline and online catalogues are among the least referred sources of information. It follows that youngsters mostly get their fashion-related information from unauthorized sources, i.e. the street, from their online and offline reference groups, and from retailers, i.e. malls and online shops. This is in line with those global trends which show that the future's omni-channel consumers tend to look at products both offline in malls ("showrooming") and online ("webrooming"), compare the prices, and then purchase the products from the most advantageous source (e.g. GfK 2015).

The findings confirm only partially the importance of online information sources: indeed, online sources can be considered more important than offline sources, at least if we refer to the case of online and offline magazines or to the importance of social media, but they do not represent the most important sources of information. The reference groups and the street, i.e. "real people" from youngsters' acquaintances, seem to be more important. This latter aspect illustrates some important things: a) a kind of specific lifestyle in the case of youngsters, for whom the acceptance by their reference group is more important than following the latest trends as suggested by fashion magazines; b) the changing meaning of fashion for youngsters for whom what is fashionable does not represent an abstract, intangible construct anymore but an everyday practice mostly in terms of fashion adoption, which is reflected by the outfits of their significant others and by those of the street (cf. the role of the "trickle-across" fashion diffusion – Barnard 2002).

In the survey, the respondents were asked whether they regularly follow fashion (v/)blogs. The results show that only 12% of the Sapientia sample regularly follow a fashion blog, with no variation between men and women. When those 33 people who regularly follow fashion blogs were asked to indicate the name(s) of such blogs, the results were even more downsizing because they also rate as blogs the websites of several online shops or fashion magazines or the Instagram profiles of celebrities. Only 18 people indicated real fashion (v/)blogs, and only 8 of them denominated exactly the blogs, while the others used collective denominations like YouTubers or vloggers. The referred fashion blogs were Viszkok Fruzsi (mentioned two times), Fifty Pair of Shoes, Wendy's Lookbook, Fabulous Muses, Alina Ceauşan, Inspirationholic, and Chloe from the Woods. When checking the self-rated information level of these 8 respondents, in 6 out of the 8 cases, they rated themselves as very well informed in terms of fashion.

As a conclusion, it can be said that the relatively low popularity of fashion blogs is rather surprising – youngsters do not follow them regularly; however, it seems that they are more popular in the case of those people who are very well informed in terms of fashion. Only less than half of the respondents, i.e. 45%, have a fashion icon. From these people, 24% indicate that their icon is their friend/colleague, and the other part splits between movie stars, bloggers, celebs, and sports people. It seems that people either base their fashion choices on ad hoc choices or try to follow the image of their friends rather than that of real fashion icons. Thus, we can state again that for the respondents of the Sapientia sample professional media or the fashion-related social media have a limited importance in pushing a trend unless such trends are adopted by the members of the reference groups. Youngsters tend to imitate the choices of their acquaintances rather than "take the risk" of following a (social-) media-based icon. This finding confirms the role of the acceptance in youngsters' life, as it was already outlined in previous chapters, fashion being mostly a tool of "becoming collectively with others" (Kaiser 2012: 1), particularly with friends and colleagues. Youngsters try to avoid the risk of failure in their fashion-related appearance, and for this purpose they verify the outfit of their reference groups and adopt their choices to these groups (Bertrandias, Goldsmith 2006).

Similarly to the Sapientia sample, fashion blogs turned to be unpopular sources of information in the Babeş-Bolyai sample as well. Only 25% of the respondents (which is somewhat above the Sapientia average) succeeded in mentioning fashion (v)blogs. A closer look at the mentioned fashion blogs by these 78 respondents indicates that only 20 of them succeeded in effectively mentioning the name of the fashion blog followed (these are: Ana Morodan, Carmen Chişiu, Alina Ceauşan, Laura Cosoi, We Heart It, Wendy's Lookbook,

