

MORALITY, THE MEDIA, THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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FOREWORD

The current stage of the societal development is characteristic with an unusually high dynamics of change. The process of socialization in society is taking place in significantly different circumstances compared to the past. The last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century are marked for various contradictory tendencies present.

Democratization within the society, as well as societal and political changes bring new impulses for the development in the fields of economy, society, religion, and culture. Transformation processes have brought about fundamental changes that affect not only public politics, market economy¹, but also the everyday life of common people in this country. However, the changes are also affecting the very foundations of traditional values, value systems, and orientations. The period of postmodernism and accelerated globalization has wreaked havoc in traditional social securities, but also in the well-established system of values and, in addition to progressive tendencies, generated new challenges on a global scale to address the current issues of human life as well as the potential for the emergence of conflicts of nowadays.

Apart from the new trends, the social processes have also brought about a number of negative issues. Common people have started to use the following terms: unemployment, social network, poverty, social dependence, subsistence minimum, wealth, and others, again. Countries unfamiliar with these concepts up to this day now have to find solutions to these problems. Human life exists in the framework of mutual contact between people. Through its structure, society creates various departments of both official and unofficial nature and forms a social environment within them. The analysis of the social environment should take into account both the quantitative and qualitative aspects.

The social transformations and the consequences we encounter in everyday life are the results of the ongoing social conflicts and compromises. Each one of us endeavours to deal with both heterogeneity and radical changes according to their own abilities and will. It needs to be said, though, that we do not have that many choices.

¹Regarding so-called social economy as an alternative to market economy see eg.: BAĎUROVÁ, B. *Sociálna ekonomika a Rawlsova koncepcia spravodlivosti*. 2014; BAĎUROVÁ, B. *Sociálna ekonomika a environmentálna etika*, 2014.

A special feature of the present era is the project designing and the effort required to implement projects. This process has been heavily deregulated and fragmented. Society's interest in new social phenomena occurs only when they manifest themselves in a very significant form. Social phenomena are not usually taken into account unless they become problematic. Thanks to the scientific analysis of social phenomena and the diagnostics of negative phenomena, the elimination of the negative manifestations of social factors is possible to some extent. The role of modern social sciences is to help people properly orient themselves in complex socio-cultural processes. The most important is the process of Europeanisation. Its nascent goal and a special challenge for social sciences (also in the field of education) is the forming of an emerging European identity. Current geopolitical reformation of the world, including Europe, caused several political issues not only of the spatial nature. There are new problems emerging related to the topic of this monograph, such as morality, media, and pressing needs of society and culture. Inspiration for both the author and the editor of the publication was the co-authorship and the role of the editor as a leader of the project VEGA 1/046/16 Attributes of European identity in the context of youth education (2016–2018). The content of this grant is related to the topics of this publication, especially in terms of examining an attitude to the concepts such as nationality, citizenship, solidarity, diversity, and others, with attention being paid to the 'identity crisis'. This is mostly true within the discourse of the future cultural national and European identity of the inhabitants of the European continent. The abovementioned notions closely and contextually relate to the phenomena featured in this monograph – morality, media, medial culture, needs of the society, and the way of human life.

The publication aims to highlight the issues of the way of life, living standard, lifestyle, and living conditions. Despite a long-term research conducted in this field, no integrated and complex theoretical bases have been formulated yet. The difference of the theoretical opinions lies in a number of facts. Advanced Western countries have a relatively high standard of living and quality of life. However, the theoretical elaboration of their research is not very detailed and therefore it is difficult to use their experience methodologically. From our own experience, we know that in the countries of our region, life-standard issues are processed at a very good level, but the actual reality lags far behind the theory. A certain degree of isolation of our country has caused a part of its younger population to somewhat idealise the American way of life.

This paper also deals with the role of the media. The need to collect and disseminate information is inherent to the human. Humankind could not evolve and move forward without dissemination and transfer of information. The way people communicate with each other is historically conditioned by their technical and scientific level of knowledge. Mass media communication has become the most important type of communication by which people receive information and use it as a means of entertainment. A streamlined and professionally managed media system is constantly developing new forms of entertainment and information dissemination. New technical and technological advances in science – radio, the Internet, television, satellite information transfers, mobile phones, etc. cause a dramatic increase in the number of people on Earth who can use the information from different sources through the media, choose entertainment programmes according to their wishes, and educate themselves at their own discretion.

Editor

I MORALITY AND MEDIA DEFINED

The term 'morality' can be used:

1. descriptively – where the term describes the principles of conduct stated by society, or
 - a) a different group (e.g. religious) or
 - b) these principles are accepted by the individual;
2. normatively – where the term states the principles of conduct, adhered to by any sensible person in specific conditions.

The way morality is defined is crucial for the formulation of ethical theories, although often underrated. Applying the concept of morality to describe the actual principles of conduct is likely to lead to a certain form of relativism². The various conditions under which each sensible person would adhere to the principles of behaviour contribute to the formation of different kinds of moral theories among those who use the notion of morality in a normative way. Claim that there is no referent for the notion of morality in the normative sense, i.e. to argue that there are no principles of conduct under any convincing, more detailed conditions that would be presented by all rational persons, leads to moral scepticism. Therefore, the definition of morality is of a great importance, albeit not being discussed more broadly.

The term 'medium' generally means a middle, middle member, a medium or an environment in which a particular phenomenon or its intermediary, an agent of the contact, or communication between people occurs.

From this point of view, any meaning of the term is possible – every language (also in biology – DNA in protein production, technology – programming languages etc.), every writing (including Braille, music notation etc.), and even human spoken communication.

(According to McLuhan, the term includes media such as newspapers, radio and television, the printing press, as well as the writing itself, the material instruments and technical inventions, means of transport, weapons, etc.)³

Do we therefore also regard the writing as a medium (mediating, transmitting texts, products of verbal behaviour of people), or as a text, speech, and language (as a medium through which people relate to each other and to the world) ?

² Regarding ethical theories and morality in relation to other disciplines see eg. BAŽURA, R., BAŽUROVÁ, B. *Dizajn a etika*. 2016.

Definition and decision is very important in that process.³

From the traditional point of view, the language as a system is also a kind of medium. Narrowing it down to this definition seem highly inappropriate, regarding all the recent knowledge and increasing awareness about the human language and speech. However, there is no denying that the language is a form of communication medium in certain regards. (Mediating the transmission of simple, clear, and factual information – language and speech in this process perform the function of a medium or an auxiliary tool.)

Only the material tools that help the transmitting, retaining, or distribution of information or texts, i.e. individual realizations of speech, language, and communication will be included under the term media.

Language, speech, and writing as such will not be included.

II MORALITY AND MEDIA

Advertisement and the media, which we perceive as commonplace and indispensable, have become an inseparable part of everyday life and one of the most influential socialising and educational means⁴. We consider them distributors and bearers of value orientations, that is, they are involved in the creation of personality, identity, or other human qualities. Thus, it is possible to talk about the impact of media and advertising on the formation of values of the younger and older generations.

The term ‘advertising’ comes from Latin word ‘reclamare’ – to speak loudly, to call again, and to represent a distinctive type of public communication, the purpose of which is to inform the public about products and services and to offer them.⁵

Reifová et al. (2004) states that “Advertising is a specific way of influencing opinion, buying, moral and aesthetic attitudes.” We anticipate that advertising will be used together with non-streaming communication to sufficiently capture the interest of customers. The primary role of advertising is to inform the addressee and to mobilize them towards certain behaviour.

³ McLUHAN, M.: *Jak rozumět médiím*, 1991.

⁴ Regarding media and education in relation to environmental problems and human rights see eg. BAĎUROVÁ, B., BALÁŽOVÁ, E. *Mediálna výchova pri poznávaní práva na priaznivé životné prostredie*. 2015.

⁵ GREGOVÁ, R.–RUSNÁK, J.–SABOL, J. S.: *Interpretácie textov elektronických masových médií*, 2005.

Mass media can be defined as “organized processes and technologies that enable mass communication.”⁶

We view television, the Internet, film, radio, and the press as mass media, which we also understand as socializing institutions, because they can act on human awareness. In addition to television, which is the main protagonist of countless ads, their secondary source is the Internet, through which you can get a lot of information, anywhere and instantly. A huge quantum of information and data may pose a threat to the emergence of relativistic values⁷, but there is also the risk of their complete spoilage. We can also talk about the deepening differences that arise between the Western world and the poor countries because of the unevenness of obtaining information. Digital literacy also causes differences between ‘old’ and ‘young’. A similar situation is in advertising, respecting the differences between developing and advanced countries. In connection with the globalization of the media, it is necessary to remember the penetration of the America’s dominant culture, the English language, and the increasing commercialism. People find themselves in the gap of advertising and the media, forgetting their own thinking, opinion, and identity, which changes the values and quality of life of an individual.

Children are a particularly endangered group. “A child of pre-school age cannot yet distinguish the fiction and reality or differentiate advertising from the main programme, does not understand the function of advertising communication itself. A minor does not only take over patterns of behaviour, but fully believes the information in the ad.”⁸

The target group of media and advertising is, however, the older generation (productive and post-productive age), which represents the most solvent group, while critically assessing the effect of the media in influencing and shaping its personalities. The resulting diametrical difference in the value system between the elderly and the younger generation is a contemporary phenomenon. In the older generation, we are talking about the value of the ability to adapt, which corresponds to the knowledge of their duties, discipline, willingness to make sacrifices and to help. On the contrary, the younger generation is characteristic by strong individualism, self-interest, fulfilment of their needs and desires in the shortest

⁶ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*, 2002, p. 31.

⁷ Regarding the nature of values from the metaethical point of view see eg. BAĐUROVÁ, B. *Úcta k životu a vnútorná hodnota z hľadiska vybraných koncepcií environmentálnej etiky*, 2014

⁸ RANKOV, P.: *Masová komunikácia. Masmédiá a spoločnosť*, 2002, p. 55.

possible time. These facts relate to uncritical access to the media and distrust of institutions, norms, or authorities. In the awareness of the younger generation, there is an inability to distinguish between the virtual world and reality; they question absolute values such as love, family, society, freedom.

In the older generation, it is also possible to find a more responsible treatment of media with regard to selectivity, the ability to distinguish between quality and poor media content, lesser susceptibility to influence and manipulation. Therefore the axiological orientation in the older generation does not radically change, while at the same time they retain their traditional stances.

“It has to be reminded that the mass media also bring positive feedback as they help the spreading of information and communication on a wide scale. They can create the impulse for charity, the spread of knowledge, and relaxation. Advertising and the media, as attractive means of communication, can become a tool for strengthening communication in the family or other social relationships.”⁹

Moral relativism, however, absorbs the present society, which, in many social situations, appears chaotic or reckless, rejecting clear-cut truths. An important factor that could positively influence and direct the occurring phenomena is the active adaptation to living in the media reality and the preparedness to adapt the media reality to our needs.

III THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL BASES OF MEDIA AND WAY OF LIFE

Analysing social phenomena and processes is one of the oldest aspirations of philosophy and ethics¹⁰. This endeavour appeared when people began to think about their life and about themselves. Examination of the essence and specific factors of the way of life is not a new phenomenon in science. Human desire for a fair way of life is well known in the cultural and historical development of society. It has already appeared in ancient Greek philosophy in a certain theoretical form.

In the process of creation of material and spiritual means, a certain way of life was created and the very nature of people started to develop. The issue of

⁹ AUFENANGER, S.: Familie und neue Medien. In: *Medien impulse*, 2004, p. 11.

¹⁰ Regarding selected social issues and their analysis from the point of view of ethics see: POLÁKOVÁ, E., BAĎUROVÁ, B. *Vybrané problémy sociálnej etiky*. 2013.

the formation of lifestyle has become the focus of philosophy and other social sciences in the late sixties and early seventies. While in the initial period there was only a sporadic or random focus on research activities in this area, now it is a holistic, systematic, purposeful, focused, interdisciplinary research covering the whole field of scientific knowledge. The seriousness, recency, and importance of these issues in the development of the society was enforced by the social practice itself.

There is a considerable amount of scientific works on this issue. Each author has focused on pointing out and analysing certain elements, features, moments, and factors of the way of life. Many authors confuse the concepts of way of life, lifestyle, living standards, and variously define its structural components, quantitative and qualitative indicators. Some authors, such as Grulich and Nový, often characterize the way of life only as a broad sociological category. Due to the wide range of issues, there are frequent mistakes and inaccuracies in the characteristics as such.

The way of life is not only a sociological category but also a philosophical, ethical, economic, and political one. It is inherent to all social sciences and their categorical apparatuses. This category requires a comprehensive approach to its solution. It is necessary to analyse it from different points of view, while taking the unifying scientific-methodological aspect into account. When comparing the concepts of way of life and living standards, we think that the concept of way of life is wider than the living standard. The way of life involves the living standard. The way of life in the social sciences is an aggregate category characterizing the life of a person as a whole and capturing its nature, content, and structure.

The way of life is a combination of the subjective aspects of society, as well as the objective aspects that shape common activities, ways of coexistence among people, and their behaviour. The way of life appears as a structured manifestation of their material and spiritual life. We can distinguish it from different points of view, such as those of social groups.

