

Mikuláš, Peter

Global Patterns for National Stars? : Celebrity in Slovakia

Kultura Media Teologia 10, 103-114

2012

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach
dozwolonego użytku.

Peter Mikuláš

Global Patterns for National Stars? Celebreality in Slovakia

STRESZCZENIE:

WYKORZYSTANIE CELEBRYTÓW W KOMUNIKACJI MEDIALNEJ NIE JEST ZJAWISKIEM NOWYM, ALE MOŻNA ZAUWAŻYĆ NASILENIE TEGO ZJAWISKA. W BADANIU AUTOR SKUPIA SIĘ NA WYKORZYSTANIU ZNANYCH BIEŻĄCYCH PROGRAMÓW TELEWIZYJNYCH, KONCENTRUJĄC SIĘ PRZEDE WSZYSTKIM NA GATUNKACH TELEWIZYJNYCH Z OBSZARU REALITY. PREZENTUJE ANALIZĘ PORÓWNAWCZĄ AMERYKAŃSKICH I SŁOWACKICH CELEBRYTÓW - BOHATERÓW WYBRANYCH FORMATÓW TELEWIZYJNYCH REALITY SHOW. PODSTAWOWE PYTANIE, KTÓRE ZADAJE AUTOR, BRZMI: CZY ISTNIEJE GLOBALNE FORMUŁA KRAJOWYCH GWIAZD REALITY TV, CZY TEŻ STOPIEŃ ORYGINALNOŚCI WYSTARCZA, ABY MOŻNA BYŁO MÓWIĆ O AUTONOMICZNOŚCI TYCH GATUNKÓW NA RÓŻNYCH POZIOMACH?

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

CELEBRYCI, REALITY TV, OSBOURNES, RODZINA MOJSEJ

ABSTRACT:

THE USE OF CELEBRITIES IN THE MEDIA COMMUNICATION IS NOT NEW PHENOMENON, BUT FREQUENCY OF ITS USE IS ON THE RISE. IN THIS STUDY, WE FOCUS ON THE USE OF CELEBRITIES IN CURRENT TELEVISION PROGRAMS, FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON THE REALITY TV GENRE. WE PRESENT A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN AND SLOVAK CELEBRITIES - PROTAGONISTS OF SELECTED REALITY TV FORMATS. THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION THAT WE ASK IS: IS THERE A GLOBAL FORMULA FOR NATIONAL STARS IN REALITY TV, OR IS PRESENTED DEGREE OF ORIGINALITY SUFFICIENT ENOUGH, SO WE CAN TALK ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUTONOMOUS LINES AT BOTH LEVELS?

KEYWORDS:

CELEBRITY, CELEBREALITY, REALITY TV, OSBOURNES, MOJSEJ FAMILY

The presence of celebrities in television, especially in reality TV programmes, is without a doubt an effective way of their presentation in media. Television can create celebrities out of ordinary people, as well as it can use well-known people from other media or even different areas of social life, who are trying to get more media attention. Although under the pressure from various media resources, television is still the most important entertaining mass-media, not only in terms of its popularity, but especially because of recipients' attitudes (eg. Fichnová, Wojciechowski, Polakevičová, 2010). This is what Ozzy Osbourne (2009), one of the biggest reality TV stars ever, said about success of his show *The Osbournes*: "I couldn't believe it. And I certainly couldn't understand it. I'd never been that famous before - not even close... Obviously, I was no longer famous for being a singer. I was famous for being that swearing bloke on the telly - which felt very strange, and not always in a good way."

In this statement of Ozzy Osbourne we can see the distinction between personality known to a specific audience (famous rock singer outside the mainstream) and popular well-known personality (the protagonist of a successful television show, TV star, or particularly celebrealty star). Another point of view could be taken from Ozzy's quote: contemplation about the glory without merit, a sudden and unexpected success, which interferes with unprepared person so hardly, that he or she cannot react adequately and appropriately. There is one more important thing obvious from singer's quote: trying to be famous at any cost (ea. with the ability to use the gross expression on the screen). Such actions do not automatically bring satisfaction and positive feelings. However, the number of people who choose this kind of road to glory is relatively large globally. Mr. and Mrs. Mojsejs are the unique example of television celebrities in Slovakia, well known also in Czech Republic.

Celebrealty. An introduction.

