Hana Pravdová, Zora Hudíková

Contemporary Media Culture in the Coordinates of Game Principles

ABSTRACT

The intention of the study is to highlight the interrelationships between the operation of gaming principles and contemporary media culture. The authors analyze game principles as defined and conceptualized by R. Caillois in his work. They formulate a premise according to which individual game principles can also be identified in contemporary media production, especially in cinema and digital games. They are present in the choice of preferred media topics and in the discourse of creative approaches of media creators. Gaming principles are based on fundamental human qualities that dominate during play. That is, they are an anthropological issue and have had a culture-making function. Although mimicry is the most dominant gaming principle within media production, other gaming principles, namely agon, alea, and illinx, are also found in particular genres and formats. The authors argue that contemporary media culture is shaped by the coordinates of game principles as well as by the mental settings of the people existing in the contemporary Euro-Atlantic civilizational circle. This environment creates a person craving for entertaining media genres. These provide them with enormous emotional excitement and transitions into another dimension of life, into a playful media reality.

KEY WORDS

Audiovision. Cinematography. Commercialisation. Consumer Society. Digital Games. Game Actors. Game Principles. Media Culture. Players.

1 Instead of an Introduction: Terminological Anchoring and Methodological Background

Contemporary discursive practices in the field of media production and the continuous mapping of mental structures of late modern societies testify to a paradigm shift within media production and media culture. Media production is tailored mentally to suit the human longing for perpetual gaming adventures in a simulated world of fantasy escapes. It is designed for the mental disposition of the playing man – homo ludens. The concept of homo ludens was introduced by J. Huizinga in 1944. According to him, homo ludens is the playful person to whom we owe the origin and development of culture.[1] Fourteen years later, R. Caillois is both inspired by and critically follows the work of J. Huizinga.[2] He defines four game principles and explains the different categories of games by them. He points out that the four game principles are present together in individual games, but only one of them is dominant. The "agon" game principle represents competition,[3] the "alea" game principle represents surrender to fate,[4] the "mimicry" game principle represents imitation[5] and the "ilinx" or "vertigo"[6] game principle is the patron of games dominated by the emotion of excitement.

The principles of games have always been part of media creation, as evidenced, for example, by the development of theatre from ancient Greece to the present day. The basic coordinates of the relationship between acting principles and media creation can be seen very clearly already in the Greek Dionysian theatre. However, only the era of digital communication has made the purpose and functions of these coordinates clearly visible. In our view, however, other relevant factors are also involved in the process of amplifying these coordinates and making them visible. These are, in particular, the technical-technological level of contemporary media, the digitisation of media production and the phenomenon of hedonistic consumerism, which has become a firm part of the socio-cultural environment and a significant feature of media production.

The concept of homo medialis appears in connection with the emergence of the information society, the digitalization of communication flows. The media are becoming dominant not only in leisure time, but also through mobiles, tablets, etc. They are permanently present in people's everyday activities. A person becomes a subject of simulated worlds and an object of technical-technological progress in the field of media production.[7] Both the pragmatic entertainment logic and the playful principles of the commercial media world offer people a new, much more interesting and fascinating reality and quality. It is better than the reality of everyday life. The simulated worlds of media production offer situations, hedonistic experiences and a rich variety of fascinations. In these worlds of fascination, game principles play an important role. They offer individuals the possibility of experiencing the fates of others, a whole plethora of emotional states, exciting experiences, tension, the feeling of winning and the bitter-sweet feeling of losing.

In this study, we highlight the role of game principles in contemporary filmmaking and digital games. Based on an outline of the mind-set of contemporary hedonistic societies and the characteristics of media culture, we formulate an initial assumption. In it, we point to the fact that

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[1] See: HUIZINGA, J: *Homo Ludens.* Basel : Burg-Verlag, 1944. (HUIZINGA, J.: *Jeseň stredoveku. Homo Ludens.* Bratislava : Tatran, 1990, p. 222.)

[2] See: CAILLOIS, R.: *Les Jeux et les Hommes.* Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1958. (CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé. Maska a závrať.* Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998.)

[3] The player demonstrates skill, strength, their goal is to win, to be the first among others.

[4] The player relies on luck in the game if a good number is rolled, for example in a dice or roulette game.

[5] Creating a new identity, playing at being someone else, like children playing pirates.

[6] Players experience excitement based on the strong emotion of fear or euphoria of danger.