There are groups that, in general conditions, create a specific way of life that manifests itself in specific forms of behaviour, in external signs reflecting and emphasizing their specificity. They create a subculture, a cultural expression of one's own group. Such a typical group with its own distinctive subculture is the youth. In addition, there are also groups that have their own way of life

but do not need to express it externally. Older people are such a typical group.

The way of life involves the living standard¹¹. The living standard is determined by the real income of the people. It encompasses the volume and structure of consumption of material goods, the sphere of employment, housing conditions, the level of education, health care, the structure of the timetable, the possibilities for cultural leisure and self-fulfilment as well as the overall family conditions.

The category of living standards expresses in particular the material and economic conditions or the means of satisfying the basic human needs of a person. The way of life puts them in the context of life manifestations and forms and the overall life process through which people actively subordinate the conditions of life to their conscious control. In relation to the comparison of these categories and the analysis of the category of the way of life, the category of lifestyle becomes the focus of attention.

Lifestyle is a form of expression of a certain way of life, and as such cannot go beyond the limits of the qualitative determination of a given way of life. The concept of lifestyle is used for the characterization of psychological, moral, and social peculiarities of the way of life of an individual or a social group.

The way of life leaves a trace on the lifestyle, but this does not mean that the lifestyle is typified to such an extent that there are no nuances in the conditions of the creation process. Lifestyle is also influenced by geographical conditions, historical peculiarities, tradition, spiritual wealth and various psychological relationships. Lifestyle is the specific type of behaviour of an individual or a social group with permanent differences in conduct, ways, habits, and inclinations.

Lifestyle is influenced by the level of the material and technical base of the society and, in particular, the results of material production. Lifestyle is based on the external forms of life of the individual and the social group with permanent expressions of organization of work and leisure, personal interests outside the field of work, organized family life, participation in public affairs and life. Lifestyle is a social, mental, and above all, economic phenomenon.

¹¹Regarding concepts of standard of living and quality of life see eg. BAŽUROVÁ, B. *Sociálna ekonomika, kvalita života a etika*, 2014.

Contrary to the definition of the way of life, the psychological and social traits and specifics of people's behaviour are emphasized in lifestyle. Lifestyle appears to be an essential feature of individuality, a manifestation of its relative autonomy and ability to form a personality based on its own imagination of intense spiritual, social, and moral life. For this reason, the process of shaping, developing, and defining personality also includes the moment of defining and shaping one's own personal style of life.

Every person or group shapes a lifestyle. We cannot associate this category with just emphasizing certain peculiarities of specific people with the desire for originality, with the desire to separate from the group at all costs, to distinguish themselves from others. Forming a personal lifestyle is a matter of upbringing and, in the most general understanding, reflects the culture and morals of society. The style of life is essentially the expression of human individuality and its specificity of uniqueness.

Lifestyle is created by:

- a) objective choices within a given social system,
- b) subjective motives influencing human behaviour.

In relation to the social differentiation of a society, lifestyle is often one of the main identifying features of a social group or stratum.

In Western European social sciences, the concept of quality of life has emerged in relation to the lifestyle issue. Theoreticians claim that democratic capitalism must be an era of quality of life. They regard as possible that the achievements of the quality of human life can be realized without a thorough transformation of the foundations of state-monopoly capitalism.

The term 'quality of life' characterizes the side of the way of life that is related to the qualitative aspect, i.e. the standard of satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the people. This term refers to those elements of individual and social life that cannot be captured by quantitative characteristics or measured, as it is possible with the elements of the standard of living.

Quality of life is a concept that is applied in Western theory in connection with certain consequences of development oriented towards the

rationalism of science and technology. This concept was introduced in 1967 by the American economist J.K. Galbraith. The term was originally used in connection with specific issues of environmental deterioration. The issue of quality of life derives from the basic characteristics of Western civilization in particular, which focuses on growth indicators in all areas of social life.

German social democrats see the quality of life in the fact that private ownership, business functions and market mechanisms must constantly strengthen. The issue of quality of life has been at the forefront of two reasons:

1. Economic growth and the development of science and technology make it possible for the people to meet their primary material needs. In connection with this, the law of needs growth operates with increasing power, activating and updating the necessity of securing and satisfying their higher forms.
2. At the same time, the side effects of this economic growth emerge, posing a threat to the health of human existence.

At the current stage of society development, the issue of quality of life is increasingly linked to the need to address the global challenges of the 21st century civilization. It is recognized that, despite the differences in the development of individual countries in the world, there are problems related to the existence of the whole of humankind and it is therefore necessary to find a common platform for their solution. A willingness to dialogue and a rational approach to defining basic problems and to find common groundworks were noticed more than forty years ago when the Club of Rome was founded on the initiative of the most important world capacities in various areas of theory and science.

Club of Rome was founded in 1968 at the initiative of the Italian industrialist A. Pecceio, who became its first president. It was a non-governmental and unofficial international association of scientists from different subject fields and from various countries. The aim of this association was to create a global forum where politicians, diplomats, and scientists would jointly consult the various dangers of global crises, and ways to prevent them. Our scientific panel understands the activities of the Club of Rome only in terms of keeping a record of environmental degradation. It is clear that the objectives of the association have broadened from the time of its founding.

Among motivating factors of its establishment and activity were the crisis phenomena associated with the economic, scientific, and technological development of the countries of Western societies. The most significant negative side effect of this development was the growing danger of the ecological crisis. At the same time, the key issue was the question whether mankind will be able to resolve economic, social, political, cultural, religious, moral, and environmental problems at the turn of the new millennium, as their continual rise may lead to a global disaster.

Since 1972, the association has begun a cycle of reports called Reports to the Club of Rome. The individual reports of this association have been the subject of research by scientists around the world. While theoreticians of Western countries sought in these warnings the possibilities and perspectives of modelling the future, Eastern theoreticians have focused primarily on criticism of the content concentration of the Club of Rome. In this critique, the ideological aspect of the above-mentioned issue is evident. For illustration, we can mention I. T. Frolov's *The Prospects of Man* (1983) and V. Lejbin's *Club of Rome and its Ideas* (1985).

The first report, *The Limits to Growth*,¹² warns that if the growth trends that are characteristic of the current world model are not changed, if the growth of the population, industrialization, raw material use, food production, and consumer goods are not halted, and the growth of environmental pollution is not slowed, then the resources of our planet will be exhausted in about a hundred years, and humanity will have to face the necessary disaster. The nature of these warnings is highly pessimistic, not only as for the paths leading to the global catastrophe, but also because of the unconvincing solutions that the authors formulate as conditions for achieving a state of economic equilibrium. In this regard, we would like to point out that this fact has been thoroughly analysed in the US and the presidential administration has issued strict regulations prohibiting exporting US oil, and on the contrary, buying it from Europe and the Arab region.

The first two reports were based on quantitative indicators and mathematical modelling methods were used as prognoses. The third report is characterized by an apparent effort to capture qualitative indicators and to process economic, political, and sociological concepts. This report, titled *Reshaping the International Order* by Tirbengen (1976), is based on the humanist idea of the fundamental goal of mankind, which is to achieve a dignified life and prosperity for all the people in the world.

¹² MEADOWS, D. L. et al.: *The Limits to Growth*, 1972.

The humane content of human life will be achieved if the following basic human values are respected:

- a) equality as an expression of the equivalence of all the people of the world and the need to combat discrimination and prejudice;
- b) freedom as a recognition of the fundamental rights of each person and their compatibility with the free expression of the will of others;
- c) democracy and the participation of people in economic, political, social, and cultural life;
- d) solidarity, which demonstrates the expressions of love, compassion, and brotherhood, expressions of common interests and mutual respect;
- f) the preservation of cultural diversity as a necessary tendency for the development of humanity based on the recognition of the independence of nations and the usefulness of mutual exchange of values between different countries;
- g) care and preservation of a healthy environment, for future generations of humanity.

The fifth report under the title Goals for Mankind appointed an important role for humanity on Earth. The process of humanizing the world and man is linked to the four basic goals we need to achieve:

1. The global safety objectives act as a decisive condition and prerequisite for further human survival on Earth. The basic task is to end the growth of arms expenditure while reducing, or minimising the possibility of disrupting international conflicts, whether at regional or global level.
2. Global supply targets that supposedly eliminate the hunger and malnutrition of millions of people on Earth. This implies increasing labour productivity in agriculture, distributing food evenly between countries and within them, adding to world's reserves and creating a global supply system that will meet the diverse needs of all the world's citizens in the food sector that are essential to life security.
3. Global targets for the use of energy nad natural resources. The most important task of ensuring implementation of these goals is to use energy to serve people and not to become a victim of irresponsible use of its potential. To introduce control of technology for power generation and evaluate it not only in terms of investment, but also in terms of social significance and environmental

conservation. To ensure rational use of natural resources by changing existing ways of exploiting natural wealth and assessing the use of natural resources and raw materials. To restrict quantitative resource consumption indicators.

4. Global goals of development are not supposed to be oriented towards maximum economic growth but to the satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of man. To improve the quality of life and establish social justice in the distribution of material and spiritual goods.

The need to care for the humane quality of man, to ensure a dignified life, coupled with the demand for the development of human existence, which also presupposes his participation in the social life, in which the rights of each member of society are organically linked with his responsibility for the fate of mankind. Autonomous personality development and integration of people into a coherent whole are all recommendations that are contained in the Seventh Report of the Club of Rome by Botkin, Malitz and Elmandjra (1979), entitled No Limits to Learning – Bridging the Human Gap.

The problem of the need to focus on the qualitative aspects of human life, that is to say, the paths of transition from quantity, creating consumer attitudes and consumer lifestyle, to the quality of life based on the development of personality, is the essence of the entire effort of the first president of the Club of Rome A. Peccei. In his program work *The Human Quality* (1977) he connects the process of humanizing the world and man with the necessary transition from economic growth to growth aimed at the development of diverse human needs and the improvement of quality of life, from the isolation of peoples and countries to the unity of people, to interdependence and solidarity, from intolerance and passivity to engagement in social life and active participation in it, from moral misery and poverty and political irresponsibility to moral and social responsible activity, from the destructive relationship to the human environment to the global management of the Earth's natural resources.

This work is dominated by six goals, the realization of which is also the mission of mankind:

1. To respect external borders linked to the existence of limited biophysical resources of the Earth and to adhere to the principle that not only are humans able but also must use natural wealth for its purposes without disturbing the existing harmony in nature.

2. To respect inner boundaries conditioned by the physiological and psychological adaptations of man to the external environment, to seek internal reserves for satisfying adaptation to de-naturation and the rate of contemporary life, as yet, but not to overstretch the human organism because it can induce stressful states and disturb the physiological functions of a particular individual.
3. To preserve the cultural heritage and not reduce the culture of the future to a unified model and to ensure that the cultural achievements of humanity that are reflected in the different languages, customs, and memorials of past times do not disappear.
4. To help to create a world community based on the new international order and a system of mutually bound but geographically diverse centres for the approval of socially responsible decisions, centres operating at all levels of the human organization.
5. To promote environmental preservation by developing a global environmental plan for the rational use of natural resources, removing environmental pollution, rationalize population growth, and so on.
6. To help create a productive device or world economic system to ensure the effective functioning of all economic mechanisms in the global community.

Various activities of the Club of Rome, its members and supporters, represent a significant shift from the technocratic concepts of the industrial society to the basic questions of the existence of man, to the paths of humanization of the contemporary world and to every individual, and their warnings against unilateral technocratic economic development are also acceptable. The accent on the fundamental values of human life, common to all the inhabitants of our planet, is undeniable.

The authors of the material are highly regarded scientists, whose opinions we cannot in any way refute or trivialise. It is above all the idea of creating a new human ethos through the way of world solidarity. The concepts of global solidarity, an innovative learning project presented by the authors of the Seventh Report as a universal approach to knowledge and life based on a human initiative, like the requirement of global ecological thinking or a new global ethos not expressing the factors that can lead to a change in civilization and culture .

The concept of quality of life is not limited to the activities of the Club of Rome. This point of view on the need to move from the quantity of consumption,

levelling and passivity to human quality is given above all because the international cooperation of scientists around the world, without distinction of boundaries that has been developing over the last two decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain, agrees with the concepts of the Club of Rome.

This association of scientists presents the humanistic path of mankind, combined with the joint efforts of representatives of various democratic, religious, economic, sociological, and other groups to solve the global problems of the present and to create such social conditions that will ensure the realization of the essential forces of people.

From the point of view of scientific analysis, it should be noted that our task is not only to analyse the mentioned categories or subcategories, but the theoretical classification of the category of lifestyle into individual subcategories allows us to structure the reality of the way of life more accurately. Individual authors define different numbers of these subcategories. The way of life, as an interdisciplinary category, is richer in content and includes subcategories. It is a reciprocal relation that continually raises in quality

The characteristics of these life-style subcategories is presented primarily for the following reasons:

- a) the effort to define the category as precisely as possible as well as its relation to other categories and categorical apparatus of other social sciences;
- b) to point out the scientific-methodological orientation and the way of its further development.