Historically, people - more or less known - coming from different spheres of cultural industries, welcome the existence of reality TV as a perfect medium for their wide public presentation. In many ways, reality TV is not based on facts or presentation of ordinary people, as its name suggests, but this TV format consists more often of celebrity stories that are being relatively strongly stylized. Deploying celebrities in reality TV usually comes immediately after audience's oversaturation with the characters of ordinary people. This process is becoming so clear that it can be identified as one of the most current mutational trends of television production called celebritization. However, celebritization is not a specific component of reality TV that can be identified in broad range of television genres both on local and global levels, factual or fictional. According to Mark Andrejevic (2004), tendency to maintain status of celebrities in reality TV programmes overcomes their original immanent intentions (creating celebrities out of ordinary people) and enter into a similar significant feature of this genre group. Andrejevic also emphasizes what types of celebrities are appropriate for such exposure while he is being also quite critical: „it is the rehabilitation of faded stars who agree to turn

their lives into reality shows” (Andrejevic, 2004). Today, only eight years after Andrejevic’s book was published, we can find different examples all around the world, Mojsej family in Slovakia as one of them.

In this context, television scholars talk about celebrealty, using this expression usually as an opposite term for reality TV shows with ordinary people as its’ main protagonists. Celebrealty can be identified at a genre level, but it can be better grasped as a reference to specific formats having their "celebrity" variations. This developmental trend is evident in the case of reality TV in plenty of formats and it is presented in two different ways:

1. Direct connection, eg. world known reality gameshow Big Brother with its celebrealty mutation Celebrity Big Brother; Donald Trump’s The Apprentice mutated into Celebrity Apprentice; real-life social experiments like Wife Swap with its Celebrity Wife Swap mutation etc., and

2. Indirect connection, eg. Surreal Life (WB, later HV1, 2003-2006) at least partly inspired by The Real World (MTV, 1992-today) etc. The trend is less obvious in other reality TV genres like docu-soap (eg. socially motivated document series The Family motivated celebrealty docu-soaps like The Osbournes) etc.

Today, it seems obvious that celebrities who want to be successful in reality TV, must give up their privacy to some extent. Mixing or even merging private and public spheres, which thereby arise, is a relatively new phenomenon, especially in transforming countries like Slovakia. Mojsejs were the first personalities in Slovakia who took this step. They were domestic pioneers of reality TV and appeared in a number of formats that can be categorized under several different reality TV genres. Inventions of Mojsejs are partly original and emerging from their specificity, but also partly based on imitation of many inspiring foreign sources.

Osbournes and The Osbournes

A phenomenon of demystification of celebrities began with The Osbournes. The show was broadcasted on MTV (Music Television) and is still one of the MTV’s most successful formats ever adapted. The Osbournes were broadcasted between 2002 and 2005 in four seasons, but the show is still being recycled in MTV programme structure. The show was very successful in the U.S. and subsequently became an important issue for media scholars. Various aspects of the show served as inspiration for a number of studies, as well as monographs (eg. Koopmans, 2003, Holt, 2005) and name of the show can be found in most indexes of scientific publications dealing with reality TV.

Even before The Osbournes, the family appeared in two television programmes of reality TV character. The first one was a documentary film *Ozzy Osbourne Uncut* (1997, Channel 5, Travel Channel). The family with such an eccentric expression immediately

became a magnet for television producers: members of family living in the house (rented villa in California) were smoking all the time, using a large amount of pills, and most of all, they were using rough dictionary. In his autobiography (Osbourne, 2010) Ozzy remembers that the TV crew initially did not trust their authenticity of expression, because it simply didn't resemble socially functional family. However, the document had a massive commercial success and even won the bronze award on the global television entertainment contest Rose d'Or in Switzerland. Three years after the first television success, MTV offered Osbourne's special episode in the *Cribs* (MTV, 2002). As audience's reaction was very positive again, MTV subsequently came up with an offer for a long-term project: *The Osbournes*. Salzman et al. (2003) evaluates this decision of MTV, with only 200,000 dollars paid to Osbourne, as the MTV's decision of a decade. To certain level, many celebrities followed the success of *The Osbournes* after the boom of celebrealty programmes inspired by this globally known example. Most of them were only one season lasting reality series, like *Venus and Serena: For Real* (2005) with Serena and Venus Williams or *Britney and Kevin: Chaotic* about the life of Britney Spears (2005). However, few of celebrealty shows, eg. Donald Trump's *The Apprentice* (2003-today, with several adaptations outside the U.S., including Slovak version), were broadcasted during a number of seasons. One of the current and successful stars of celebrealty programmes is Paris Hilton with her reality gameshow *My New BFF* (2008-present). In addition, similarly to Donald Trump, also her show was adapted abroad: in Great Britain as *Paris Hilton's British Best Friend* and in United Arab Emirates as *Paris Hilton's Dubai BFF*.