The Sartorialist, Fabulous Muses, Dana Rogoz), while the other indicated options were general denominations like YouTube vloggers or Instagram profiles in general. The majority of these 20 respondents, i.e. 14 of them, consider themselves very well and well informed about fashion, wherefore we can at least partially confirm that fashion blogs are more popular among those people who are more informed in terms of fashion.
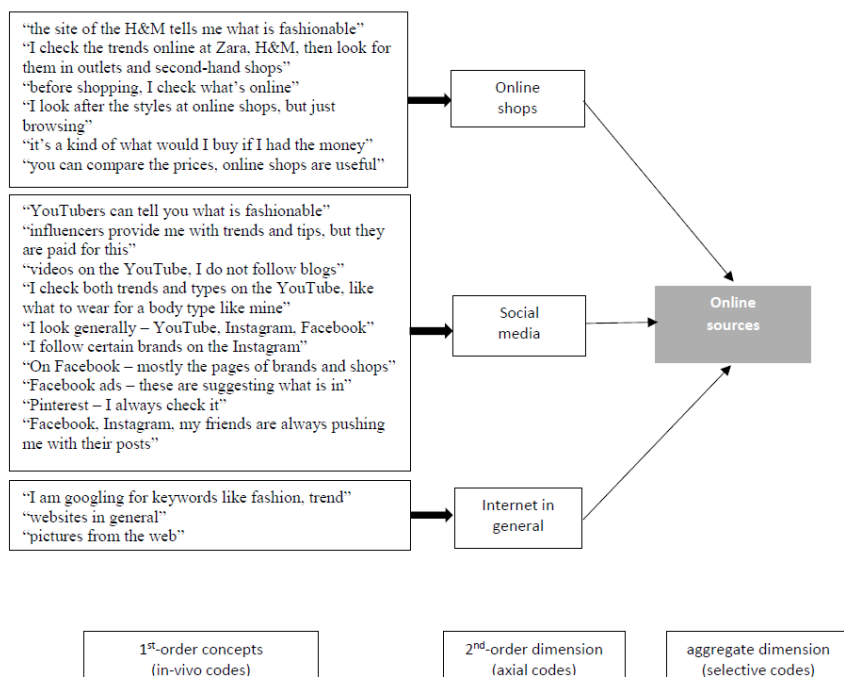
In what concerns the existence of fashion icons, 67% indicated that they have a person whose image inspires their choice of clothing. Out of those who indicated the existence of fashion icons, 38% mentioned their friends and colleagues, 30% celebrities from the world of entertainment, 27% sports celebrities, and only 5% mentioned fashion bloggers. These results resemble the findings already revealed in the Sapientia sample: in the case of students, their colleagues are the most important references in determining their clothing choices.

Beyond the Quantitative Data:
The Discourses on Fashion-Related Information

Discovering the most common sources of information about fashion was one of the major tasks of focus-group phases of my research. The findings of the survey already showed that students are multichannel consumers who mix between offline and online environments in terms of their clothing purchases and clothing-related information (cf. GfK 2015). What came, however as a surprise, was the popularity of the street as an information source of fashion. The findings of the focus-group research are largely in accordance with these previous results and are also important in clarifying the motivations for relying on these sources.

The analysis of the in-vivo codes suggested that the information sources about fashion and style can be grouped into two major aggregate dimensions, i.e. online and offline sources (see *graphs 1* and *2* below). The online sources correspond to online fashion shops (mostly the shops of fast-fashion brands like Zara, H&M, etc.), to social media, and, to a lesser extent, to the Internet in general. Online shops represent a "webrooming" type of information search (Flavián et al. 2016) in the sense that youngsters check the online shops in order to look after the trends which are not necessarily bought later from the same shops. Looking at the websites of clothing retailers gives youngsters an idea about what to buy, an idea about how to combine their outfits. Online shops are also a source of searching for practical information, such as clothing prices, promotions, etc. This finding is in line with those revealed previously by Salonen et al. (2014), the authors suggesting that checking for fashion-related information online can have various functions, including here practical

reasons like checking prices, availabilities, etc., but can also represent activities of "daydreaming" (Campbell 1987). In this latter respect, youngsters related about the act of browsing across online shops just for fun; in order to look around and select favourites in order to prepare their further shopping list; or just in order to daydream about what they would buy if they had the money for that.