The theoretical discussions on the issue of lifestyle cannot be considered as concluded, given the constant and longstanding discussion in specialized monographic works and journals. Most specialists agree that each way of life that emerged in our history acts as a complex of the typical forms of activities of individuals, social groups, and real social conditions. Essential features include the content and nature of society's work, forms of social organization, the participation of people in social life, opportunities and ways of satisfying their needs, forms of leisure time activities, and the form of day-to-day behaviour and conduct of people.

It is not extraordinary, because development is also necessary in case of attitudes and approaches to the given issue. A considerable number of sociologists agree that the way of life is one of the most diverse social phenomena in which economic, social, psychological, religious, moral, and family relationships are reflected. It is an expression of thoughts, actions, behaviour, and mental processes of an individual and a social group.

There is a large number of scientists in both the West and the East, who emphasize the subjective aspects of the way of life. They characterize it as a concrete and historical process of people's lives, conditioned by their position in a particular social system, and characterized by the level of material resources development, the maturity of the social forces, and the practical ability to use them to achieve the basic social interest, to achieve the goal, and to meet the necessary needs of a particular individual.

Three features come forth in this characteristic: 1. way of life, 2. way of thinking, 3. course of actions. These moments act in mutual bond and synergy. Based on this, we can divide our views into two groups.

The first group of authors attempts to characterize the way of life as a course of people's actions, which are shaped by the influence of economic and social factors, the relationship of the individual to the state, legislative power, politics, ideology, etc. They are fundamentally against enriching the content and determinants of lifestyle. The second group of authors assumes that the unity of forms and conditions of life activities is shown in the way of life. This group determines the way of life as a system of essential features that characterize the activity of nations, social groups, individuals, and historically determined social conditions.

Based on the broadness of content and the diversity of opinions, the ambivalence of the question of the way of life is determined by the following facts:

- a) it is an incomplete elaboration of the problems in the whole range,
- b) the characteristics are formulated at different levels and in relation to the needs of different areas of life,
- c) the various determinations, especially in detail, are connected with the effort to give the most specific characteristics of the phenomenon,
- d) its diverseness lies in the effort to find out all interrelationships and dependencies among the determining factors of the way of life.

Despite the diversity of the problem under consideration, we can outline some of the key features:

1. The category of lifestyle belongs to the system of scientific categories of social sciences. It is an integral category reflecting social relationships. It allows for the concretization of the general characteristics of the social system.

2. The way of life relates to the economic level that determines all spheres of social life at every stage of its development. It emerges in the process of people's activity under the joint action of all social relations.
2. The way of life, production-economic facts, objective economic regularities and laws are related.
3. The way of life is an open system of subjective, objective, quantitative, and qualitative characteristics.

We can briefly describe the way of life as an actual historical system of subjective and objective conditions, the most typical forms, the existing characteristics of the activities of social groups and individuals, the conditional systems of social relations, and especially the economic relations of a given society. It is a structured system of life activities of people in the productive and non-productive sphere, the essential features that are organically linked to the conditions of social reality, satisfying the most important social and individual needs.

The way of life allows fixing the interrelation of the essential forms of individual and group activity with the conditions of their social existence, allocates the place of work in the system of essential characteristics of the way of life. It examines changes in the field of work on the perspectives of further improving our way of life. It is necessary to distinguish between the content of the way of life and the assumptions that are important in relation to this category, but not identical with it.

“In the whole life-style of a central European city, which could be collectively referred to as a consumerist, there are different groups and social classes that differ from each other. These differences often result, among other things, from the specificity of their social life experience. In this one city with a generally consumer way of life we can meet revolting squatters, punk rockers, beggars, and many other groups, sometimes demonstrating their attitude to life with a certain lifestyle. Representatives of other groups, whose lifestyle is a sign of loyalty, or conformances to the nature of life, can often be identified by external features, such as the type of housing, certain means of transport used, the specific method of dressing, etc.”¹³

¹³ NOVÝ, I. et al.: *Sociologie pro ekonomy*, 1997, p. 147.

It is clear from the above quote that the way of life is created in a particular community of people on the platform of both individual and group behaviour. It is not the expression of the individual will of man, but of the social process in which each individual participates. Ways of life can be characterized as an coherent manifestation and result of social life of people and their social relationships. At the same time, however, this comprehensive manifestation of life can be defined as an inconsistent and contradictory manifestation, because conflicts can arise as consequences of either desirable or real-life social events

In studying the way of life, four basic questions arise:

1. the formation of criteria and principles that determine the characteristics appropriate to the given lifestyle;
2. identification of those aspects and relationships of social life that are dominant from the way of life point of view and create its essence;
4. knowledge of the general characteristics and their differentiation with respect to different social groups;
5. knowledge of those determinants and factors of a social nature that play a major role in its creation.

The classification of factors and determinants of the way of life in the professional literature is not uniform. The importance of defining the factors that affect the way of life lies in the fact that their knowledge is the key to determining the factors of the way of life differentiation. Different objective conditions in which the way of life of individuals and social groups is realized also act on different value orientations, differentiated needs, interests and the resulting forms and content of life activities.

When classifying factors and determinants of the way of life, it is necessary to distinguish the meanings of terms like living conditions, determinants, and factors of the way of life. Living conditions represent all objectively existing conditions in which the whole society develops in a particular historical period.

It is crucial to know the living conditions when studying lifestyles. It allows us to understand the meaning of human activities to a certain extent, predict them, and through a possible change in the living conditions, to make a way of directing a way of life. The way of life is a field, which in normal conditions can only be minimally influenced or changed by direct interventions. Direct measures would hardly bring the expected effect under the regulation. Much more effective is the indirect influence of the way of life through a change in conditions.

While the way of life of each particular individual represents (due to the active presence of the subject/individual) a unique and unrepeatable case,, living conditions that act in the same way on the whole society or its social groups are undoubtedly more pronounced and can be expressed quantitatively. Social phenomena are the result of concurrent causes, which can also cause conflicting consequences in some social processes.

In terms of clarity and collation of living conditions, it is necessary to point out the determinants, factors and components of the way of life.

Determinants (from de-termino = to define, to limit) are the external objective conditions, the sum of which determines the character of the way of life of the people in a particular society within the given social system during a historical era. Determinants are, therefore, conditions, which, in a high degree of dependence, have a fundamental influence on the formation of the life process both in terms of the qualitative nature and the scale of social spheres and areas. People do not adjust to them passively, but they act on them and change them by their active conduct, while the change of objective conditions is obvious only in the next period.

The objective conditions of social life, i.e. the material level, manufacturing, state authority and its policy, the social structure, the legal structure and the system of legal measures, the impact of educational, religious, and cultural institutions together with the system of values as well as the historical tradition, are determinants that affect and influence the activities of people, their relations, standards, values, and ideals.

More than twenty years ago, several definitions of determinants appeared in both Slovak and Czech professional literature. We can mention such authors as F. Hronský, V. Brožík, H. Navarová, and others.

H. Navarová includes among the determinants: “1. biological conditions, 2. geographic conditions, 3. socio-economic formation, 4. socio-economic relations, 5. method of distribution and human standard of living, 6. international situation.”¹⁴

¹⁴ NAVAROVÁ, H.: *K některým otázkám formování životního způsobu absolventů vysokých škol*, 1981, p. 14.

The number of the individual determinants varies with each author. For completeness, we should also characterize life style factors. Some authors (F. Hronský, I. Škorica) think the determinants and factors of the way of life to be identical. In our opinion there is a difference. Factors of the way of life differ from determinants by the force of their impact and the scope of their reach. Only certain aspects, elements, or areas of life are affected, modified, or differentiated, and even then with a lesser degree of dependency. Those are the geographical conditions that affect the occupational structure. By a factor in the way of life, we refer to a phenomenon that affects some components of the way of life, but it is already a part of it which means that it does not act externally.

Determinants of the way of life are generally divided into two groups in our professional literature:

1. natural or similar to natural determinants,
2. socio-historical determinants.

When considering the above-mentioned conditions in relation to the formation of the way of life, it is necessary to talk about four problem areas:

1. Man as a biological being. In this hypothesis, we mean the respect of the morphological structure and physiological function of the human organism, which form the basis for the higher functions and in their totality constitute the cultural and social content of life. However, it needs to be remembered that the human organism, like any living organism, is relatively conservative and has a relatively stable structure and function. With elevated pace and degree of environmental transformation, different degrees of adaptive lag can occur.
2. Status of a man in the natural environment. The above-mentioned fact can result in the second problem circuit. This is an understanding of the inalienable bonding of the social system to the natural ecosystem of our planet. The fact that an attempt to transform nature and create habitation of the environment based on specific human criteria and ideas is inherent to every human and cannot lead us to believe that one is able to cross the biological foundations of life to the extent that they will not be compelled to respect these laws. The facts about the negative consequences of such a unilateral and simplified understanding of the unlimited human abilities lead us to the warning of the emerging global ecological crisis and to the knowledge that in the relationship of man to nature, a radical and rational change in the ways of using natural resources is necessary.

3. Relationship between the way of life and the natural environment. Searching for another denominator that results from this second characteristic is being dealt with by many professionals in various professional fields in today's world. If nature conservation was considered an matter of environmentalist professionals a few years ago, today most experts agree that a radical change in the use of natural resources is needed, and a fundamental change in the way of life is a prerequisite for human relationships with nature. Similarly, today, we cannot only justify the causes of the crisis of the natural environment by the imperfection of technological processes and call them the negative consequences of the technical and informational civilization.

Technics is a neutral instrument and its appropriate or inappropriate, responsible or irresponsible use does not depend on the historically limited degree of rational scientific knowledge but on the content of the way of life, its cultural maturity, and the realistic value priorities. The conflict between economic and ecological interests is nothing but the culmination of contradictions between the essential needs of man, the interests of nature and the basic economic laws of society.

The narrowly understood functionality of the production technologies has caused the development of negative expansionary activity in the environment, and worse, it has brought into common life the view that nature has a value for man only if it serves as a cheap source of raw materials. This fact has been thoroughly analysed in the last two decades by the experts, and their work brings a number of empirical data from which we can draw a trend of further development. To address these issues, social sciences must contribute much more significantly than they have so far.

4. The way of life, nature, and culture. Nature is an important contributor to the formation of a certain type of culture and a certain way of life. In primitive societies, the cultural expression of people is an natural expression of their practical everyday activities. Tradition in the present-day African-Asian countries has increasingly dictated the turn to previous cultural elements and models. Breaking from native nature and the nation itself leads to austerity and creative sterility.

Primary natural determinants need to be specified more precisely:

I. Natural conditions.

a) Geographic conditions, to which we also count climatic conditions, the location of the area in which the society lives, the landscape, the territory, the prevailing weather type, the water resources, the fertility of the soil and, last but not least, the ecological conditions. Natural conditions are gradually losing their primary importance to the way of life. In cases of natural disasters (floods, earthquakes), natural conditions become for some time the dominant feature of the whole lifestyle. We should not forget about this fact even under normal circumstances.

b) Biological conditions, which we usually specify in relation to the health of the members of the society or its components. Health care can serve as a typical example of social intervention in natural conditions. Medicine in advanced countries has been able to largely manage some of the traditional dangers of epidemic diseases, malnutrition, and child mortality. However, this area of social life must increasingly devote attention to new forms of civilization diseases such as obesity and all kinds of addictions, or various forms of ecological threats. In connection with the character of natural determinants, should a man exist as a biological being, a kind of metabolic exchange between them and nature is necessary. This biological fundament is a basic determinant of meeting the needs of life that are necessary for its existence.

c) Demographic conditions, which are already a very clear transition from natural conditions to social conditions. In analysing the way we live, we cannot forget about such important data as population density, settlement structure, migration level and status, population structure based on gender and age, and others. Empirical knowledge of these facts is a matter of social science, and cannot be absent from the characteristics of the way of life. There is a relatively dense network of small and medium-sized cities in our territory. This relates to the way of commuting. Compared with other countries, especially in Eastern Europe, we have a certain natural advantage in this respect.

II. Social conditions.

Under the notion of social conditions, we include those that result from human activities, but in relation to each individual they affect their individual will objectively and independently. In general, there are three scientific characteristics: a) economic determinants, b) social determinants, c) specific elements of superstructure, ideas, norms, and institutions.

We further differentiate macro-social, social, and microsocial conditions.

1. Macro-social conditions include:

- a) Type of socio-economic system. The inclusion of this determinant among macroeconomic conditions means that every social system contains some general elements, which are valid for the communities of the same type.
- b) Indeed, membership in a particular socio-economic system also expresses its belonging to a wider international association, whether in the form of economic unions (the European Union), military-political clusters (NATO), but also of volunteer ties (the movement of non-participating countries). Membership in these clusters greatly affects the living standards of people in individual countries.
- c) Macro-social conditions include the current state of the international political situation. Various forms of both escalation and reduction of a tension are not only a response but also a reflection on the overall spiritual climate of society.
- d) For other macro-social conditions, we have to include all trends of global development. This can be characterized in the last decades as scientific and technical progress. The rapid development of science and technology at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century largely fails to respect the political boundaries of individual countries. It acts as a common denominator of changes in their way of life. This is a response to the necessity to raise the level of education of people, ranging from smallest companies to global social units. Japan and the countries belonging to “four Asian dragons” can serve us as an example.