The final episode of *The Osbournes* was aired March 21, 2005. After a break lasting for several years, the Osbourne family briefly returned to the television with the variety show *Osbournes: Reloaded* (Fox, 2009). But only one out of six episodes was broadcasted. After negative audience reaction and criticism from the press, Fox decided not to continue with the programme. The remaining five episodes have never been broadcasted.

Celebrealty in (Czecho-) Slovakia: Mojsejs

As we already mentioned, a phenomenon of Mojsej family was significant for the construction of social and cultural status of reality television in Slovakia, both on the level of laic and academic discourse. Moreover, their presence in the media landscape raised common interest in this genre form in Slovakia.

Mojsej family consists of just two persons: Nora Mojsejová and Braňo Mojsej. They are a married couple living in the metropolis of Eastern Slovakia - Košice. Nora became rich after the Velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1989, she succeeded in tax consultancy. She likes to be surrounded by luxury products (especially clothes) and profiles herself as shopaholic - shopping fanatic who travels all around Europe to buy the best luxury clothing and spend huge amounts of money on it. Braňo's background is very different. He is about ten years younger than Nora and he has never been successful before he'd met his wife. He is unsuccessful music performer and former habitual drinker. Together, Mojsejs are a quite con-

troversial couple, having very controversial views on various social issues. They became popular via the presentation of material assets (expensive cars, luxury house, top branded clothes, etc.), nevertheless they situate themselves to the position of speakers of ordinary people, marking their opinions as a common sense.

Media popularity of Mojsejs can be dated back to 2004, when they appeared in television series *VILOmeniny*. This originally Slovak reality TV programme, which can be classified as a reality-series with a competitive nature, was among the first of its kind in Slovakia. The moderator of *VILOmeniny* was well known showman Vilo Rozboril, whose name has been even used in the name of this series. Programme became popular because of particularly unconventional approach to controversial topics. *VILOmeniny* was broadcasted from 2000/2001 programme season, having primarily a competitive and family nature and was placed in the off-time programme slot on TV Markíza, number one on Slovak television market. Few years later - after positive viewing response - *VILOmeniny* was moved to prime time, consistently creating a superior audience share. From the position of the family oriented programme *VILOmeniny* redesigned its format into a social experiment reality TV genre with the potential to highlight social anomalies in society and create a wider discourse about social problems. Format was based on the confrontation of social contradictions, such as pupils vs. teachers, doctors vs. gravediggers, rich vs. poors, nuns vs. prostitutes etc. Besides social contradictions, physical ones were often used, for example tall vs. short people, slim vs. fat people, etc. *VILOmeniny* was broadcasted until June, 23 2008. In 2005/2006 programme season it was temporally replaced by the premiere of *Big Brother*. After a huge failure of *Big Brother* in Slovakia, *VILOmeniny* had returned to the air and for the next two seasons it was one of the most stable prime time titles of TV Markíza. All together, around 150 parts of *VILOmeniny* were aired, making it one of the most succesful reality TV series in Slovakia ever. The episode with Mojsejs was aired in 2005 and it was nominated for global television entertainment award *Rose d'Or* in the category of reality show, but with no success. In this episode, Mojsejs competed with a pair of homeless people (social contradiction - homeless people vs. millionaires) with whom they even temporarily swapped homes. With more than a half of television market share, Mojsejs immediately captured public interest and showed that they are protagonists attractive for a full range of reality TV programmes.