| "the site of the H&M tells me what is fashionable" "I check the trends online at Zara, H&M, then look for them in outlets and second-hand shops" "before shopping, I check what's online" "I look after the styles at online shops, but just browsing" "it's a kind of what would I buy if I had the money" "you can compare the prices, online shops are useful" | → | Online shops |

| "YouTubers can tell you what is fashionable" "influencers provide me with trends and tips, but they are paid for this" "videos on the YouTube, I do not follow blogs" "I check both trends and types on the YouTube, like what to wear for a body type like mine" "I look generally – YouTube, Instagram, Facebook" "I follow certain brands on the Instagram" "On Facebook – mostly the pages of brands and shops" "Facebook ads – these are suggesting what is in" "Pinterest – I always check it" "Facebook, Instagram, my friends are always pushing me with their posts" | → | Social media |

| "I am googling for keywords like fashion, trend" "websites in general" "pictures from the web" | → | Internet in general |

Online sources

| 1st-order concepts (in-vivo codes) | 2nd-order dimension (axial codes) | aggregate dimension (selective codes) |

Graph 1. The narrative data structure for the online sources
of information on fashion

Social media is also referred to through rich codes. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are typical sites for following influencers, celebrities, fashion brands, for liking and sharing trends. Similarly, to online shops, social media is also a way of daydreaming but also a way of forming practical ideas about how to wear certain outfits. In this respect, mostly YouTube vloggers, i.e. influencers, are referred to in the narratives. Youngsters tend to blame influencers for their brand endorsement; however, they follow them because such people give them a tangible, true-to-life representation of fashion. This finding confirms those approaches of the literature in which influencers, fash-

ion (v)bloggers are referred to as "connectors" between the brands, fashion houses, and the general public (cf. Eagan 2015).

There are also situations when social media becomes an information source by default. In such cases, youngsters are not consciously looking for a typical fashion-related content, they just come across these contents while browsing, which then inform them about fashion or trends. This is an accidental, informal type of learning, whether we are talking about brands, trends, or styles.

Given the popularity of social media among the participants, it was in a way whimsical to see that they do not really use social media in order to connect to fashion-related lifestyle communities or alternative groups. Only a few participants mentioned the name of some Instagram and YouTube vloggers who promote capsule wardrobes, minimalism, or a specific take on fashion, and the number of participants who related about their personal experiences in terms of connecting to such groups was even more reduced. Thus, it can be concluded that the effective joining of bottom-up fashion communities, style subcultures, or groups which represent challenging fashion-related initiatives (cf. Buckley, Clark 2017) is still an unpopular practice among the participants. This finding places further emphasis on their already revealed approach on fashion: youngsters are predisposed to see fashion as a form of personal combination among the trends, they reject the idea of fashion as a convention, but in their fashion-related information search give preferences or vantage to no-far-to-seek contents (e.g. the online shops of the fast-fashion brands, YouTubers who are brand endorsers, etc.). Youngsters are a kind of soft challengers with ambivalent attitudes: they reject fashion as a convention but accept the dress codes, interpret fashion in the form of personalized styling of the trends but reject or are only hardly aware of those contents which are anti-fashion, anti-consumerist, or alternatives to the mainstream.

Offline sources, such as friends/colleagues, the street, and shops, are present with rich in-vivo codes, while print catalogues/fashion magazines and TV are revealed through fewer codes, usually in the case of non-student Generation Y respondents. Colleagues and friends are the most important offline reference for fashion and style. If a person is unsure, he/she asks his/her friends, colleagues about what to wear because he/she wants to belong to them, to be similar with them, or he/she just does not want to make a mistake. Dressier friends and colleagues can serve also as tangible fashion icons or as icons of a style in a certain gang. We can interpret the importance of friends and colleagues as information sources through the age of the participants as well; they are young people for whom acceptance and assimilation is important; so, reference groups are important in order to direct the clothing choices (cf. Fernandez 2009). It is, however, an important finding that some