[7] See: VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Paralely digitálneho novinárstva a jeho rozmach v kontexte rozvoja informačných a komunikačných technológií v spoločnosti. In PRAVDOVÁ, H., RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Koncepty a praktiky multiplatformovej žurnalistiky. Slovensko v sieťach digitálnych diaľnic.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2017, p. 183-272.

game principles have become relevant factors in contemporary media production, conditioning the choice of themes, narratives and visuals. Game principles, with their properties, also guarantee the popularity of a media product and its success in the media market. In the study we apply hermeneutic, phenomenological as well as causal methodological approaches. We favor an interdisciplinary oriented selection of sources. These come mainly from the fields of media and cultural studies, game studies and sociology. From this perspective and methodological background, we thematize and verify the degree of truth of the formulated premise.

2 Homo Medialis in Contemporary Consumer Society

The process of the formation of homo medialis is one of the most significant attributes and phenomena of contemporary societies in the European and global cultural and civilizational space. M. Petrusek[8] speaks of late modern societies, which transformed the previous industrial society, denying modernity, and began to take shape around the middle of the last century. In his opinion, the term late modern society best corresponds to the development of thought and mentality of societies of this period, as well as to changes in all spheres of social practice. These societies have specific features, such as the emergence of new forms of life and pluralism of lifestyles, the development of new patterns of social behaviour resulting from the emergence of affluent societies, the influence of the media world, as a result of which man perceives two worlds – the world of everyday life and the simulated the world mediated by the mass media, the displacement of direct repression and its replacement by methods of media seduction, a significant change in value patterns indicating low level of adherence to ethical norms, the emergence of a new postmodern mentality, the rapid growth of globalisation processes, including the accompanying global risks, such as new forms of social differentiation, new stratification of society, the emergence of new social movements, etc.[9]

In the second half of the 20th century, new lifestyles, the development of communication practices, changing geopolitical conditions, and the general phenomenon of wealth in the Western civilizational circle have become the subject of reflection for many social scientists.[10] As M. Petrusek very aptly notes, there has been a "naming boom".[11] Authors are trying to name changing social and cultural conditions as succinctly as possible. In particular, we would like to draw attention to the phenomenon of consumer hedonism. In the past, it was practised only by a handful of people from high or bohemian society. In the second half of the last century, it became a driving force of mainstream culture with a radically different cultural habitus. It manifests itself through the exhibition of hip-rock pop culture, blasphemous humour, cynicism and violence. D. Bell points in this context to new phenomena such as "pop-hedonism", "counterculture" and their fundamental influence on the formation of new lifestyles and dominant values.[12] However, it should be stressed that such a reversal of lifestyles is nothing new in the history of cultures. In traditional societies, the lower classes tended to imitate the lifestyles of the upper classes. The desire for an affluent life of pleasure has been an age-old motive of both the upper and lower social classes. It is clear, then, that the extreme manifestations of the 1960s pop hedonism

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[8] See: PETRUSEK, M.: *Společnosti pozdní doby*. Prague : SLON, 2006.

[9] Ibidem, p. 23-24.

[10] See for example: BELL, D.: *Kulturní rozpory kapitalizmu*. Prague : Sociologické nakladatelství, 1999; BAUMAN, Z.: *Úvahy o postmoderní době*. Prague : Sociologické nakladatelství, 1995; HABERMAS, J.: *Strukturální přeměna veřejnosti*. Prague : Karolinum, 2000; HUBÍK, S.: *Postmoderní kultura*. Olomouc : Mladé umění K Lidem, 1991; HUNTINGTON, P. S.: *Střet civilizací. Boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. Prague : Rybka Publishers, 2001; JAMESON, F.: *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham : Duke University Press, 1991; KELLNER, D.: *Media Spectacle*. London : Routledge, 2003; LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Hypermoderní doba. Od prožitku k úzkosti*. Prague : Prostor, 2013; etc.

[11] PETRUSEK, M.: *Společnosti pozdní doby*. Prague : SLON, 2006, p. 23-25.