A year after *VILOmeniny* series, TV Markíza launched a massive promotion of the new reality gameshow, the first of its kind and scale in Slovak media. *Mojsejovci*, as the show was called, had many features in common with *Big Brother* licensed format. The format was so similar that Endemol was considering allegations of copyright violation. TV Markíza, however, insisted that *Mojsejovci* is an original format. Vilo Rozboril, author of the screenplay, perceived the authenticity of the *Mojsejovci* as follows: „...there is a number of other reality shows of this kind. We verified a possibility for exceptional audience share on *VILOmeniny*... Although we could purchase a license format such as *Big Brother*, TV Markíza has chosen the format that is originally Slovakian and will be dealing with Slovak physical and social environment." Naturally, the originality of the format was also de-

fended by the PR department of TV Markíza. Ivana Semjanová, head of PR, argued: "Certain common features are universal for reality show as a genre. Our rules, however, were created by Mojsejs themselves, who offered the reward for the winner. Big Brother contestants are leaving the show as a consequence of audience decision via SMS voting, in our format audience only recommends a candidate that should leave the show". Endemol finally did not go into litigation. However, the ambiguity of the rules in conjunction with Mojsejs behavior led to an extreme disorder during the competition.

Despite the complicated processes inside the show, its rating was above-average, mostly generating even ultimate audience interest. First episode was watched by 1.7 million viewers and brought 65.2% market share. It is still one of the largest rating percentages of any Slovak television since the implementation of peplemeters in 2004. Market shares of the show were often above 50%, while it should be noted that a similar result in prime time in Slovakia today is more of an idealistic desire of television broadcasters. Mojsejs were able to trigger the attention of viewers and keep it to the very end of the show. Virtually, from the first airing of the show, they became a magnet for tabloid press. Scandals and unexpected events (both from the show and its production surroundings) were covered on a daily basis. After Mojsejovci, no other reality TV format was able to attract such a huge interest of audience in Slovakia, although there were some proven formats adapted and broadcasted such as Big Brother or Hungarian Való Világ.

Indicated by the market share results, as well as reactions of tabloid press, reality gameshow Mojsejovci clearly attracted Slovak audience and tabloid media. For the first time, the audience could become familiar with a large and expensive project of reality gameshow. At the same time, Mojsejovci fully exposed the shortcomings of this type of programming, namely the absence of clear rules and criteria for victory. These troubles were multiplied by the fact that audience role was rather passive, because only Mojsejs themselves had the power to make final verdicts. Mojsejovci showed that celebrealty programmes tend to depend on, but also fail upon their protagonists. In this aspect, Mojsejovci was successful, although it also showed that communication between Mojsejs and the production staff was more than difficult. Television channels have begun to beware the great risk of using Mojsejs in the core programme projects. Potential failure could affect not only the financial benefit, but also - and it is certainly important - the actual image of the broadcaster. It is also important to mention that TV Markíza was fined 2 million Slovak crowns (about 60,000 euros) for Mojsejovci because of a failure to comply with ethical and legal standards, including vulgar expressions of Mojsejs. Until that time it had been the highest fine imposed on any television broadcaster in Slovakia. Even though, TV Markíza - aimed on commercial success - kept being interested in Mojsejs during next couple of years. Also, the second largest commercial television broadcaster in Slovakia - TV Joj - showed interest in the famous couple. Despite continuing disputes, Mojsejs kept faithful cooperation with TV Markíza.

In 2006, reality gameshow Mojsejovci was nominated for Rose d'Or, just like VILOmeniny (episode with Mojsejs) the year before that, and again it wasn't successful. In this context, these two reality TV programmes provide the mirror to the television enter-

tainment in Slovak media landscape in the period of recent decade. It is noticeable that these two attempts are without precedens and up to these days (2012) there haven't been any other nomination for Rose d'Or for a Slovak television programme.

In spite of certain media distrust towards Mojsejs that arose during the reality gameshow *Mojsejovci*, they returned to broadcasting after a few months. Tabloid media announced their return in the next reality gameshow called *Hotel*, proclaiming the social dimension of the project - to help people find an employment. However, the show has never been executed.

Mojsejs (this time just Nora) finally returned in a more humble project - adaptation of licensed format *Shopaholic* (*Nákupná horúčka*), which was verified in advance in Norway, where it was first aired in 2004. The screenplay was very simple - a group of women competed in purchasing of clothes. It is obvious that the adaptation of such a format requires some extra added value that could be provided by members of the jury more than any other aspect of the show. Together with the two other jury members, *Nákupná horúčka* offered a space for Nora Mojsejová, this time in a role of fashion clothing expert.