of the participants have narratives which imply a reflexivity towards the role of friends and colleagues; in these situations, the interviewees are questioning the validity of the information coming from such groups ("Do they know better than I know?"), and if they are unsure about their friends'/colleagues' savviness they try to confront them with other sources (e.g. online sources).
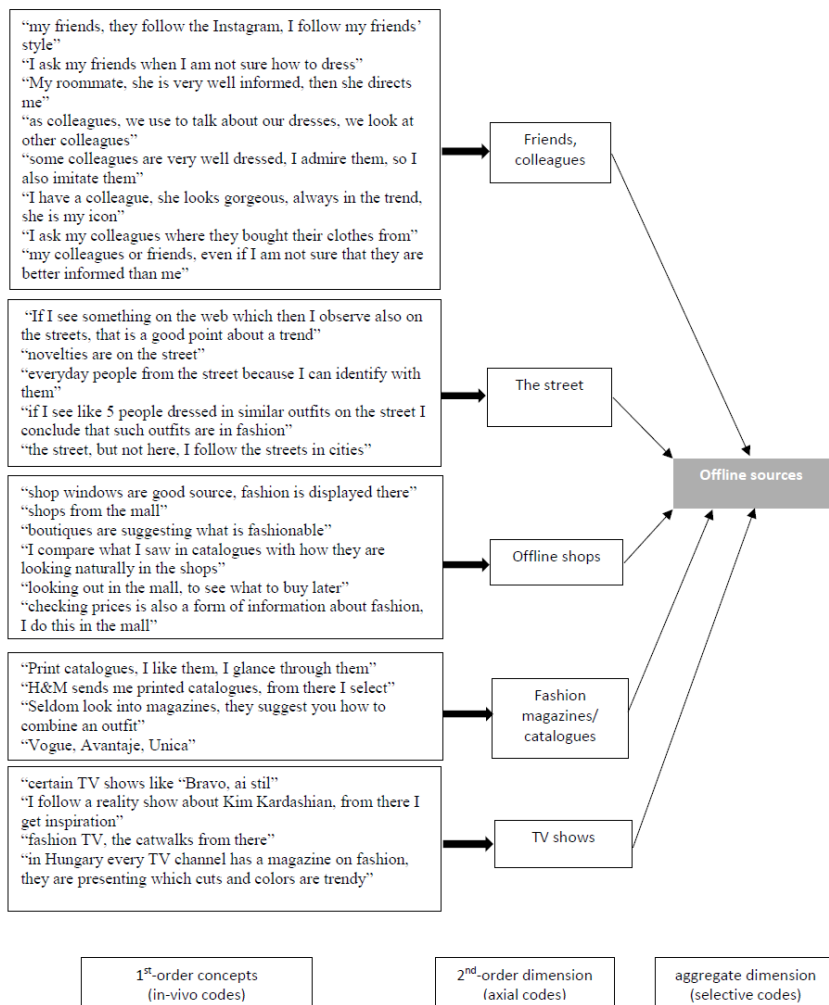
Graph 2. The narrative data structure for the offline information sources on fashion and style

The street is referred to as a common place for checking out the actual fashion. In the respondents' viewpoint, the street is considered a proof for the success of a trend. It confirms fashion and validates it. This is in line with the approach of Loschek (2009) and Entwistle (2015), who differentiate between fashion as an innovation proposal and fashion as a validation of certain innovation through the act of *de facto* wearing. Besides this, the street is inspirational as well. The ways in which common people combine the trends shown in the shops or online gives a tangible facet to fashion.

Even if the street is referred to in each focus group as an important source of inspiration – both in terms of showing the trends and giving examples for stylish forms of adoption –, in the less urbanized context of Miercurea Ciuc, participants are more concerned about the relevance of the street in terms of fashion. They consider that their street is less fashionable, less diverse, after all, less trustworthy than the streets in other places, particularly cities. This type of vindication in connection with the relevance of street-based information is, in fact, in line with the results of the online survey, which has already showed that for the students of the Miercurea Ciuc-based campus of Sapientia University street is a less popular site for getting information about fashion.

Shops and boutiques from the mall are another important source of information on fashion. Similarly to online shops, they represent sites of informing about the trends, in the form of "showrooming" activity (Gensler et al. 2017), in the form of hanging out with friends in the mall or doing window shopping just for fun or for more practical reasons like looking at how certain clothes look in reality. Getting information from boutiques and shop windows does not necessarily lead towards buying the item or does not necessarily lead towards buying the item from that particular shop. Obtaining information from offline shops is a conscious or unconscious process of collecting information about the trends, styles and about the extrinsic qualities of the clothes (how they look, what type is the material, etc. – cf. clothes as a "feel-and-touch product").