[12] BELL, D.: *Kulturní rozpory kapitalizmu*. Prague : Sociologické nakladatelství, 1999, p. 68.

followed the expansion of hedonism of the narrower, elite classes in earlier periods. The new revolutionary counterculture merely took up the ideal of hedonism, expanded it, and offered it to the broader social strata through the mass media. It manifested itself, for example, in extremes of sex, exposure of the naked human body, drug use or fanatical worship of popular music. On the other hand, the revolutionary counterculture disrupted the conformist waters of Western political elites. The hippie movement, for example, was inspired by the beatnik generation of musicians and rebelled against the values and norms of previous generations, against their religious, gender and racial stereotypes, or against the war in Vietnam.[13] Some forty years later, however, Canadian researchers J. Heath and A. Potter, in a bold study,[14] conclude the dysfunctionality of counterculture. They ask the cardinal question: Why is consumer capitalism not a threat to the system but, on the contrary, a driving force? They answer it unequivocally. The capitalist system has irreversibly dominated the revolutionaries' counterculture through the well-established mechanisms of the free market. The capitalist system has merged with the counterculture to create a new, commercially lucrative platform of pop culture that is mass-produced for the masses of enthusiastic consumers. The consumer society knew how to find a way to neutralize the counterculture revolt. It has commercialized it and dropped it into the waters of the conformist mainstream. In this way, the revolt did not become a threat to the consumer capitalist system, but on the contrary, became its driving force.

From the second half of the 20th century to the present day, a specific hedonistic lifestyle has taken shape. It is dominated by the idea of immediate gratification of all kinds of needs, a preference for experiences and emotional pleasures. According to G. Lipovetsky, its driving force is the commercialisation of all areas of social practice. It has perfected not only things and goods, but also culture, art, time, communication, procreation, life and death.[15] In the sphere of media production, these tendencies are manifested by exact demonstrable indicators. They are, for example, the increase in the number of commercial media, the pursuit of high commercial turnover, and a fundamental change in the discourse of media production. Media creators offer a wide variety of genres and stories contained within them, which evoke different emotional states in the audience. The driving force behind the change in media discourse is clearly commercialisation. According to D. C. Hallin and P. Mancini have changed their priority objectives. The mission of the media is no longer to disseminate ideas and form social consensus. It is to produce entertainment and information that is sold to the consuming public. *"The rise of television and radio, together with the commercialisation of the press, contributed significantly in the 1960s to the transformation of Europe into a more individualised consumer society, and this process accelerated in the 1980s."*[16] The media began to apply sophisticated marketing strategies both in the areas of production, distribution and sale of airtime and pages of periodicals and in the sale of final products. Proper market segmentation, targeting and subsequent positioning in the eyes of potential customers became the basis for the success of any media entity. [17]

We are currently in a phase of civilisational development under the baton of digitalization of all areas of social practice. We are shaped by the domination of digital technologies, socialized and educated through the flow of information on digital information highways. However, the media world has become fragmented, as has the social world. Traditional mass media and one-way communication are dissolving into a chaos of online communication on social networks; recipients are becoming communicating users. G. Lipovetsky talks about the birth of a new culture. It is a culture that allows people to leave the position of a passive consumer and,

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[13] See: HANÁK, O.: *Hippies. Slepé rameno mrtvé řeky*. Prague : Argo, 1992.

[14] See: HEATH, J., POTTER, A.: *The Rebell Sell.* Toronto : Harper Collins Publishers, 2005.

[15] LIPOVETSKY, G.: Vláda hyperkultury: kosmopolitismus a západní civilizace. In LIPOVETSKY, G., JUVIN, H.: *Globalizovaný západ. Polemika o planetární kultuře.* Prague : Prostor, 2012, p. 37.

[16] HALLIN, C. D., MANCHINI, P.: *Systém médií v postmoderním světe.* Prague : Portál, 2008, p. 300.

[17] ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ.: *Mediálny marketing.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2010, p. 5.

on the contrary, to live and discuss together more. On the one hand, we are witnessing a dependence on this form of communication, on the other hand, we are seeing greater possibilities in networking.[18] The fact is that the acceleration of the technical-technological platform of digital communication offers enormous communicative and creative possibilities. However, the expansion of the creative possibilities of multi-platform production also supports the rise of media hedonism.