In that regard, the following must be pointed out:

1. the process of computing and automation associated with changing the attitude of man to the overall work,
2. moving a human being to the level of thinking and the technology watchdog,
4. the change of the overall system of division of labour and the professional structure,
5. the working time reduction,
6. the internationalization of production and changes in the system of international division of labour.

These tendencies do not always develop at the same pace and in the same direction. It depends on socio-economic, religious, cultural, moral, and political conditions. This process, despite overcoming the initial inadequacies, has not yet reached the peak. Its complex comprehension is the possibility of understanding the contemporary social processes.

2. Social conditions:

These conditions are also included in the classification of living conditions, which act universally within a particular society and control the given society to a certain extent:

- a) This is primarily about the relationships in the manufacturing process, the use of production technologies and workflows, the amount of automation, mechanization, and manual labour. The definition of labour productivity, the share of state and private production is considered very important in studying the production method.
- b) The volume of material production and its productivity relate to the material consumption of the society. Satisfaction with consumption can be parallel to the standard of living, which is the most visible condition of the way of life.
- c) The level and purposeful operation of the follow-up institutions. This is mainly about binding legal norms, the activity of the legal system of state administration, the activities of political parties and movements. Furthermore, we include here the role of social organizations, the functioning of the educational system, the operation of other forms of socio-educational work, the influence of cultural, artistic institutions, and the mass media.

- d) A special kind of social conditions resulting from the cultural and historical specifics of the society that we include under the notion of tradition. Traditional behaviour can designate that which does not stem from immediate living conditions, but rather reflects the multigenerational development. The historical experience of the society, the richness of folklore traditions accumulated in the course of years, can act as a tradition. Traditions are the only component of living conditions that society does not control and cannot change. However, we want to note that we can consciously build on some of those traditions (e.g. the Constantine-Methodist tradition) and develop them.

3. Microsocial conditions:

These are living conditions that are operating on a lower than the whole-societal level. Essentially, they arise from each individual's belonging to a system of social groups that create informally immanent own standards of behaviour, their own system of values, etc.

Authors also call these microsocial conditions the group-specific characteristics of people. Microsocial conditions are an essential domain of sociological empirical research, which is capable of describing the partial subdivision of social reality. This means that if the average human life or the rejuvenation or aging trends were among natural demographic conditions of interest, we are dealing with differences in age groups in the case of micro-social conditions, and then we are talking about the way of life of youth, adults, or the oldest generation.

II. Individual conditions.

The category of personality living conditions concludes the overall group of definitions. Individual conditions are the same what we call human qualities in everyday life. They are created by psychological and bio-physiological characteristics of individuals. We mean the temperament of a person, the type of personality, the physical constitution, and so on. Another category of personality conditions comprise of the experience of an individual.

Individual conditions intertwine with the human activities to create the human personality; on the other hand, they act as a special element that predates immediate activities and again affects them in a certain way. The category of personality conditions is also an expression of respect for human personality ontogenesis. It focuses on two sources:

1. biogenic, which presents congenital inherited features,
2. sociogenic, which characterizes elements of an individual acquired through socialization.

The above-mentioned classification of living conditions convincingly demonstrates the versatile dependence of the way of living on these conditions. In connection with the current problems of our society, it points to the real boundaries of the influence of social and educational activity. The basic source of change in attitudes and behaviours of people is the shift in material living conditions and the active participation of people in their implementation. The highlighted schematic diagram clearly shows the multidisciplinary nature of the way of life.

When analysing natural conditions, we must necessarily rely on geographic, geologic and biologic data, in close collaboration with medicine doctors, ecologists, and demographers. The study of macro-social conditions focuses on the results of philosophy, political science, economics, history, law, and science of art. These results reflect in sociology in a concentrated form of social and microsocial conditions. The analysis of personality conditions leaves its imprint in psychology and social psychology. The proposed scheme is also important from a methodological point of view. It leads us to hold on to the specific meaning hierarchy present in the case of the microsocial conditions analysis.

Since its inception, technical means of communication have become part of our everyday life, whether in the mediation of information, or entertainment. This level of development corresponds to the tendencies to explain the functions of communication tools and their impact on society and individuals as accurately as possible. The emergence of modern technical tools also creates current theories that seek to capture the way media, later film, radio, and television, mediate, capture, or interpret reality.

Significant authors are Innis (semiotic-oriented by exploring public communication, especially its bias), McLuhan (the most influential conservative mass media analyst), or Postman (with a critical analysis of public communication – a semiotic critique of TV- communication).

We can talk about the two directions of media exploration and communication:

1. semiotic direction - predominantly Anglo-Saxon,
2. hermeneutical direction - continental European.

Both disciplines point to the essential importance of speech stereotypes, communication and discourse (“text-conversation”) strategies aimed at getting knowledge and opinion. The knowledge of man also has a pragmatic-contextual and speech character for both the semiotics and the hermeneutics, which results in its inseparable connection with the communication and media repertoire of society. The psychology of communication is also based on this fact: “We are as if sold off to communication: our awareness of ourselves depends on communication as well.”¹⁵

Gadamer adds: “We say that we are ‘leading’ the conversation, but as the conversation gets more real, its course is less dependent on the will of one or the other partner. Therefore, the actual conversation is not sometimes the one we wanted to lead. It should be quite right to say that we find ourselves in the interview rather than engage in it.” He further emphasizes the importance of meaning and understanding: “Foreign language is only an exaggerated case of hermeneutical problems, i.e., alienation and its overcoming. In truth, in the same unambiguously defined sense, all the ‘items’ the hermeneutics is dealing with are foreign. The imitation role of the translator is only slightly different from the general hermeneutic role of each text.”¹⁶

Semiotic and linguistic exploration, structuralism and its subdivisions, as well as the analytic-philosophical ‘turn to language’, brought a textual turn according to Eco: they showed (especially French post structuralism) “how much is the seemingly naive survival determined by discourse strategies.” This causes the urgency of semiotic research: “Semiotics has become a morally critical duty in its own way, when it became clear that mass media are becoming sacred texts that create ideology and transform the perception of the real world.”¹⁷

In the second half of the 20th century, new thinking, a new social-critical stream of (neo) Marxists, along with their supporters, emerged. In particular, the Frankfurt School has produced a number of concepts of analysis in connection with the criticism of the mass media and their ideological influence, from the shaming of the ‘unidimensionality’ of the ideal consumer of the mass culture (Marcuse) to the creation of such type of a consumer or reconditioning/education of the mass media.

During the Cold War, a ‘dominant paradigm’ (according to McQuail) emerged in western democratic countries – a new look at the mass media and the perception of their functions. The scheme depicts a threat to society’s freedom and justice by a totalitarian model, which is abused by the mass media to oppress

¹⁵ WATZLAWICK, P. – BAVELASOVÁ, J.B. – JACKSON, D.D.: *Pragmatika lidské komunikace: interakční vzorce, patologie a paradoxi.*, 1999, p. 30.

¹⁶ GADAMER, H. G.: The Power of Reason. In *Man and World*, 1970, vol. 3. p. 5-15.

¹⁷ ECO, U.: *Mysl a smysl*, 2000, p. 36, p. 44.

citizens while disorienting them. Such a type of approach is characterized by the unidirectional nature of transmission and effect, the security of the dogmatic society, participation of political dogmatism, and, ultimately, of course, a kind of commonplace for the members of the society, who are not thinking about it at all. The main critical objections or reservations to this paradigm are a contiguous and interconnected bundle called an alternative paradigm by McQuail. Either criticism from liberal positions (de-masking of the actual state of the functioning of the media in the interest of cooperating economic, political, and military elites), or (mostly) of positions influenced by social or socialist motives and incentives (wider interest in issues of inequality, collective privileges, monopolies, rejection of the linear transmission model, etc.).

In the 90s of the 20th century, the significance and power of political propaganda and ideology have ceased due to a relatively peaceful situation within the western civilization model (pluralism, free market, etc.). In the foreground, other social problems are already under way, i.e. themes of ethnicity, race, diverse lifestyles, culture, education, upbringing, racism and anti racism, feminism, etc.

Mass communication is subject to day-to-day changes that result in the maximum satisfaction of the recipient, getting closer to them. In current perception, media no longer fulfil only informative function, but they are primarily about satisfying the recipients through entertainment. The audience has become more demanding, not satisfied with superficial views, looking for more and more information from all areas of life (education, science, art, travel). There is a situation when one becomes slavishly dependent on specific programmes through which they live their lives. It can be said that the traditional transmission model is still changing and the recipient enriches it with the following models:

- a 'ritual-expressive model' (processes of control, sharing, shared expression of common values, and reinforcing of cohesion by the community),
- a 'promotional model' (assumed to be the main aspect of a media presentation of demonstration and attention seeking); and
- a 'reception model' (based on abstract semiotic and general cultural analyses of meaning, coding, decoding, etc.).

In recent years, we have encountered advertising phenomenon in mass media. These appear wherever we look, whether in television, in newspapers, even in the radio. The television advertising includes all the accents mentioned before, because it is not just information about the product or the brand, but also a promotion, manipulating the recipient to accept the new instructions for consumption. It is about persuading an individual of the need to be in the right layer and to be 'in'.

Mass media study wants to track all the structures that emerge during the communication processes and from which these processes are being created. Structures are all forms and regularities resulting from the technological situation and from practice, material and immaterial sets (information, rules, and systems) and their layers, institutions, implementation units, nature of contractual relations, and so forth.

From the broadest point of view, it is possible to distinguish approaches and perspectives according to those possible contexts they are putting their media discussion in:

- economic (or economic-industrial) aspect,
- political (or politico-economic) aspect,
- technological aspect,
- the public interest (mixed) aspect – summarizes in a certain way the normative pathos of other concepts, including the critique of capitalism and defence of the individual (and the 'semantic power' of the individual) against the interests of national and international, political and economic institutions.¹⁸

Mass communication is classified by space, means (newspaper, film, television, etc.), distribution (national, international, regional level), by media (stations), and by particular product (song, book) or provider.

The audience is the main target of media, mass media, or mass communication. Those recipients receive products of such forms of communication. Information, which is mediated to a given group, is targeted, according to the group structure, interests, size, behaviour, etc. Marketing of consumer content is based on media research, what are the requirements of the recipient, that is, what is consumer content.

¹⁸ McQUAIL, D.: *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*, 2000, p. 182.

The audience of the 21st century can be characterized as masses of millions, some being controlled by television channels, not forgetting that this socio-cultural phenomenon has also passed through a development (from the gathering of masses (ancient Greek theatres), through the invention of a printing press and subsequent emergence of reading public). The perception of the audience as a mass gains a new dimension in the research of the constitution of the groups. This examination focuses on the personal influence of the individual inside the group – the leader¹⁹ as a distinguished type of the individual within the group, without ignoring the creation of the market concept and the synergy of the legitimate practical interests of the participants of the mass media communication.

The idea of the mass as a large number of people who are losing their uniqueness under the pressure of the group influence, its peculiarity and individuality have been examined most by Canneti (1994). The mass makes a human being into a creature of action, instead of being judicious. Those who are able to kill, to act violently, or direct others to do so, who show fitness for action, achieve the greatest importance in the masses and their communities.

Ortega y Gasset (1993) perceives Western society in the first half of the 20th century as a civilization of snobs who parasite on other civilizations. A society of incompetent and irresponsible consumers of cultural achievements and profits, people who are unable to understand their civilization, politics, technology, parasiting on civilization. A society of irresponsible, incompetent, and unworthy consumers of cultural achievements and profits of civilization, people who do not understand 'their' culture, technology, politics, and do not realise this fact in the blindness of obtaining the greatest reassurance, care and benefit.²⁰

At the end of 19th century, Le Bon, with his strenuous formulations, attributes the people of masses and the mass society a timeless nature.

The problem of the emptiness of 'opinions' and mentality of the masses as well as collective foolishness does not dwell in every individual inadequacy: one usually understands the (one-off) rational analysis of the situation – but on the next day they return back to their stereotypes and repeat their previous mistakes; the environment of mass repetitive manifestations of crowd is stronger. For example: "Imagine a modern freethinker who would be transferred amidst the Middle Ages by some miraculous force. Do you think, when seeing the sovereign power of the

¹⁹ The concept of ethical leadership is theoretically analysed by BAĎUROVÁ, B: Aký by mal byť etický líder v organizácii? = What should an ethical leader be in an organization? 2018

²⁰ ORTEGA y GASSET, J.: *Vzpouřa davů*, 1993.

religious ideas that ruled at that time, would they have tried to fight against them?”²¹

One of the important factors that causes a decline into massification is the transparency and ease of such a social life – a simple repertoire of snobs, devoid of change and ambiguity.