As appears from *Graph 2* above, the traditional media in the form of printed fashion magazines, catalogues, or TV shows is revealed through less abundant in-vivo codes; they are sporadically present as information sources and indicate the already over-emphasized fact of the literature, namely that old media is a passé and millennials are turning towards the new media when searching for information (Serazio 2013).

Conclusions

Youngsters get their fashion-related information mostly from their peers, from the street, and from the malls, but online sources, particularly social media and online shops, are also important and outperform the importance of classical sources such as fashion magazines. On the other hand, fashion (v)blogs, which are among the most influential fashion-related information sources of nowadays, are of a marginal importance in the case of our samples. Much of the students of both university's samples consider themselves as being more or less informed about fashion, and those who are more predisposed towards getting information from other sources than their peers declare themselves as being more informed about fashion. This might indicate that relying on peers in matters of fashion is a kind of risk-managing activity: youngsters adapt their clothes to those being worn by their peers, and such adaptation does not mean to follow a trend of fashion, rather is a form of following certain acceptations of fashion in a certain group.

The focus-group research re-confirmed the trends of the survey: friends and colleagues, together with the online sources, such as online shops and social media, are the most important sources of information on fashion. When being informed by their friends, colleagues, or the street in general, interviewees look for inspiration from their dressier counterparts, but they also rely on these offline sources for approval and guidance in terms of how to adapt an outfit in such a way to be accepted. The online sources bring new (practical) information: by accessing webshops or social media, youngsters check the trends, create wish lists and use these platforms as tools of getting access to trends in a much easier way than in the case of malls. In the majority of the narratives, online shops are preferred for offering more advantageous prices than malls. Indeed, malls are preferred for hanging out, checking trends, trying clothes, but they remain – in the case of each groups – the less preferred places for shopping.

In understanding these results we must articulate that the majority of the participants, regardless of their campus or university, live on a limited budget; so, following the trends online and offline offers knowledge and information for them about trends and also about financially affordable places of buying such trends. Later on, when they need to confront both their price-consciousness and fashion preferences, online shops and mostly second-hand shops and outlets offer viable alternatives which are in accordance with youngsters' perception on fashion: they do not want to (cannot) follow the latest trends of their outfits in every aspect, but try to acquire (at affordable prices) such pieces which can be integrated in trendy outfits.

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BRAND BUILDING
IN THE DIGITAL AGORA

The spread of digital technology has led to a major change in the communication of companies. They are now in strong competition and hence need solutions enabling them to stand out against their competitors and to capture the attention of their target groups. One of their strategic tools for self-differentiation consists in creating their digital company brand. A significant number of companies revalue the possibilities of digital brand building. They view the digital media as a further communication channel and do not take into account that digital spaces are also social spaces with specific rules of functioning, possibilities and requirements. This article sketches out the advantages of digital brand building and summarizes the challenges transforming the relationships between the company, the brand and the public in the digital space.

KEYWORDS: *corporate brand, brand management, digital media, digital environment, challenges of digital brand building*

1. Introduction

The spread of digital technology has changed the habits of social actors in almost all fields of life, leading to a dramatic increase in their presence in public or semi-public spaces and in the demand for the attention of communication partners.

The spread of digital technology has also transformed the communication of companies. They are now in a highly competitive environment and are hence searching for strategic solutions enabling them to stand out against their competitors and to capture the attention of their target groups. The response to the strong competitive situation consists in a both quantitatively and qualitatively increased corporate communication. Under the current

competitive circumstances, neither the quality of the corporate products and services, nor their premium price is sufficient to stand out in the market, but the use of further unique selling points is needed.

One of the strategic solutions of corporate communication for attracting and retaining attention consists in emphasizing the essential features of the company, its characteristic mode of operation, strategic objectives, specific culture, values and original style. The obvious strategic solution of companies lies in corporate brand building (Urde 2013: 743), which could be regarded as a unique brand promise to the external and internal target groups of the company (Balmer 2001: 253). As opposed to product brand communication, the communication of the corporate brand takes place through several channels and not only with the traditional tools of marketing communication. Company employees are also strongly involved in the creation and maintenance of the corporate brand. Employees contribute, through their attitudes, behaviour and the opinions they communicate about the company, to the fulfilment of its brand promise (Harris, de Chernatony 2001: 441).