The aesthetic impact of the synergy of sign, sound and video changes the discourse of media creation. The phenomenon of media hedonism represents in contemporary media production the preference for specific themes, modes of realisation, the emergence of new programmes, formats and the hybridisation of genres. Media creators offer recipients the pleasure of experiences full of emotions, impressive scenes. Producers mainly focus on creating media content that offers different kinds of experiences, emotions or different kinds of pleasures and satisfactions to the recipients. Hedonistic, pleasure- and experience-oriented production has become the domain of typical entertainment genres or entertainment features. They can also be traced across media production and are prominent in stories and their visualisation. At the same time, contemporary homo medialis is overwhelmed by the wide range of experiential media production. It turns out that contemporary media culture is shaped in the coordinates of gaming principles, which are conventional to the mental settings of people existing in contemporary hedonistic society. This environment creates a person desiring media experiences that saturate their physical participation in classic games and gaming entertainments of various kinds. However, some authors also point to the positive aspects of the gamification of the media environment. According to N. Vrabec, digital games should not only be perceived as a means of entertainment and relaxation but also as effective education and learning tools that *"enable the successful transfer of knowledge while maintaining learner enjoyment, which is especially important for active participation during knowledge construction"*.[19]

3 Image and Narration as a Macrocosm of Playful Audiovisual

It should be stressed that the principle of eliciting pleasure, based on the operation of game principles in media production, runs through the history of media culture like the proverbial Ariadne's thread. The dominant acting principle of mimicry is already encountered in archaic cult dances, in the celebration of the god Dionysus in the ancient Greek theatre of Dionysus, in the famous tragedies of *Aeschylus*, *Euripides* and *Sophocles*, and in the comedies of Aristophanes. The principles of mimicry and agon, with the principle of ilinx in the background, are clearly present in ancient Roman gladiatorial fights or popular horse-sled races. Scenes of legalized madness in the Middle Ages can also be classified as entertainment principles modelled on the dominant acting principle of mimicry. The popular classes of the time performed their unattainable fantasies through the staging of wild, unbridled carnival festivities. They built a worldly hierarchy "upside down",[20] indulged in the bawdy humour of grotesque travelling theatres, etc.

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18 LIPOVETSKY, G.: Vláda hyperkultury: kosmopolitismus a západní civilizace. In LIPOVETSKY, G., JUVIN, H.: *Globalizovaný západ. Polemika o planetarní kultuře.* Prague : Prostor, 2012, p. 60-61.

19 VRABEC, N.: The Concept of Soft Skills Cluster and Descriptive Indicators in the Process of Gamification. In KUSÁ, A., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., BUČKOVÁ, Z. (eds.): *Marketing Identity.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2019, p. 999.

20 Authors' note: M. Bakhtin, in the second half of the last century, discusses the role and mission of the fool within the practices of carnival culture. In the figure of the fool he identifies and describes the attributes of carnality, anti-intellectualism, down-to-earthness, inverted values, the "upside-down" world in medieval and Renaissance cultures (See: BACHTIN, M.: *François Rabelais a lidová kultura středoveku a renesance.* Prague : Argo, 2007.).

The emergence of the printing press in the 15th century and the later boom of popular bestsellers of various genres such as farces, short stories, fairy tales, sagas, travelogues, ancient heroic sagas, later the novel, provided many more opportunities to exploit the entertaining elements of culture. A specific landmark in the application of entertainment elements is the emergence and development of the tabloid periodical press in the 19th century, as well as the dynamic development of electronic media in the 20th century.[21] It can be concluded that contemporary media creators have solid prerequisites for developing the tradition of applying the entertaining game elements. The reason is simple. They have greater opportunities to offer narratives and images that are conventional to the desires of the audience. In fact, they offer their fans diverse fascinations and escapes from the daily routine of ordinary life by becoming part of the action in a simulated world. The audience is drawn into the action of diverse storylines through the experiential pleasures provided by the game principles. The appeal to the presence of game principles allows the creators to evoke sufficient tension, a range of emotions. The creators work with themes, narrative structures, means of expression and imagery in such a way as to offer them as unremarkable, infantile, trivial and sufficiently dramatic situations. At the same time, various persuasive strategies are used in this context, which are based on sophisticated forms of verbal and non-verbal influencing.[22]

Game principles play an important role in this. They model characters as constructions of interesting, ingenious, comic, clever, stupid, infantile, mean, trivial, etc. actors in the plot.[23] It is important to stage an engaging media carnival, game situations in the spirit of mimicry, agon, ilinx, and often in the spirit of alea. In this context, it is important to note that N. Postman already pointed out this principle of creating a media entertainment carnival at the end of the last century. He pointed to television production in which all topics are turned into entertainment, even news. Attractive and desirable news should not burden the viewer's attention, but stimulate it with variety, novelty, action, movement. It is necessary to create visual stimulation as a substitute for thinking.[24] We note that these trends have intensified in the first two decades of the new millennium, and that this mode of media production is also changing the perception of the viewer. They become superficial, unfocused. They miss the context because they focus only on the visual effect. They do not think, they just take in some of the information through a series of compelling images and attractive, exciting narratives.[25]