It is almost impossible to lead the crowd people or snob society, to persuade them to undertake a longer, targeted resistance, to open up to a new idea, and accept it. It is hardly possible to lead ignorant, impious clients; the solution might be to please them. The certainty with which snobs achieve the flawlessness of their conversation seems as if it was confirming their legitimacy; “The main and fundamental role of the press and governments have become a prediction of public opinion today.”²²

Unilateral concepts of the mass phenomenon need to employ methods that are more sophisticated in the Internet age to defend the immanent models and predictions that result from them. At the other hand Toffler (1996) notes the existing ‘demassification’ at all communication levels, in the holistic sense of culture, also in production and entrepreneurship, including media demassification (the fall of monopolies of previous technologies – radio and television broadcasting, reduced number of frequencies, in telecommunications, etc.).²³

Since the 1980s, ‘ethnography of the audience’ has been cultivated in cultural studies, and in its expressions, we come across a preference for conviction of the capacities and possibilities of media sharing recipients to change or reject ‘preferred’ reading, some of which are endorsed by text authors. We anticipate fundamental differences in cultures on a diametrically different reception of media sharing of members of each culture. Fiske presented the concept of ‘semantic power of the people’, or ‘semantic democracy’ – based essentially on the optimistic notion that cultural knowledge (and ‘cultural capital’) and the power of tradition are independent of the economic power of the mass media and their ability to choose topics and contents of people’s social life (‘setting the agenda’).²⁴

In postmodern culture, we note the radicalization of the aspect of ‘playfulness’, resp. divergent functions in cultural creation, finding otherness, differences, conflicts between each other, ‘dissens’ – that is: radical plurality that brings a new positive ethical dimension.

²¹ LE BON, G.: *Psychologie davu*, 1994, p. 133.

²² LE BON, G.: *Psychologie davu*, 1994, p. 74, p. 110.

²³ TOFFLER, A. TOFFLEROVÁ, H.: *Utváranie novej civilizácie. Politika Tretej vlny*, 1996.

²⁴ McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*, 1999; REIFOVÁ, I.: *Slovník mediální komunikace*, 2004

Unconditional support for pluralism and resignation to any thought of unification, hints, 'outcome', or grasp of 'totality' could be considered as the basic criterion for the recognition of postmodernism and its opposition.

Critics of postmodernism and postmodernists themselves are represented by sharp rhetoric – they draw attention to the warning signs of distortion or extinction of competencies, especially in 'higher spheres of culture and speech', the ability to understand the text more thoroughly, and to perceive the communicated themes fully.

Finkelkraut accepts the de-intellectualisation and infantilization of mass media communication and socio-cultural habits: "The struggle was hard, but what is now known as communication, confirms one: the non-verbal hemisphere eventually won, the 'gibberish' had settled with the conversation, the society finally became adolescent. The bourgeois is dead, let the adolescent live! – Youth: Those people have appeared recently. They did not exist before compulsory education: the traditional form of teaching did not have to separate its addressees for many years from the rest of the world in order to be sold... With general schooling, coming of age ceased to be a bourgeois privilege and a universal part of life. Moreover, their way of life: protected from parental influence, school institutions, and from the influence of teachers by a group of contemporaries, young people could build a world for themselves, a reversed mirror of the values that surround them. ... 'young culture', this anti-school, consolidates its power and its autonomy from the 1960s, from the time of the general democratization of education."²⁵

Toffler tried to overcome the postmodernists' opinion: he recorded or forecasted a new and structured economy, a third wave of modernization, based on incomparably more flexible and effective contractual relationships, the demassification and diversification of all resources, processes, activities and goals. All thanks to the information revolution and the maximum capitalization of information (in contrast to the feudal-peasant first wave and the industrial mass-production second wave) – and with the possibility of almost unlimited growth and development.²⁶

From a societal and political point of view, there is a significant issue regarding access to information, particularly in terms of openness and equality in access, as well as possibilities and ways of ensuring and protecting rights, controlling or enforcing openness and equality in the information service and information flow. Toffler leaves out that aspect (optimistically) without any notice, deeming it unproblematic. In contrast, from Lyotard's warning against the

²⁵ FINKIELKRAUT, A.: *Destrukce myšlení*, 1993.

²⁶ TOFFLER, A. TOFFLEROVÁ, H.: *Utváranie novej civilizácie. Politika Tretej vlny*, 1996.

possible consequences of the mercantilisation of leadership, or subjugation of all kinds, types and regimes of discourse, domination by the only one – economic discourse, transferring everything to the figures of change, useful calculable values, saving and capitalization of time, pre-known and secured or pre-determined settlement of the claim, etc.

In the unmanageable masses of communicated texts in TV and on the Internet as a regular product, according to the laws of commerce, the urgency of the problem of maintaining the qualitative richness of texts, i.e. diversity, differentiation of genres, styles, themes, opinions and information, is increasing. Thompson – in close proximity to Lyotard's neo - Marxist view – emphasizes that "there is no necessary link between the logic of profit and the cultivation of diversity and the law of decreasing diversity: the unregulated market can develop methods that effectively reduce the diversity of media products and can even prevent most people from their opinions to become known."²⁷

IV THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY AND MEDIA

The increased attention the social sciences give to the study of the way of life means increased intensity in new research of human needs. The issue of the human needs was already addressed in the past by the ancient authors Plato in his Constitution and Aristotle in the Athenian Constitution. Indeed, human needs have triggered the need for a state. Each of us has many needs, but no one is able to satisfy all of them by themselves.

"The needs are the metaphorical red thread of human history and the behavioural background of each of us at the same time. We should therefore know what the needs are, how they emerge, and how they affect our behaviour."²⁸ It is understandable that living conditions greatly influence the form of human activities, the way of their realization and means. Needs are decisive for the internal content of the activities – the purpose for which they are carried out.

There is a considerable difference between people's values and desires. There may even be a contradiction between what I say I appreciate and what I really do appreciate. What is the unifying starting point for understanding human resources? This exactly is the field of human needs. "We are talking about the need to remove the lack of stimuli and conditions necessary for existence, everyday life, and thus for self - fulfilment and personal development. However, we encounter

²⁷ THOMPSON, J. B.: *Médiá a modernita. Sociální teorie médií*, 2004, p. 191.

²⁸ GÁL, F. - ALAN, J.: *Spoločnosť vo svetle sociológie*, 1987, p. 65.

some problems here. A simple example: even a healthy person has a need to be healthy. It seems to us, therefore, justified not to address the need only to remove the perceived lack. The notion of need is wider. A person is aware not only of what he lacks here and now but also of what he is heading for or intending to pursue. A healthy person feels the need for health not because of its lack, but because good health is a condition for further existence.”²⁹

Problems of needs have been addressed so far by psychology and by economics. Other social sciences were more or less satisfied with the take-over or the combination of both approaches.

The psychological concept is characterized by accentuating the motivational function. A need is generally manifested as a state of lacking something important to a person's life and results in a motivating activity to overcome this insufficiency. Needs are complex structures. They have a content aspect that expresses what is needed, what is lacking, or in a surplus. In addition, they contain an emotional aspect in which the individual dislikes the lack or excess. The third is an aspect of will aiming to remove the unpleasant state.

A need is a state of the subject that reflects the contradiction between what is given and what the subject deems to be necessary for their life. At the same time, it is a state that encourages the entity to take action to address various insufficiencies.

We can say, “the need not only reflects an objective state of the organism, but also the subjective feeling and the awareness of the particular state. It has a tremendous effect on the individual as well as on mankind. It is the happiness and the tragedy of man that the satisfaction of one's needs ensues in the emergence of many other needs, that the increasing degree of satisfaction of the needs simultaneously accelerates the appearance of others. However, this statement does not apply indiscriminately and for all the needs. In addition, individual needs have a different meaning for a person, varying depending on their living conditions.”³⁰

²⁹ GÁL, F. - ALAN, J.: *Spoločnosť vo svetle sociológie*, 1987, p. 65.

³⁰ GÁL, F. - ALAN, J.: *Spoločnosť vo svetle sociológie*, 1987, p. 66.

The general classification of basic needs:

- a) primary, i.e. elementary, lower, biological;
- b) secondary, i.e., developmental, higher, socio-cultural.

An important distinguishing criterion is the origin of the needs. Primary needs are innate. They belong to the biological equipment of a human being as a biological species. On the contrary, secondary needs are acquired, an individual gains them through socialization, and their content and the degree of adoption depend mainly on given social conditions.

In the literature, other distinguishing features are often added to this basic criterion. A limited number of primary needs is highlighted, with the difference of a virtually unlimited number of secondary needs. Emphasis is on the immediate urgency of primary needs, the non-fulfilment of which the individual immediately registers and their fulfilment is virtually no longer possible to be postponed. Secondary needs, on the other hand, are much more complicated in terms of human awareness and their satisfaction can be delayed for a variety of reasons.

The homeostatic character of primary needs and their fulfilment is desirable only to an optimal state. There are no internal limits for secondary needs. In this respect, their borders are practically unlimited.

The orientation of primary needs on things and their consumption is often highlighted, while secondary needs are focused on activities and relationships to ensure their satisfaction. However, it has to be remembered that there is considerable inconsistency among the specialists in the field, which makes it difficult to apply the results of the psychological aspect of the problem.

The primary needs are not only biogenic ones, but also a number of psychogenic and even sociogenic needs. At the same time, they often make up a foundation that reduces the higher needs.

One important and open issue is the relationship between organic and social needs. Social needs are often perceived as an evolutionary continuation of organic needs, as a product of the natural development of the deepening socialization of life. Another tendency in this psychological aspect rigorously distinguishes organic needs from the social ones. In particular, it is highlighted that even the lowest human needs are fundamentally socially irreversible or modified. Even Napoleon knew that the greatest enemy of his soldiers was not the hostile army, but their own hunger. Humans can be brought to an animalistic state by

famine. This fact points to the mutual differences between lower and higher needs.

Organic needs are internal, focused on the preservation of the subject. Higher needs are also characterized by identifying with internal requirements and higher social interests. Unlike animals, a human is characterized by being born in the biological sense, but becoming a human in the sense of the psychosocial in the process of humanization and socialization. People acquire their human heritage accumulated in society.

There is a bond between nature and society, but in the sense of a reversal of their relationship, and that individual theories may infer the abovementioned categories from the natural ones. In this sense, the categories of needs are often replaced by concepts of inclination, instincts, and motives.

Most of the needs of modern society are so socially mediated that their original biological basis plays an increasingly diminishing role. Similarly, the relationship between needs and activities has also been complicated. Psychological understanding of needs implies a simplified idea of the immediate ability of an individual, who feels the lack of need, to satisfy it by their own activities. The immediate link of needs and activities does not apply in society. The complex structure of social ties and the social security system is also much mediated in this field.

The psychological notion of needs cannot pay enough attention to the fact that the satisfaction of many needs, with the continuous socialisation of the subject, outweighs its individual possibilities. The share of socially secured needs is growing significantly. From the point of view of psychology, emphasizing the motivational function of needs also emphasizes the importance of an objective knowledge. Especially in higher human needs, the gap between their objective form and subjective reflection is widening. This fact is essential for sociological and economic knowledge, while psychology puts it down as less important.

Economic understanding of needs focuses mostly on material production. In this case, the needs in particular play a role as the driving force of economic development. Economic definitions characterize needs as hierarchically structured, inherited and acquired dispositions, the satisfaction of which is conditioned by the reproduction of man as a member of a particular society. The economic encyclopaedia characterizes the need in the most general sense of the word as the feeling of something desirable or necessary.

Thus, economics has already dealt with the problem of the origin of human needs and their immediate relationship with man (in terms of the emotional aspect). The needs in economics appear in a certain whole, abstracted from concrete bearers. Their existence, size, structural diversity, and urgency are proven by consumption. This corresponds to the basic economic division of material and non-material, respectively economic and non-economic needs. The first of these can be satisfied with material utility values and the attention of economics focuses on them. The definition of the second group is rather vague and characterized in a simplified way – they are obtained otherwise.

Economic thinking also classifies needs as individual and group. The first division includes all the needs of members of the company, whose satisfaction are the conditions created for the development of the individual and mental abilities of the members of society. The second group includes all the needs arising from the organized life of society as a whole, which makes the variety of bodies of administration, security, defence, and others, necessary. Satisfaction of individual needs is indispensable for the preservation and development of an individual, satisfying group needs is necessary for the well-functioning of an organized society.

The definition of group needs explicitly eliminates the psychological bond of the need to an individual. Economic understanding of needs does not underestimate the problem of the real bearer. Individual and group needs are only relevant in connection to the mechanism of economic reproduction of society. In terms of the economic approach to needs, we must not forget about the characteristics of the economic, i.e. real needs. We understand the economic needs as those that are necessary to ensure the standard of living and material growth. With real needs, we can truly meet people's demands in terms of the realistic socio-economic system.

The economic definition of needs largely outweighs the psychological characteristics, but at the same time raises objections of a different nature. By putting the material needs at the centre of its attention, it inadvertently trivialises and distorts the importance and the specifications of non-material needs. Ignoring the genesis of needs also means a problem of their identification. Economics perceives needs in the form of formulated economic requirements. Economic goals can only be set after political decisions. In the absence of scientific criteria, we risk a certain absolutisation of the economic approach to needs. The importance of consumption is increasing as a measure of needs. The offer to the consumer begins to produce new needs by itself and thus becomes a goal, not a means of developing an individual or a social system.