The spread of digital technology and social media has opened up new possibilities for corporate branding (Kent, Taylor 2002: 31) and thus also for making the corporate brand visible to the public (Rowley 2004: 132). In the case of traditional corporate brand communication, the communication of the brand promise was under the control of the brand managers, and the customers' influence on the development of the brand image was limited. However, the spread of digital media enables encounters between the customers who continuously share their experiences, feelings and thoughts about the brands (Gensler, Völckner, Thompkins 2013: 242). Under such circumstances, the brand managers cannot fully control the brand communication anymore and have to take into account the influence of the public on the brand building process. Hence, the extension of brand communication toward digital media platforms is to be considered for the successful cooperation between the brand and its public.

This article will point out the advantages and challenges of digital brand presence along with the changes transforming the relationship between the company, the brand and the public in the digital space (Kent, Taylor 2002: 31).

2. Advantages and challenges of corporate brand building in digital environments

Companies realize their objectives through planned cooperation and conscious communication. In fact, companies can also be viewed as complex communication systems with rationally developed external and internal communication schemes (Mumby 2013: 14). Although companies have recognized the possibilities provided by digital technology and social media, there are significant inequalities in their use. Research shows that both customers and job seekers begin with collecting online knowledge about the companies and brands they are interested in before contacting them in real life (Christodoulides 2009: 142; Ojasalo et al. 2008: 102). Their knowledge stems not only from the official company webpage and from its other online communication platforms, but also from the digitally shared experiences of other customers. As a result of Web 2.0, customers have spilled out into the digital environment, where it has become much easier to freely express one's opinions and to share one's emotions and ideas about brands. Therefore, companies and brands have been confronted with the decision whether to become involved in the digital environments of communication and cooperation, cultivating a less controllable dialogue with customers.

Corporate brand building is, in fact, also a communication activity emphasizing the uniqueness of the company, its differentiation from competitors and the strengthening of the relationships with customers. Successful brand communication requires the communication of the company to be based on coherent principles also ensuring the authenticity of the company and the brand.

According to Martinez-Lopez et al. (2016: 69), corresponding to the development of digital technology, there are also three stages of digital brand building: the developmental steps of Branding 1.0, Branding 2.0 and Branding 3.0. A brief summary about the development of the World Wide Web will also make it easier to understand the stages of digital branding, since the latter essentially consists in the use of the digital platforms in the branding process.

Web 1.0 is also known as the "static Web". Its main feature was to enable the transmission of a large information quantity. In this period, it was primarily institutions that unilaterally communicated information about themselves, while their public played the role of the passive recipient. In the era of Branding 1.0, the company homepages mainly presented products and services, and the success of branding was measured by market share.

Web 2.0 is the "social Web", characterized by technological developments which facilitated the involvement of users in content creation. Furthermore, the media platforms of community communication and cooperation were

also established. Branding 2.0 has put the emphasis on customer relations in the digital environment. This is the period which sees the beginning of digital content creation by customers and of their involvement in the development of the brand image. Companies now recognize the need for the online orientation of their target audiences and the importance of the dialogue and cooperation with them.

Web 3.0 is also called the "semantic Web". Its main features lie in the creation and storage of large data quantities, as well as in providing meta-data for this information. In the era of Branding 3.0, corporate brand builders and their target audiences create the brand together. The ideas and feelings of external and internal target groups are increasingly gaining importance in this process. The communication of detailed information about corporate and product brands is now commonplace. The main emphasis is put on the experiences and emotional advantages offered by the brands. Customers identify emotionally with the brands and seek to actively participate in the branding process.

In the digital environment, the brand is the experience itself that is made by the visitor on the brand's home page or on its social media sites. Successful brand experience presupposes the brand creation to be adjusted to the characteristics of the digital spaces and to the expectations of customers regarding their digital experiences (Edelman 2010: 7). If online brand experiences fall behind the offline brand promise, the followers of the brand may distance themselves from it (de Chernatony 2001: 441). The creation of the strong digital corporate brand brings wide recognition and an increase in the number of visitors.

Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster (2008: xx) have established the connective model for digital brand building and have also summarized the key points for which traditional brand building procedures require a different approach.