Also on the basis of the above facts, it can be concluded that contemporary media production has a universal character. Such a character is determined by the mental needs of the audience, the mental setting of media creators in the current hedonistic, consumerist society. However, the universal character of print, auditory and audiovisual media production is also related to the technical-technological platform of the media, to the process of digitalization, internetization, virtualization. According to M. Ciel, *"the new technologies have become part of the film image, and at the same time have begun to create it"*.[26] The universal nature of media

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[21] See: PRAVDOVÁ, H., HUDÍKOVÁ, Z.: Correlation of Culture, Game Principles and Media Productions. In *Communication Today*, 2021, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 4-19.

[22] PETRANOVÁ, D., VRABEC, N.: *Persuázia a médiá*. Trnava : UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 59-60.

[23] Authors' note: Such manifestations of the protagonists of the drama correspond to the mental setting of the society, its tendency to trivialization, juvenilization, narcissism, as well as the value setting of individual cultures (See: McGUIGAN, J.: *Modernity and Postmodern Culture*. Buckingham : Open University Press, 1999; BAUMAN, Z.: *Globalizace. Důsledky pro člověka*. Prague : Mladá fronta, 2000; BECK, U.: *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus − Antworten auf Globalisierung*. Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp, 2004; LIPOVETSKY, G.: *Éra prázdnoty. Úvahy o současném individualismu*. Prague : Prostor, 2003; RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: *Mediálna zábava v 21. storočí. Socionálno-kultúrne aspekty a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2016.).

[24] POSTMAN, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti*. Prague : Mladá Fronta, 2010, p. 113.

[25] See: McCHESNEY, R. W.: *Problém médií. Jak uvažovat o dnešních médiích*. Český Těšín : Grimmus, 2009.

[26] CIEL, M.: Nové paradigmy, zmena systematík. In PAŠTÉKOVÁ, J.: *Súčasné filmové teórie I. Nové rámce, iné problémy*. Bratislava : VŠMU, 2019, p. 11-12.

production is also related to the availability of digital technologies, which are becoming a part of almost every individual. It can therefore be stated that media production is being democratized and liberalized. Media production has become an opportunity for every individual.

The above factors determine changes in creative practices within media production. There is a convergence of different media platforms, hybridization of genres, and the differences between different types of media break down. The media environment is being unified on the basis of rethinking old concepts and practices. The convergence of media creates space for experimentation in the field of media creation and media art. A specific aesthetic of expression of media production is developing, in which the image dominates. The image is the window into each narrative, it makes the accompanying word, music, sound, letters present. As M. Maffesoli says in an interview with M. Fischer, the image represents the macrocosm, i.e. what people actually share and what connects them.[27] In the periodical press, for example, the image underlines the power of the word in a dominant way. In television, the image offers a coherence of chaotic utterances in a set of interconnected genres and formats. In cinema, the general availability of digital technologies is recognisable at a glance. It manifests itself in the fact that the image is spewed with a range of submissive or provocative close-ups, dynamic cuts that make the audience dizzy in the spirit of the ilinx game principle. The playful, searching, provocative experimentation with the image, the gradation of editing, the kitsch-like colouring, make the viewer dizzy in the dimensions of the ilinx game principle. It is also indicative of an aesthetic of over-dimensioning, of a tendency towards neo-Baroque dynamism in contemporary audiovisual production.