The sociologic possibilities and concepts of needs. Sociology has been widely underrated over the last decade. Only the end of this century has enabled this scientific branch to create its own approach to needs. The possibility of constructing a sociological concept of needs has offered results obtained through a system approach in social sciences. A need is understood to be a lack of conditions and elements necessary to preservation and development of the given system. This deficiency creates internal tension in the given system as a source of activity to eliminate the deficiency. The new situation has made it possible to combine the needs and interests that belong to the whole society, group, or individual. Part of individual needs becomes social needs based on their cognition and willingness to recognize them. Even a relatively frequent individual need does not have to become a social need. The society can take an indifferent or a negative attitude towards an individual need. The need for drugs in drug addicts can be used as an example.

The main issues of such a sociological concept of needs should be the problems of social recognition and acknowledgement of needs, the mechanism of their formulation, the establishment of scientific criteria, the analysis of the social consequences of potential disproportions between the existence of needs and their satisfaction.

Most social sciences put the needs into a proper categorical apparatus. However, there is also the avoidance or criticism of this problem from the positions of naturalization and structural functionalism. We can mention two representatives. Malinowski, a British scientist of Polish origin, has created a naturalistic theory of culture, according to which the whole society is superstructure existing over basic biological needs. Needs are in the form of cultural responses that enable society to meet these basic needs. Subsequently, the basic need for metabolism corresponds to the cultural supply response; the basic need for reproduction produces the cultural reaction of the relationship, the basic need for health ensues into the cultural reaction of hygiene. The author describes these reactions as cultural imperatives, the most important of which is the need for social control, education, economic, and political organization.

The leading American representative of structural functionalism T. Parsons argues that society does not exist to meet the individual needs; it is the individual that serves to satisfy the needs of society. If a society meets the needs of an individual, it is only in order to avoid serious failures in its system. A certain degree of satisfaction of individual needs is Parson's functional prerequisite for running the company. It is not the only condition. In addition, the society needs a system of normative order through which the life of the population is organized. There is also

a need for management and decision-making related to the means by which it can deal with the violation of its standards. Moreover, there is a need for integration that is implemented through a system of socialization and the need for a certain system of services that individuals perform in the context of social organization.

These facts describe the features of society and express two tendencies: a) tendency towards self-esteem, b) tendency towards homeostatic balance. The concept of the social system is so rigid that it does not leave room for socially transforming activity and excludes social movements. The notion of a society that meets more and more human needs is in complete contradiction to the concept of structural functionalism.

Based on these facts we can say that humanistic and civilization development is progressive only if it is possible to preserve and develop the diversity of cultures of individual societies, each presenting irreplaceable wisdom, the experience that man acquires in dialogue with nature. From this point of view, it is necessary to consider the processes of homogenization and differentiation in relation to the way of life.

The fundamental human rights³¹ in today's society include the right to freedom and the right to information, but those are changing with the shift in communication, with the new media. "Every old medium was new, and every new medium became old. This is a well-known fact. However, the process and causes of the emergence of a new media are less clear."³²

A number of factors, including economic factors (media availability), communication and social skills of users, or their ability of critical analysis, influences new media, the birth of a favourite media, technologically or technically superior one. When marketing a product – in this case a media – the market does not decide on its promotion or its functionality but the interests of potential users and their real needs. It is here to achieve satisfaction in an individual in the interests and needs of the individual, and the desire for a given medium is so strong that they sacrifice their routine habits and stereotypes and reorient themselves to a new product for new skills or knowledge. However, it is unnecessary to make a deeper cross-section in the media development forecast, because there already have been futuristic visions that have not been successfully completed in history.

³¹ An interesting contribution to the discussion about human rights in relation to education has been made by POLÁKOVÁ, E., BAĐUROVÁ, B. *Anti-bias education and human rights teaching in secondary education of students*, 2015.

³² BREČKA, Samuel et al.: *Od tamtamov po internet. Prehľad dejín mediálnej komunikácie*, 2009, p. 24.

Let us ask, however, how and why new media are created? A clear and satisfactory answer is for a long discussion, but let us try to get closer to the new media as defined by A. Sekota (2006, p. 66):

- “the maximum use of sophisticated computing,
- flexible hybrid character,
- the possibility of interactivity,
- public and private functions,
- a low level of regulation,
- interconnection”.³³

The media have great potential, but on the other hand, they also have negative aspects related to threats and their subsequent prevention. Therefore, the benefits of new media must be reflected from a wider perspective. Social and technical disciplines include the ethics of the media as well as ethics and morality in the media world as the object of its exploration. The most important part of the study is the content of the text combined with the behaviour and experience of the individual, and hence the responsibility of the media for the behaviour of people.

The media affect the behaviour of an individual in these disciplines:

Psychology – the influence of the media on people, their attitudinal orientations, and representation of models.

Sociology – responds to the media in terms of their existence within society, as well as how media is influencing the behaviour of people.

Politology – deals with the legal aspects of the media, the media policy, which means that the media is understood as a means to achieve medial goals.

Economy – reflects the relationship of the consumer / client versus media / media content as a product.

Linguistics – the centre of its interest is the clarity of media content.

Apart from the listed disciplines, the media is also a subject of study for philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, history, and so on.

³³ SEKOT, A.: *Sociologie v kostce*, 2006, p. 66.

Modern media influences not only the individual, but also the creation of public opinion and therefore it is directly related to objectivity and truth. Public opinion has its own dynamism, expressing its own ideas, which can be changed and adapted, so that public opinion is changing and shaping. This process is possible through thoughtful methods and various means, so its subjectivity can be determined. According to P. Dinka (2008, p. 15) “general judgments (opinions) may not be true just because they are general.”³⁴

The unethical aspects caused by the media themselves – the political context or control of media by interest groups – can get to the public through that very media. In a context of a change in values in Slovak media practice after 1989, E. Poláková and Z. Masaryková describe this phenomenon in a concise way: “In the competitive media environment, not the ethics of media work was the first, but the profit.”³⁵ The tabloid phenomenon gradually controls the recipients and the public, therefore the mind thus loses the ability to perceive the boundary between abuse and constructive criticism. The paper of P. Dinka (2008) presents the work of the media and the situation of the media environment and its culture. In the context of discourses on the ethical aspects of modern media, it would be appropriate and expedient to evaluate each medium individually with a focus on the assessment aspect, since apart from the common features, each medium has its own specificity. In general, we can rely on E. Polák’s view that “from the point of view of the relationship of ethics of communication and media ethics, the distinctive aspect is the difference between mysterious and ignorant lies, half-truths, and the concealment of truth.”³⁶

New media bear some social responsibility, ethical regulation, or self-regulation of media creators with regard to the reflection of ethical aspects, in which we look not only at concrete phenomena, but also at the consequences of these phenomena, manifesting themselves in the viewer, reader, listener, mobile phone or internet user.

V THE WAY OF LIFE AND CULTURE OF MEDIA.

The term ‘culture’ was created from the Latin word *colo, colere* (to cultivate, to cultivate soil), since there is an obvious connection with human work. Later, the word was passed on – to enlightenment, literacy, education. Cicero in Tusculi interviews in 45 BC wrote about philosophy as a “culture of reason”. He stressed

34 DINKA, P.: *Slovenské masmédiá. Metódy manipulácie*, 2008, p. 15.

35 POLÁKOVÁ, E. – MASARYKOVÁ, Z.: *Etika mediálnej komunikácie v on-line prostredí*, 2011, p. 63.

36 POLÁKOVÁ, E.: *Mediálne kompetencie*, 2011, p. 39.

that human reason had to be cultivated just as the farmer cultivates the soil. The cultivation of reason and the development of the mental abilities of human was considered the main content of culture. In the Renaissance period, the term culture was used in a very broad sense. It included the expression of such a development of man, which corresponded to their essence. However, the misconception of the nature of man has greatly distorted the notion of culture. The bourgeois philosophy understood culture predominantly as an area of religious, moral, artistic, and philosophical notion, as an exclusively spiritual area that is the counterpart of the real existence of people being torn away from practical interests. The philosophy of the bourgeoisie sees culture as the result of the activity of the highly privileged. According to this philosophy, only the spiritual elite of society create true culture. An ordinary man cannot and is not capable of forming cultural values; they can only receive them passively.

The French enlightenment of the 18th century, when explaining the history of mankind, brought a significant moment to the understanding of culture. Culture was seen as a force that can liberate people of an unfair position in the social system. The mistakes of people have been attributed to the cause of social inequality and injustice³⁷. For that reason, the content of the cultural historical process has been narrowed only to the development of human reason, to the growth of enlightenment, which was to liberate man from prejudices. Culture in the general sense is not limited by a factor of education or a degree in which one acquires the spiritual values of society and civilization at all. The culture characterizes the degree of relationship between humans and nature, the level of relationships and the conditions for the development of individuals. In this sense in particular, it becomes a part of the method and testifies to the measure of the humanisation of their interrelationships, relationships, and behaviour.

Under the term culture, we understand what a person has transformed or produced as a result of human activity. In this understanding, culture is the realm of reality, which differs from the primary nature by forming itself in the process of historical social development. In some cases, experts call it the second nature. This nature acts as a historical product, the result of many generations of people. Moreover, the true thing, as well as its results, are the content of the concept of culture.

³⁷ Regarding the problem of justice and injustice see eg. BAĎUROVÁ, B. *Human rights and environmental (in)justice*, 2015.

Nature exists independently of man and the changes that occur within it are not caused by the wishes of men. However, the development of culture depends on the goals and tasks of people and on human needs and interests. Therefore, the boundary between nature and culture determines ultimately the level of man, the development of their material and spiritual forces, the degree of universality, and others.

Often, the level of culture has been understood as the degree of human control over the natural forces. This false exaltation of man has caused many negative global impacts, e.g. the destruction Brazilian forests. In the case of such a gross interference in the natural environment, there was a disturbance not only of microclimates, but also of macroclimates, which resulted in the reduction of oxygen production. Scientists later proved that the forests on Earth are natural reservoirs of drinking water. Therefore, culture cannot express the degree of dominance of man over nature, but the degree of their adaptation to this nature. We receive nature as a gift to our lives in this world, and we must know how to handle it. We should take an example from other living creatures. The mass media often talk about what people have created, but also what they have destroyed.

Things created not by the nature, but people surround us. A summary of these things is a direct perceivable form of existence of culture. Culture exists mainly in the form of finished objects. All of these items differ from natural objects significantly. Each of them is mainly a product of the work. The cultural object has, in addition to the characteristics of the natural material from which it was made, the properties that arose in the process of its making. These characteristics have been given by a man by their practical purposeful activity and are therefore cultural properties of the subject. What properties are those ?

The first inherent feature of a product is its ability to serve as a means to meet human needs. This is still not enough for the product to become a cultural object. The development of the society significantly changes the structure of the needs and the possibilities of their satisfaction. Only an object capable of satisfying the needs of people at a given evolving historical level in the most advanced form can be considered a cultural one. It is commonly said that an item is culturally wrought. It means that the thing is created with regard to all the requirements. These requirements also correspond to the other features of cultural transition, such as practicality, technical layout, aesthetics, and design. These properties are related to a given developmental level of society and the skills of people to create such subjects.

The quality of cultural objects – how the subject fulfils the requirement to meet human needs – is a measure of the cultural significance of a thing, of its cultural value. From what does the quality of things depend? The quality of things is the quality of the work that created it. The better, the more versatile, the richer the work, the better the product. Work is a conscious, purposeful, and active use of human abilities, skills, and knowledge. The quality of the product is the advancement of the developmental level of its creator, the degree of their physical, intellectual, aesthetic, and moral development. The existence of culture in its form, as a result of human activity, is only an external form of its existence. The real content of culture is the process of advancing historical development of human forces and abilities that predominate in the richness and diversity of the actual reality created by people.

The development of man as a subject of activity and creative abilities is a personality form of existence of culture. Culture is not just the works of art or the knowledge that people acquire. Culture comprises also the qualities of the people at a certain level of spiritual development, their abilities, the skills, the knowledge they need for their creative activity. It follows that culture exists in two basic forms: on the one hand, in the form of objects, the results of human activity, that is, in the form of social wealth created by people and in personality in the form of actively manifesting human abilities. Culture changes under the influence of shifts in the system of the whole social organism, and impinges back to it by fulfilling the functions necessary for its existence and development. The most important and integral function is the effort to form people – the educational function. Through the upbringing of a person in accordance with the orientation of the social system, the culture satisfies the needs of human existence.

Other functions include a cognitive function, which is to equip a person with the knowledge necessary for the realization of their work, to focus their behaviour on society. The society prescribes human behaviour standards. The content of a normative function of culture is to develop the standards that regulate the behaviour of members of society. In every social system, violation of standards and behaviour is sanctioned. The normative function of culture also includes the elaboration of specific forms, standards, and traditions characteristic of a particular nation.

The society needs knowledge acquired as a result of cultural recognition and norms developed in the process of implementing its normative function to be maintained and adopted by its people. This is the function of the accumulation of cultural values in forms that ensure their preservation and transfer of one

generation to future generations, and this is an information function. The transfer of cultural values would not be possible without contact through language and other means that are also part of cultural values. By using these resources, culture has a full communicative function. In fulfilling these functions, culture emerges as a force, which liberates the process of social development from the nature, helps to improve and consolidate the social system and the personal qualities of the individuals that make up this system.