In terms of genre categorization, *Nákupná horúčka* is a hybrid format, connecting various aspects of reality gameshow, talent show and talk show. Audience response to the show with such a specific theme was slightly above the average. Without a doubt, it was Nora Mojsejová whose presence in programme potentially placed it into the prime time. In *Nákupná horúčka*, Nora boosted her position of shopaholic and fashion industry expert in the minds of viewers. Programme showed that Mojsejs are well applicable to a relatively broad format spectrum, and that audience interest in them persists over years.

Due to commercial success of reality gameshow *Mojsejovci* and - as *Nákupná horúčka* has shown - continuing public interest in Mojsejs, a new programme called *Nora a Braňo* (Nora and Braňo) was created in 2006. This format partly emerged as a spin-off from reality gameshow *Mojsejovci*, however, its competitive character shifted it towards the documentary stylization. Similarly, as in the case of *Mojsejovci*, also *Nora a Braňo* was the original format. As indicated by slogans („Nora and Braňo: a true story“; „The incredible life of a prominent couple“), show focused on "real" life of Mojsejs, their privacy, relationship between them, relationships with their friends and acquaintances, and their participation in various events (such as fashion shows, shopping in Milan, Italy), as well as events organized by them (music festival called *Mojsejfest*, charity sale of their luxury fashion clothing). A programme plan of TV Markíza thematically targeted docu-soap *Nora a Braňo* as follows: „Viewers watch every movement of the couple with interest. We would like to know how they live in their house, how often they change their flats and apartments, if they argue with each other, how Nora works and earns money, how Braňo composes songs, produces vodka and deals with his alcoholism, how their parents live, and if they have any friends at all ... Daily life of spouses will be under the supervision of television cameras so viewers can find who Mojsejs really are." (Programme plan of TV Markíza, 2006).

A format of *Nora a Braňo* can be formally included into the British tradition of docu-soaps, but even closer similarity can be found in comparison with U.S. programmes like *The Osbournes* already mentioned above. While British docu-soaps focus mainly on a working environment (airports, ports, farm, etc.), America's tradition focus on the family, and what's more, the celebrity family.

Despite the relatively strong criticism, *Nora a Braňo* is so far the only docu-soap programme ever made in Slovakia. This format can be considered as rare, therefore Slovak response to relatively strong trend of docu-soaps in Western Europe is very late and it peaked around year 2000. The first implementation of the new, fresh genre was undoubtedly a major challenge for both TV Markíza and *Mojsejs*. However, we can be questioning how the production understood this challenge and whether *Nora a Braňo* was something more than only an extension of an old theme and apparently exhausted topic of the two "hyper" celebrities, this time packed in a docu-soap genre. *Nora a Braňo* was broadcasted during strategically important Friday's prime-time slot and it succeeded very well, even in comparison with much more expensive competitive projects broadcasted by other television channels. Also in this programme, *Mojsejs* stylised themselves in a higher social class, showing a continuous tendency of looking on the Slovak society from bird's eye view. By establishing a section inside the show dedicated to responding to the audience correspondence, *Mojsejs* distanced from the formal rules of docu-soap while showing that their need for selfpromotion after annual break was more important than formal rules of docu-soap genre. *Mojsejs* again labeled themselves as "know-all" specialists with the exceptional ability to understand deeper social phenomena (especially tabloidization of media), or to criticize anyone out of Slovak showbusiness personalities. Their effort was also supported by the production. The opening jingle characterized them as unique and exceptional personalities: *Nora* as a financial wizard and *Braňo* as a successful rocker. At least the success of *Braňo Mojsej* as a musician is doubtful, but in the meantime, also *Nora* – the „financial wizard“ – has been accused of financial fraud, though not legally found guilty. On the one hand the programme officially proclaimed the intention to explain *Mojsejs*'s ideas to the wider audience, on the other hand it tried to mythologize them and present them as hyper-celebrities, having a right to evaluate their colleagues, ill-wishers, and ultimately the entire society. Television audience had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the everyday life of a famous couple, but also with the unique situations of their lives (clothing auction, preparation and realization of music festivals etc.). The story took place either in *Mojsejs*' home (called "villa") or in a variety of outdoors, depending on the current activities of the protagonists. Presented environment had the nature of high society: expensively furnished interiors, luxury cars, crowds of people (fans only) around, buzz wherever they occurred. The feeling of authenticity was accented by technical resources, especially fly-on-the-wall. The story concentrated mainly on the central events that required proper preparation of the protagonists and reflected their human characteristics. Even though, in these moments the audience actually learned only what it had already known after seeing *VILOMENINY* in 2004 – the first media visualisation of a couple. Just like in the reality gameshow *Moj-*