The development of digital technologies, the change in media production strategies, the fragmentation of audiences, the emergence of fan groups and the changing nature of reception represent a significant turning point in media production following the emergence and dynamic development of digital games. D. Botler and R. Grusin introduce the concept of remediation. The term represents the embodiment of one medium in another. It is also a fundamental feature of digital media. Remediation ensures that the older medium is not abolished because the new medium remains dependent on the older one.[28] In the case of the development of digital media, one can point to the influence of traditional print and electronic media on the development of multiplatform media. At the same time, however, another consequence of the development of digital technologies in the field of media production is also interesting. It is the process of imitating the creative processes of dominant media. Currently, such dominant media are digital games or some audience-successful formats, such as reality shows or some film genres. M. Ciel draws attention to this moment when he points to the sources of inspiration for the structure of contemporary film. These are digital games, reality shows, video clips in terms of content and means of expression. The form and dramaturgy are changing, shortcuts and speed are preferred, the exposition is shortened, the player becomes part of the fictional world of the game. The player can enter the action of the game, the film, influence the course, shape the action.[29] The player of digital games can become an actor in the action by being allowed to enter the action, by taking on the role of the creator of fates, by becoming part of the identity of the protagonist. Narrative digital games have brought a new creative paradigm to perfection. Developers seek to emancipate the narrative of the story and the interaction of the actor of the plot. At the same time, however, they determine the degree of freedom they grant them. Some can enter the story environment, others are guided by the story. In this way, computer games remediate film, becoming an interactive film. But there is a difference between telling a

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[27] FIŠEROVÁ, M.: *Obraz a moc. Rozhovory s francouzkými mysliteli.* Prague : Karolinum, 2015, p. 147.
[28] BOTLER, J. D., GRUSIN, R.: *Remediation: Understanding New Media.* Cambridge : MIT Press, 1999, p. 45-47.
[29] See: CIEL, M.: Nové paradigmy, zmena systematík. In PAŠTÉKOVÁ, J.: *Súčasné filmové teórie I. Nové rámce, iné problémy.* Bratislava : VŠMU, 2019, p. 12-17.

story in a digital game and in a film. According to C. Pearce, game designers are not primarily focused on telling a story, but on creating a compelling framework for the game. Literature and film focus primarily on telling a story. In digital games, everything comes down to player experience and skill.[30] An important incentive for playing digital games is the validation of skills, the overcoming of obstacles, as well as the victory metric and the players' awareness of entering and influencing the action.[31] Players thus become characters in a cinematic narrative. They gain control over the plot as they can solve a puzzle or choose a path to an objective. The game transforms and draws the player into its distinctive world of simulacra. The condition for transforming and immersing the player in the game environment is not a reflection of reality, but a belief in the fantasy, imaginary world of the digital game.

4 Instead of the Conclusion: Contemporary Media Culture in the Coordinates of Game Principles

Despite the above mentioned differences, digital games and film also share a common characteristic. Both platforms offer their own interpretation of created reality. At the same time, they bear witness to the time and culture in which they were created, to the ideals, norms, models and morals of the time. Both platforms reflect and valorise these cultural elements in their narratives and visual representations. Digital games and film also reflect and apply the aesthetic values and artistic discourses of their time. We note that for each historical period, certain aesthetic values and artistic discourses are binding for both creators and audiences. Each period also privileges certain themes that are compelling to the target audience. Although we live in the mindset of late modern society and in an era of postmodern chaos of art forms and themes, trends in preferences of themes and genres are clearly established.[32] They are in fact related to the mindset of late modern society, to contemporary tastes, as well as to advances in digital technology. J. Radošinská, Z. Kvetanová and L. Rusňáková point out an evident fact in this context, the long-term trend in the choice of film themes and genre framing in the second decade of the 21st century. Film producers prefer films that offer stories of male superheroes, biographical film portraits of personalities from different spheres of social life. Spectacular fantasy narratives are popular.[33] From this perspective, one can also point to the preferred genres in digital games. It should be underlined that genre and thematic frameworks and genre diversity are typical for both film and digital games. If digital games have influenced the discourse of contemporary cinema, cinema, comic book literature, animation, literary horror, short stories, historical narratives, science fiction, etc. have influenced the themes and narratives of the action, adventure or strategy genres of digital games. However, it is clear that digital games also have their preferred themes, heroes and complex interactive stories, but these are synchronised with the game mechanics. H. Bendová, for example, points to the conventionality of the genre field of

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[30] PEARCE, C.: Towards a Game Theory of Game. In WARDRIP-FRUIN, N., HARRIGAN, P. (eds.): *First Person. New Media as Story, Performance and Game.* Cambridge : MIT Press, 2004, p. 144.

[31] KLIMMT, C., HARTMANN, T.: Effectance Self-Efficacy, and the Motivation to Play Video Games. In VORDRERE, P., BRYANT, J. (eds.): *Playing Video Games: Motives, Responses, and Consequnces.* New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006, p. 144.