Culture as a specific human way of activity, the way of involving people in the process of interacting with the external environment and the realization of their needs, interests, and goals influences all spheres of social and individual activity, i.e. work, everyday life, leisure, and thinking. The importance of culture in the process of shaping and developing the way of life of a personality, a social group, a social system is particularly evident in the sense of the influence of socio-psychological factors such as the conscious orientation, needs, and values that influence the norms of behaviour and the ways of people's contacts. The way of life is always an expression of the attained level of culture.

The reciprocal linking of the way of life and culture is conditioned by the content and the functional closeness of these two non-identical concepts. The culture characterizes the degree of humanization of man's relationship to nature, to other people, and to himself. It allows not only to determine the quality of one or another way of life, but also actively participates in the historical process of its origin, development, or change. Culture cannot exist and operate without firm standards of activity, stereotypes of behaviour and cooperation of people that have already been created, that are active, and form their way of life. The relationship between the way of life and culture is evident from different aspects at different levels.

From a sociological point of view, culture emerges as a factor for the interconnection of human beings with historically given circumstances. Those determine a certain way of human behaviour expressed in the form of norms, rules, and patterns. We understand the culture as a variety of manufactured things that create an external artificial environment in relation to each individual. The way of life, as a system of specific cultural forms of intercourse, is a fundamental link in the field of production, reproduction, and consumption on the one hand and the spiritual, moral and aesthetic area on the other. Especially in the process of cultural development the unity of socially typified and psychologically individual behaviour of people is formed.

The characteristic of a cultural fund of a society, group, or individual allows not only to reveal the value system of life, but also to clarify the peculiarities and differences of the way of life. These cannot be immediately derived from the social, economic, and political conditions of a particular society.

Based on the previous level of knowledge about the way of life and the theory of culture, we can talk about five basic approaches.

The first approach characterizes culture as a process of creative activity, one that focuses on understanding the reality of the world and personal development. The universality of such a definition seems problematic if we want to separate the specifics of cultural phenomena from the structure of human activities for the needs of concrete research.

The second approach to culture is determined by cultural stereotypes and standards. A cultural stereotype is a concept used in ethnography, from which it has been taken over by the sociology of culture. In ethnography, the cultural stereotype is defined as a complex of phenomena of material and spiritual culture and given conditioned norms of behaviour. Sociology defines the cultural stereotype as a steady way of behaviour, conduct, and thinking. Cultural patterns, customs, and traditions are also included. Changes in the cultural stereotype lead to a process of interaction between tradition and innovation. The cultural standard is something consistent in a certain society, common to most of its members. It is a normal and desirable pragmatic approach.

The third approach, perhaps the most widespread, links culture with the humanity sphere of spiritual life. This is primarily about socially desirable normative systems. Representatives of this tendency combine cultural elements with positive values as conditions for optimal development of an individual or a group.

Another approach is the identification of culture with the artistic sphere and the activities of cultural institutions. The art fulfils very specific, irreplaceable functions in life-forming processes, and culture represents a wider sphere of social practice.

Understanding of culture as a specific technology expressing ways of entering social life and the principles of man's relationship to material and social environment is a completely new approach. The idea of the technological nature of culture is immanent to Western European culturological concepts.

Based on these approaches, it is clear that the way of life and culture are specific phenomena, never identic but very close and interrelated. A historically specific way of life always has a specific cultural content and form.

The way of life is, in fact, a culture of action, a living cultural matter, emerging in function and developing in everyday practical activity. Culture is a phenomenon that instils the way of life of society and within its existing lifestyle the character of individuality, uniqueness, unrepeatability. Culture plays a stabilizing, integrative, and humanizing role in the way of life.

The philosophical debate on the relationship between life and culture has become, almost without exception, a discussion of the nature and specificity of scientific and artistic knowledge. From this point of view, the phenomenon of culture, cultural practice, and cultural reality is viewed as a posteriori, both in the historical process and in the process of contemporary social action. In this sense, the views of scientific thinking are reflected in three levels:

1. Dominant position must have the artistic culture that, by its specific tools, restores and innovates the relations between man, society, and nature, and the relations between culture and civilization. Artistic culture, by reflecting and creating the emotional world of man and the image of the world, is one of the few predetermined to outline the system of values as an indispensable condition of the integrity of man, the relationships of all his social and cultural categories.
2. The opposite is the view that the dominant factors in the process of social reality should be contemporary non-classical science with its technology. Expanding and deepening its position in the direction of the aesthetisation of science, its cultural and humanistic position will be fulfilled. The artistic culture itself must then prepare tools for rapid change and the processes of shaping the scientific image and model of the world.
3. The next is the opinion that the real basis lies not in a dominant position of science, art or culture, nor in adaptation of science to culture or vice versa, but in their complementarity, in the organic balance of these two processes in shaping the image and model of the world, in which one has to live and create, implement a way of life and urban environment. It was one of the founders of American atomic physics, J. R. Oppenheimer, who drew and characterized fundamental changes in life conditions of man, changes induced by the dynamic development of civilization in his work – *The Reflection of Science and Culture* in 1959. “This change in man’s life is evoked by many things; but it’s really the science that is crucial.”³⁸

³⁸ VANĚK, J.: *Umění ve století vědy. Eseje*, 1988, p. 60.

J. R. Oppenheimer believes that this process is irreversible. However, there is a lack of clarification of human history and, above all, of functional changes in culture. He disagrees with the view that science and culture overlap that they are the same thing with two names. He does not even agree with the view that science is useful, but it does not have to do with culture anything at all. The cultural values of science lie according to him in the scientific interior. The author sees the whole solution in the restructuring of cultural functions. In traditional societies, the function of culture was to maintain things in a state of constantness, immutability, assimilation of one epoch to the other, to reveal the meaning of things in relation to the constant features of human life, to universal truths, to what is sustained reliance. In simple terms, culture has promoted the ability to preserve the integrity of the surrounding environment. Today, according to Oppenheimer, culture and tradition have “a completely different intellectual and social purpose; ... the main function of the most vital and most important traditions today is to prepare the instruments of rapid change, the change brought about by science itself.”³⁹ It follows that culture, especially artistic culture, is considered a way of adapting man to the environment. By contrast, science, which has cumulative functions and the irreversible nature of lessons learned, is the instrument of the changes that are necessary. Despite the fact that the world-renowned scientist highly appreciates the importance of culture, he still sees the dominant factor in changes in life processes, lifestyles, and the creation of the environment in science. Culture then should be the one that prepares tools for rapid change, for active adaptation of man in changing conditions.

Such an instrumental and functional understanding of culture has found a number of opponents but also proponents. It has undoubtedly stimulated and oriented the discussion of gnosiological focus, i.e. considering the nature of the artistic and scientific truth, as the highest knowledge of the phenomenon of culture, which represents the process of the daily reality. The facts brought about by many monographs of culture, as well as of the way of life and the creation of the environment, in some cases influenced by fundamental research of culture and the position of science and art in social processes result in roughly three approaches.

In the first approach, the culture model is conceived as a functional system of special mechanisms, characterizing the specificity of human activity in terms of unique technology and exclusively human ways and forms of adaptation in reality. It represents a systemic analysis of culture based on its functions.

³⁹ VANĚK, J.: *Umění ve století vědy. Eseje*, 1988, p. 66.

In the second approach, the model of culture is conceived as a system of spiritual production, referring to the formation of individual characteristics. It is therefore a personality understanding of the culture, and the criterion of creativity is preferred in its analysis.

The model of culture based on other criteria characterizes the third approach. There is a pronounced tendency to use semiotic models, meaning culture is a sign system. The differentiating criterion is then the view of the origin and nature of this principle, which determines and characterizes the specificity of culture as a special group of phenomena. The advocates of the first and second cultural model coincide with the principle of culture as an activity, but each of them interprets this principle, whether it relates to the origin of culture or its functions. The first model represents culture as a specific mode of human activity, the expression of which is a special kind of technology. The advocates of this approach reject the primary axiological approach to the phenomena of culture; they consider it secondary. In the second model, culture is presented as a historically creative activity aimed at enriching a person as a subject of this activity. In this tendency, the development of individual dances and the overall development of culture fall into one totality.

Of course, these model concepts are mutually intertwined and influenced. Controversies between them persist and appear primarily in the controversy between the axiologists and the non-axiological understanding of culture and the explanation of cultural phenomena. The sphere of culture constitutes a person as a subject of a cultural process, of cultural value, expressing real human abilities and talents, a mechanism of spiritual creation, determining what values are created, acquired and reproduced in a particular society and how it is done. It is clear that the different layers of social phenomena that constitute the content of culture are found in the historical movement.

Today, new social, scientific, artistic, and other problems are inspired by the theory of culture. Culture, as a specific area that employs empirical knowledge, is formed on the platform of a number of specific disciplines such as ethnography, ethnology, ethnosology, psychology, physiology, sociology, philosophy, cybernetics, ecology, and others. It examines and analyses the reality of culture from all its relevant features and sides, in order to create an integral picture of its complex structure. Among the new knowledge and the present-day problems, to which the experts focus their attention, there is the issue of adaptation or adaptogenesis. One of the pioneers of this issue is J. Charvát. Relational theories of adaptation and adaptogenesis interact with each other in the following areas:

- a) The field of research where the synthetic theory of evolution is formed based on knowledge of population biology, population genetics, and ecology. It has brought about the recognition of the need to distinguish between ontogenetic adaptation, which refers to individual changes and responses of the organism to the effects of the environment and to the phylogenetic adaptation that results from the transformation of the organism in the historical process.
- b) The area of environmental research, where adaptation processes are analysed in relation to mechanisms of internal management, self-organization and, self-regulation of ecosystems as well as specific relationship to the system of ecological culture.
- c) The field of research at the level of automation, cybernetics and theory of information, where this applied theory of adaptation deepens the concepts of social adaptation and the mechanisms of its activity.
- d) Research in the field of the theory of knowledge, where the issue of adaptation brought about the different types of reflection of reality as a prerequisite of the cultural form of adaptation.
- e) Basic research fed by knowledge provided by the theory of adaptation and adaptogenesis – that culture is a form of adaptation of man and society, that the genesis of culture is linked to the development of specifically human adaptation mechanisms, and to processes of anthropogenesis.

A specific sphere of scientific research that is inspirational for analysing cultural phenomena is that knowledge of global ecology is applied to the level of interrelationship of natural ecosystems and systems of ecological culture of man and society. The inner context of adaptation, adaptogenesis, and ecology is expressed by social and cultural categories that in practice direct the activity of man and co-create their reality.

Based on the suggested problems, we can assume that the forming research of the nature, genesis, and functions of culture as a specific mode of human activity deals with the knowledge of the processes of the practical formation of the world in question, in which man is certified as a physical being with natural powers. These processes are implemented in practice by a wide range of means, each of which presents specific technology and techniques, different mechanisms of activity, different forms of reflection of external reality, ways of processing and utilization of information, and their application in adaptation processes (reflection - adaptation), the various functions that change and innovate in the socio-historical process

The causal relationships between them that express themselves in feedback present not only a concrete reality but also the contradictions between the idea and reality. This fact summarizes the picture of individual ways of thinking, acting, experiencing one's own life, the level of co-existence with groups, and society. The tools, resources, and technologies of each activity are neither identical nor completely different. Their common basis is, among other things, a certain universal aesthetic activity.

One is able not only to create individual objects, but also to attach an inherent measure to each item. Therefore, man also creates according to the laws of beauty. This implies the existence and importance of the aesthetic dimension in science. We talk about its role and functions in terms of imagination, fantasy, but also the differences between science and art. Some linearism of our thinking often leads to the fact that we try to reduce everything to the level of intellectual knowledge and we do not take into account other means of human activity.

Human practice has created a human sense of life in the process of anthropogenesis, sociogenesis, adaptogenesis, and culturogenesis. Cultural concepts and knowledge have never been wholly made and satisfied in the history by means, instruments, technologies of science and art, even though art has shaped them from a start. In particular, it gave them a level of survival in the temporal dimension of life and death.

Relation between civilization and culture is important so the culture follows both the culturological direction and deep analyses and probes aimed at identifying the specifics of science and art and their relationship. The acceleration of social movement has changed not only the whole structure of the classical understanding of culture, but also disturbed the feedback between culture and civilization.