sejovci, conflicts between Mojsejs and TV Markíza caused very complicated course of the show. This time, the main platform of conflicts was concentrated in tabloid press, not inside the programme. This resulted in short duration of the programme, reduced only to nine episodes in comparison to the original plan.

Despite the continuing conflicts between Mojsejs and broadcasters, public interest in them lasted. A year after the end of *Nora* and *Braňo* they finally agreed to cooperate with television channel TV Joj, number two in the Slovak market, and created another original format: *Čo na to Mojsejovci?* / What do you say, Mojsejs? (2007) (As it wasn't a reality TV programme, we will pay only a little attention to it). The format was designed as a talk show hybrid, so it gave up the complicated and unpredictable storyline typical for Mojsejs' previous shows. A basic idea of programme was to present Mojsejs' opinions on selected events in front of the audience. There were also guests invited to the studio, but format rules gave Mojsejs the power to judge them, sometimes even in a very rude way. Thus, the structure of the show partially resembled the talk show genre, but only to the point of confrontation. In this case, the audience reaction was negative. *Čo na to Mojsejovci?* failed in the competition with rival programmes. Therefore, after only four parts being broadcasted, TV Joj decided to shorten the show and enhance its dynamics, moving it to the late prime-time. After the initial above average results, its rating stabilized on average to below average levels. TV Joj broadcasted ten more episodes in this form. As an unsuccessful project TV Joj finally decided to cancel the show. The overall market share of *Čo na to Mojsejovci?* was 19,9%. It was the late prime time product with only 5,5% rating - much lower result than those reached in previous reality TV formats.

It took several years for Mojsejs to return to reality TV. As previous programme showed, public interest in them had been gradually declining, but TV Joj still believed in their commercial potential. This time, the show was aired both in Slovakia and in Czech Republic - a neighbourhood country linguistically and culturally very close to Slovakia. The programme was co-produced with TV Prima, number three at the Czech market and a partner of TV Joj. The production relied on the proven reality gameshow format *The Apprentice*. However, the adaptation of this format in the Slovak and Czech environment has been particularly complicated. Firstly, it is almost impossible to reach the authority and charisma of Donald Trump as an original protagonist of the show. He is really rich, owner of many branches of his company, and he lives in the center of the business world - New York. Secondly, *The Apprentice* is an expensive show, designed for large and economically developed audience. The main protagonist of the Czecho-Slovak version of *The Apprentice* was Nora Mojsejová, her husband didn't feature in the show. It is still not very common to see a woman to be a boss of a company in the Central Europe. She isn't a businesswoman either - she has become rich in the area of tax consulting. She only launched her fashion business during the programme called *Nora Fashion* and the winner of the show became a manager of this company. For these reasons Nora Mojsejová didn't have the authority comparable to Donald Trump. On the contra-

ry, her role as the company's chief was being presented as untrustworthy, incompetent and sometimes even naive. Contestants lacked authority, what was especially noticeable in competitions. Also, the interiors and exteriors were below expectations of The Apprentice format. The corporate headquarters was located in Bratislava, capital of Slovakia. Since the company has just started, the interiors were new, created for the show with intention to look similar to those known from Donald Trump's show.

From the marketing point of view, the show was a flop. After a couple of episodes, it was moved to late-prime time, both in Slovakia and Czech Republic. Moreover, due to the lack of audience, the show was terminated prematurely.

Global patterns and national celebrealty stars

Despite declining public interest, Mojsejs have been a phenomenon in the Slovak media for several years. Their success was proven by market share of some of the shows in which they participated that reached staggering proportions. The basic question in the context of this study is: does the media presentation of Mojsejs in the whole spectrum of reality TV genre broadcasted in Slovakia provide specific characteristic of Slovak media culture, or is it a kind of reflection of global trend of television evolution? This question is notably interesting in terms of professional, but also laic criticism of the current media culture in Slovakia, as there is often a tendency to blame reality TV and namely Mojsejs for its current status, which is undoubtedly unflattering. The dominant discourse of television culture status focuses on unprecedented development in this area, pointing to a specific domestic situation, out of the global context of media culture status (Pavelka, 2006; Spálová & Fichnová, 2008).