[32] Authors' note: The paradigm of postmodern art was aptly named by the cultural analyst J. Pavelka. He points to contextuality, the abolition of temporal and spatial contexts, the blurring of the boundaries between reality and fiction. He also points to the blurring of genre boundaries, to the tendencies towards mystification, which are culminated in the concept of computer virtual reality, to the preference for plurality of forms and contents, quotations, imitations, parodies, etc. (See: PAVELKA, J.: *Kultura, média & literatura*. Brno : Středoevropské centrum slovanských studií, 2004, p. 91-95.).

[33] RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: *Globalizovaný filmový priemysel.* Prague : Wolters Kluwer, 2020, p. 193.

digital games, to the rootedness of fantasy, science fiction, horror, fairy tales genres. According to her, this is a historically conditioned inclination towards a certain type of genres and stories. It's a mass phenomenon that suits digital developers because it offers certain clichés.[34] Z. Mago reflects on the iconicity and timelessness of games that offer an experience independent of time. It is precisely such games that are the most successful and popular in the digital games market. However, he points out that the concept of iconicity and timelessness of games is much more complex, as it is also possible to reach a state where a game becomes an archetype.[35]

We think it is important to underline that both platforms – digital games and cinema – reflect culture and are reflected in creation. Both platforms are built on the basis of the operation of game principles, which are part of the psychological make-up of human beings. Game principles are embodied in storytelling, in the phases of dramatic action, in the visual representation of a situation. We consider the acting principle of mimicry to be the primary one, because it is the basis for the emergence and development of media culture. The actors of plays change their identity, play their stage roles, perform in costumes with the identity of other beings. The symbols of masks and the metamorphosis of identity are the fetish of the game principle of mimicry. According to E. Fink, since the cradle of cultures, since archaic times, the mask has fascinated; through the mask, man wants to appear to himself in different ways.[36] An archaic shaman used it to resemble demons, an actor in an ancient drama resembled gods and mythological heroes, an actor on the movie screen identifies with the character of the character being played, a player of digital games puts their mind, abilities and emotions into their avatar. The gaming principle of mimicry is a way to visualize the real world and imagine a fictional world, because it is part of a person's mental makeup. This fact was noted by Aristotle when he attributed the emergence of art to man's innate ability to imitate creatively.[37] Thanks to this innate ability, man imitates the patterns of the social world, looks up to fictional heroes, identifies with fantasy, mythical characters. Imitation and identification with heroes allows people to transport themselves into other, imaginary worlds and to enjoy the feeling of being reincarnated into a new social role. The game principle of agon ensures that people experience sufficient tension at each stage of the dramatic action. In dramatic acting, they often rely on fate, luck or chance. This is promised to them by the presence of the alea acting principle. However, both the spectator and the player also expect a large dose of adrenaline from their reincarnation or identification with the hero of the story. The ilinx game principle will take care of that. It evokes enough emotion for the game participants to enjoy the giddiness, chills or feelings of delight from the dramatic scenes. Based on the above facts and arguments, it is obvious and unquestionable that media culture has been shaped by the action of game principles since its inception. In contemporary media culture, however, these principles are much more impressive and intense.

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[36] FINK, E.: *Hra ako symbol svĕta*. Prague : Český spisovatel, 1993, p. 177.
[37] See: ARISTOTELÉS: *Poetika.* Prague : Oikoymenh, 2008.

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Authors

Prof. PhDr. Hana Pravdová, PhD.
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
Nám. J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
hp.kaplna@gmail.com

Hana Pravdová is a Professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the UCM in Trnava and the Head of the Department of Language Communication. She specialises in media, communication and cultural studies. She works as a professor and pedagogical researcher in the field of media studies. Her research and teaching activities focus on the areas of media culture, games and gaming principles in cultural history, the media and cultural industries, globalisation and media localization, journalistic genres, multiplatform journalism and editorial systems in the media.

Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Zora Hudíková, PhD.
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
Faculty of Mass Media Communication
Nám. J. Herdu 2
917 01 Trnava
SLOVAK REPUBLIC
zorahudikova@gmail.com

Zora Hudíková is an associate professor at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the UCM in Trnava and the head of the Department of Artistic Communication. She specializes in media psychology and media and communication studies. Her research and teaching activities include topics such as media psychology, the personality of the creator and the personality of the percipient, cognitive processing of media content, creativity in media and artistic production, the effects of media production, management of creative teams, radio and television journalism, sociocultural aspects of the market environment and media performance.