The McLuhan's statement – the medium determines the message – expresses the basic (contra intuitive) semiotic knowledge. The media and expressive forms are not something that would only take up the pre-given contexts and present them further (i.e. the emergence of a new medium does not mean that the same content will still be transferred using new tools); but they have (perhaps decisive) influence on what content they will communicate (by what tone, in what meaning). "The scope, form, and action of human society are formed and managed by the media."⁴⁰

The culture of a particular society is thus characterized, if not directly defined, by its structure of media communication. (Postman: culture is communication.) The entry of a new mass media, new communication technology into the

⁴⁰ McLUHAN, M.: *Člověk, média elektronická kultura*, 2000, p. 252.

scene means a fundamental cultural change; it is not just about some technical innovation in the cultural infrastructure, but about a whole-cultural, whole-societal reform. A culture communicating with and communicated by the press and books is not the TV culture: the new mass media has fundamentally transformed content, themes, ideas, and communication and presentation styles, as well as intellectual, perceptual, cognitive habits and modes. Changing technology means civilization change. According to Thompson, “we must accept the idea that using communication media involves creating new forms of action and interaction in society, new social relationships ...; the development of communication media is, in essence, a process of reworking the symbolic character of social life ... it is about restructuring the ways in which the individual relates to other individuals and to oneself.”⁴¹

Here are some examples of how new media, new communication technology has changed the whole range of socio-cultural behaviour of people:

“New media can first look like common codes for the transmission of older results and established models of thinking ... The printing press invention allowed the existence of literature. It does not mean that it just encoded the literature.”⁴²

The onset of such an unsophisticated media as paper has changed the character of the Islamic Empire in the 9th century: “when papyrus was replaced by paper, all attempts to limit the increase in administration were in vain as the new material greatly accelerated bureaucratic growth.”⁴³

Even long after that, documents have not reached the validity of oral statements – in the diplomacy of the 11th century: “... the Roman pope asked whether they also guaranteed the wording of the letter.” (Kosmas) Nowadays, we are proceeding the other way (“what is written, it is given”), but not without reservation: Postman draws attention to the conservative institutions that emerged before the invention of the printing press. Until now they prefer to give oral testimony before a written record (court proceedings, university examinations). The press also made a significant contribution to the techno-industrial memo: “The invention of the manual typesetting has become a precursor of all the assembly lines, and it would be wise to look at the impact of the technological forms associated with printing on the mental life of the reader.”⁴⁴

A revolution in social and communication behaviour of people in the second half of the 20th century was caused by the instruments and devices enabling

⁴¹ THOMPSON, J. B.: *Médiá a modernita. Sociální teorie médií*, 2004, p. 9, p. 15.

⁴² McLuhan, M.: *Člověk, média elektronická kultura*, 2000, p. 252.

⁴³ LEWIS, B.: *Dějiny Blízkého východu*, 1997, p. 141.

⁴⁴ McLuhan, M.: *Člověk, média elektronická kultura*, 2000, p. 266.

to interrupt the formation of the text at any stage, to distribute present continuous outcome and anywhere again establish and continue finalizing the text. – “Xerox allows immediate recap of ongoing events – a kind of “summary of the prior story”... Xerox has completely changed the nature of conferences and increased the frequency of meetings.”⁴⁵ Even more beneficial to the development of bureaucratic and meeting genres were personal computers with text and spreadsheet editors.

By the end of the 20th century, the whole nature of the media conversation had been greatly transformed: “Instead of helping to optimize the flow of information, e-mail has only boosted the flood of workers operating the telephone, fax, or mail. The overabundance of information keeps them in a state of permanent alertness as if they had to fire hundreds of small fires continuously. The worst impact this overflow has on the ability to concentrate; each link represents an interruption, after which the affected person has to focus again on the broken work. The cumulative effect of uninterrupted distraction results in chronic loss of focus.”⁴⁶ And that’s nothing compared to the impact of mobile phones.

Postman mentions certain periods in the development of cultures defined by the domination of one mass-communicative medium over others. It is based on the fact that 1. each medium promotes another style and other topics of communication (McLuhan), but 2. the style and the topics promoted become dominant and thus transforming also styles and topics communicated by other media to their image.⁴⁷

Postman (following McLuhan and Havelock) has suggested that the change in the media of social communication is reflected in a change in the structure of human mind and cognitive abilities. He insists: “a significant new medium causes changes in the structure of communication, the form of the expression of truth.” Whilst culture before the printing press housed intelligence, especially in aphorist wisdom and memory, in the age of printing it is composed mainly of the following abilities: to stand in peace, to be detached and objective, to be immune to the whims, to be able to draw from concepts and generalizations, etc. It is important that ways of communicating via less influential media adapt to the style provoked by the medium which is most influential at that time. Postman uses examples such as speech, commercial advertising, political agitation, how the style and shape of these events changed from book-literary traits in the 19th century to comic - TV features today. During the second half of the 20th century, “the overall information

⁴⁵ McLuhan, M.: *Člověk, média elektronická kultura*, 2000, p. 258.

⁴⁶ Goleman, D.: *Práce s emoční inteligencí*, 2000, p. 83.

⁴⁷ Postman, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti*, 1999.

environment is gradually becoming the mirror image of television.⁴⁸

By adopting these two thoughts of McLuhan and Postman, we find ourselves in a world where we cannot overlook or aptly evaluate the importance, influence, and share of media and media communication in everything that happens, including human perception, survival, and knowledge.

We can see the outlines of three massive periods: pre-literary, literary, and TV.

Maybe others as well. Interactivity – the most important feature of new media, supports the demassification of public communication – and thus signals the possible dawning of the mass media (and the asymmetric communication of information and instructions).

Are we already entering into a new post-TV era? And what will it be ? What are we going to find in it ?

We can agree with the statement: “To be a person who is truly educated today, one must be educated in the media.”⁴⁹ Semiotics calls for the development of media literacy. “We need new forms of critical competence; so far we do not know the art of choosing and suppressing information, just new wisdom.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ POSTMAN, N.: *Ubavit se k smrti*, 1999, pp. 33-35, p. 119.

⁴⁹ McLUHAN, M.: *Člověk, média elektronická kultura*, 2000, p. 257.

⁵⁰ ECO, U.: *Mysl a smysl*, 2000, p. 123.

RESUME

The starting point of theoretical research is society as a specific historical system whose functioning determines both the origin and development of various economic, social, and spiritual needs. On the other hand, it determines the ways, content, and forms of their satisfaction. We cannot avoid the current political context, because the subject of the research is the current policy. This is especially true when studying legal and political issues, institutions and mechanisms for their functioning. The system of political parties is an organic component of the social system and significantly affects its functioning and the overall character of social life. This issue is a major concern in Western Political Science and Sociology, and M. Duverger, G. Sartori, J. Blonde and others are among the most well-known authors in the field. Our research staff could use their research because our specific reality is suffering by lack of coherent systematic theoretical platform that would have an impact on practical politics and the political system. Our politicians are self-educated (this is the best case), or non-professionals, respectively. All of us, and especially the young generation, are paying for their political, economic, and cultural ignorance. Already in ancient Greece, the sophists called for a need to cultivate reason. This is true for us all, but especially for our elected representatives. The current political power is manifested by aggressiveness, “in the insignificant number of people we call leaders or politicians and a certain number of middle and small” often “casual” careerists, this “instinct” revives and “develops”. In doing so, mankind is led to a real bane because everything else is more important than categorical moral imperatives whose adherence would jeopardize the will to power and narcissistically directed leadership, whether their instinct of aggression is reflected in the physiognomy of César, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, or in a refined form of aggressive power instinct, which appears concealed in seemingly democratic, but never truly moral form. ⁵¹

I consider it necessary to orientate the values of man in complex social processes. We have to remind ourselves that this should start in a family environment. It is in the primary relationship of parents and children and vice versa, that the relationships with other people are also established. Family and family environment create a specific and irreplaceable value in a person's life. The family creates its own economic, spiritual, and cultural environment. It creates some inner forces that are based on personal needs and interests, emotions, and effort. These forces are able to cope with the external pressures that the family and its individual members are exposed to.

⁵¹ VEVERKA, L. J.: *Fenomén duchovnosti v modoch viery, mravnosti a pravdy*, 1999, p. 77.

Today, in our conditions, the economic function of the family is at the forefront. The family gives their members a certain social position. It depends on the esteems and authority of a specific family in a particular environment. Parents' social status often acts as a decisive factor in the life of other family members. The family also acts as a significant factor in social control, moral behaviour, and other social manifestations in relation to younger generations.

In this respect, it is important to draw attention to the demands of society that we can summarize in the following points:

Life, its meaning, and its rescue cannot be understood only from the aspect of the actual real life system but also from the point of view of its transcendental penetration.

The moral values are to be considered a priority and superior to all other values. We should get rid of the definitive political-power concept of a society organization that allows the promotion of individual and group egoism and aggression leading to war conflicts.

Hypocritical, paraphrased lawful ballast driven by the group interests should be replaced by faith in man, because if the education of human faith and morality fails, the dictatorship of mafias, privatizers, tax collectors, lawyers and legal chaos will start.

The rule of law is, in this respect, anachronism, the continuation of a manageable paradigm that threatens human life itself. Even the Bible says that the concept of scribes (legislators) is linked with the terms Pharisees and hypocrites.

To deny the demon and the consumption of material goods and to favour the philosophy of inquiry and modesty, because this philosophy will lead to the saving of the environment and the hope for life. Without frugality and morality, there is no ecology or eco-ethics⁵².

To oppose the economic and linguistic imperialism that detracts from the dignity and identity of small nations especially. To realize the ideal of a unified neutral world language, alongside the mother tongue of each individual.

To revitalize and realize the social charge contained in ancient philosophy, in the Bible, and in modern and contemporary doctrines. We should not neglect positive elements of so far unsuccessful attempts to establish a just social order, contained in religious teachings, in enlightenment philosophy, but also in socialism.

⁵² For information about ecoethics and environmental ethics see eg. BAĎUROVÁ, B.: *Environmentálna etika a výchova*, 2015.

Do not force the style of “winners” on the “losers”.

Mankind can be saved only by radical spiritual cleansing, the profound content of the statement “Stop now, because you’re going back.”⁵³

The world of moral values finds its shape in realistic things that represent the essential characteristics of a young person and society. The hierarchy of values can be built in different ways. But the most reliable is the one that is in accordance with the structure of human needs and interests, without which happiness and human existence itself cannot be satisfied.

The current reality convinces us of the increasing awareness that the society will focus on meaningful subjects. The problem of what people will appreciate in the future, which will be attractive to them, is complex. One of the ways is to engage people in this search and to work with them. There is a chance that the idea of future demands that we will get based on a number of different opinions will suit many people.

Future is too complex to be predicted by the limited capacity of individual thinking. The development, which was initially very promising, may have an unexpectedly negative impact in the future. It seemed that mass production coupled with industrial and technological advances would bring welfare to most people. In spite of many advantages, however, it has caused a wide range of negatives. Even in the field of nutrition, intensive management, on the one hand, has greatly reduced hunger, lowered disease rate, and saved time, on the other hand contributed to the devastation of the soil, led to an unattractive, accelerated diet in the form of the hormonal boosting of various kinds of food.

The society of tomorrow should be a sustainable society. Gradually, we are beginning to realize that we need a more holistic, more global attitude towards progress. A sustainable society is one that could create new, renewable energy sources, preserve the created energy and respect the environment made not only for man. I would like to emphasize the fact that it is essential for the centre to be a human being able to step up on a rank of needs. The succession of meeting physical, intellectual and mental needs would be directed to a certain degree of self-realization. The level of self-realization achieved would allow for the dissemination of experience with the achievement of certain goals.

Society with such people would attribute size and seriousness to such phenomena as peace of mind, happiness, and satisfaction, while striving to stabilize these phenomena further, or even develop them. It is understandable that we cannot

⁵³ VEVERKA, L. J.: *Fenomén duchovnosti v modoch viery, mravnosti a pravdy*, 1999, p. 79

judge what the likelihood of such a society is. Gradual developments will probably bring the expected change quite late. Information technology is one of the most discussed phenomena of today's reality.

Individuals need to look back on themselves in their search for answers. The information technology that helps them grows in an unstructured way as a natural system. Information technology meets many of the environmental requirements of a sustainable society through its use of energy and materials. We can limit negative impacts on the environment by accelerating miniaturization processes that will save material resources. In conjunction with telecommunication networks, it contributes to reducing the need for transport and the need to decrease space.

Informational technology offers satisfaction of many social cultural and intellectual needs. Computer networks such as the Internet are a world without borders where information can be obtained almost immediately, and people dealing with certain problems can consult with different experts at different levels.

In this respect, we can relate the needs of a sustainable society to the opportunities that the information technology offers. This part of the historical chronology could initiate the possibility of new modernity. The nature of the media is social, it is a part of the social system, and its functioning determines the technological means. The content of messages is primarily a matter of interest and human needs. The message forwarder and the recipient, as well as the mass media, are parts of a communication that always has the character of an interpersonal communication. Media developers should be aware of the relationship between the media and society, their mutual influence and, in particular, the dominant influence of economic agents in the media sphere.

In the new society, people will be integrated into a wider community. In addition to social groups in which people will be physically present, they will still be joined in various other clusters. Therefore, the task of scientific responsibility is to enable people to interact with each other in a new, effective and satisfying way. Important in a modern society is the realistic ability of each individual to participate actively in the social system.

One way to do this is to facilitate the use of complicated electronic devices that are increasingly part of our company. We generally recognize the massive influence of the media on the state of society as a whole, but also on the behaviour and thinking of individuals. News and entertainment products are part of the lifestyle of billions of people on Earth and one of the most important factors influencing the way their recipients live. National cultures, education and forms of

communication between the nations influence the unique position of the media.

Part of the electronic network is only one type of connection in the modern world. Human beings are equipped with senses that we can create a fundamental connection with the world. Known Lockov's statement, "There is nothing in the mind that has not passed through the senses," will pay if the technique has already done much to increase human perception by giving us access to the world of sounds and motives our ancestors have experienced rarely life or not at all.

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