Table 1. Connective branding overview

	Traditional branding approach	Connective branding model
From external image to lived values		
Focus	External image	Embedded values
Key point of reference	Product	Company behind product
Primarily delivered through	Advertising	Every interaction
Communication paradigm	Manipulative	Engaging
Information flow	One way	Interactive
From insular to networked		
Brand creation	Brand manager	Co-creation
Brand ownership	Brand manager	CEO
Brand responsibility	Mid-level management	CMO or top - level manager
Collaboration	Minimal – isolated	Networked
Delivered by	Brand/marketing team	Every employee
Processes involved	Direct impact only	All enabling processes
From targeting customers to all key stakeholders		
Target	Primarily customers	Customers, employees and all other key stakeholders
Objectives	Drive sales and loyalty (customers) Differentiate against key competitors Protect premium pricing	Drive sales and loyalty (customers) Differentiate against key Competitors Recruit and retain talent (employees) Motivate employees Support share price and protect premium pricing (financial community) Build relationships with partners, suppliers, NGOs, distributors, retailers, special interest groups, etc.

Source: Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster 2008: xx, Table 0.1.

As we can see from the above overview, under the changed technological and communication circumstances, brand builders have to recognize that the branding of products and services is increasingly substituted with corporate branding that is based on a number of core values. As such, the corporate brand no longer addresses only the customers, but to all company target groups. Fisher-Buttinger and Vallaster (2008: xx) summarize the most important perspective changes that call into question the very basics of traditional brand building. One of the main challenges is the role of employees in communicating the corporate brand which increases as they contribute to the transfer of the brand experience through their attitudes and behaviours. According to the traditional view, brand building was interpreted as the totality of one-way communication tasks aimed at establishing an attractive external brand image. However, in the new approach, the attention of brand builders moves from persuasion to obtaining the commitment and to stimulating the engagement of the target groups. The aim of the brand building process does not lie in influencing the opinions of the target groups, but in establishing an experience of satisfaction with the brand. In the world of digital media, brand building is not based anymore on the communication of knowledge about the brand. The emphasis is moved on creating the brand experience capable of meeting the needs of the various target groups. All of the company's target groups come into contact with the corporate brand, while the members of the various target groups also share their brand experiences with each other in the digital environment. Hence, the consistency of brand communication and the coherence between the online and offline brand experience both increase in value.

The responsibility for building the brand is also transformed. In the traditional approach, the brand building for the products and services was the sole responsibility of the marketing division. However, the creation of the company-level brand represents a strategic task, which lies in the responsibility of the highest-level corporate management. The employees of the company and the consumers of the brand also demand to be involved in the brand creation and contribute to it. Corporate employees "live out" the brand and become brand ambassadors, while the consumers share their brand experiences and thus consolidate or question the brand's authenticity. It is of essential importance to corporate brand creators to collect as many feedbacks as possible regarding the meeting between the brand and its consumers in the digital environment, in order to understand the role of the brand experience in the buying and in the employment decision, thus creating the possibility for further brand development (Edelman 2010: 7).

3. Conclusions

Branding in the digital environment represents a new possibility of corporate strategic communication. The special communication and collaboration features of digital platforms modify the characteristics of the relationships between companies and their target groups in several respects (Kent, Taylor 2002: 31). Digital platforms facilitate for brand followers to share their brand experiences and their demand for participation in the brand building process. Since feedbacks also influence the choices of future target groups, the brand builders cannot ignore the manifestations of digital communities. In the age of digital media, brand builders create strong brands though joining their efforts with their target groups. This, however, is only possible if their relationship is constantly maintained (Hatch, Schultz 2010: 590). A significant number of companies undervalue the digital possibilities of brand building. They view digital media as another communication channel and do not take into account the fact that digital environments are, in fact, social spaces with specific modes of functioning, possibilities and requirements. Taking account of the dynamics and the popularity of digital spaces, several authors consider the possibility that offline brands will be increasingly replaced by digital ones (Dayal, Landsberg, Zeisser 2000; Christodoulides 2009: 142).

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ARGUMENTOR 5

DIGITAL AGORA

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH ARGUMENTOR CONFERENCE