The arrival of reality TV in Slovakia has been very specific, and in many ways different, from those of other countries. In a broader context, we can find several common aspects between Slovak and foreign development, regarding the framework response to global stimuli. Broadcasters and producers in Slovakia rarely understood reality TV as a new documentary mode of mediating reality, even though there are some good examples from public broadcasters – especially from Great Britain, Scandinavia and U.S. Instead, Slovak broadcasters understood the challenge of a new genre under the distinct influence of entertaining imperative of light, but also in many aspects, qualitatively poor entertainment.

Response to the questions above is based on comparative analysis of American and Slovak reality TV stars (Osbournes and Mojsejs). We are aware that due to the wide interpretative boundaries of the problem selected method could only provide us with partial answers. There are surprisingly many similarities between Mojsejs and Osbournes. Both families seem to enter into the world of television entertainment by accident, by hosting a single episode of the reality TV programme (VILOMeniny and Cribs). Both of them effectively used such a little media space to attract exceptional audience interest and stimulate producers to create their own, original formats. These formats (Mojsejovci and The Osbournes) brought them high popularity, which they have subsequently failed

to retain in other formats. Moreover, in both cases we can talk about determination of success by a chosen genre. Once the family occurred in other genre than reality TV (*Čo na to Mojsejovci?* and *Osbournes: Reloaded*; both mutated talk shows), it had a very sub-standard audience share, and were prematurely withdrawn from broadcast.

Similarities can be also found at the level of individual family members. Similarly to *Ozzy Osbourne*, *Braňo Mojsej* is a music performer. However, *Ozzy* is a music legend, but *Braňo* is probably still waiting for his career turnover to come. Both men are financially guided by their wives, who are portrayed as more responsible and circumspect. With the high family budgets, both wives ostentatiously displayed their affiliation to a higher social class via expensive purchases, aimed at the top class fashion.

It is important to say that there are also many differences between the two families. Probably the biggest one lies in the fact that the *Osbournes* have children, while *Mojsejs* are childless. A presence of children in reality TV is certainly an interesting interlocutor factor that can lead to interesting and attractive situations. From the narratological point of view, a complete family retells the story of a deep variety of interpersonal relationships. In this context, *Osbournes* have a significant advantage because of their three children, although just two of them featured in the show. From this viewpoint, *Mojsejs* had to portray other topics than the stereotypical stories of family harmony in its broadest meaning. At least at the level of acting in the reality TV, there are quite a lot of similarities between the two families. On this basis, the media representation of *Mojsejs* should be viewed as a response of domestic background to foreign inspirations.

Pointing to a number of similarities between the *Osbournes* and *Mojsejs* doesn't automatically mean that the Slovak protagonists intentionally and purposely copied the U.S. ones. A more appropriate answer to the question stated in the introduction would be: despite a strong wave of criticism, *Mojsejs* as celebrealty stars aren't entirely original Slovak reality TV phenomenon, at least at the level of co-creators and innovators of reality TV formats. Acquired knowledge suggests that local media scenes of small countries like Slovakia have to be viewed in the broader context of global development trends. A comparison of *Osbournes* as a global reality TV stars with *Mojsejs* as local ones appears to be a good example of specific type of glocalization in media sphere. This kind of implicit globalization is a specific manifestation of contemporary media culture. ■

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andrejevic, Mark (2003): *Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched*. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. ISBN-10: 0742527484.
- Bočák, Michal - Rusnák, Juraj (2008): *Na ceste za poslucháčom a divákom: Poznámky o trendoch v programovaní v elektronických médiách*. [On the way towards radio and television audience: Notes on trends in program-

- ming in electronic media]In: Foret, Martin - Lapčík, Marek - Orság, Petr (eds.): Média dnes. Reflexe mediality, médií a mediálních obsahů. Olomouc : Palacký University. ISBN 978-80-244-2023-3.
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2002): The Mediation of Everyday Life. Genre, Discourse, and Spectacle in Reality TV. In: Bondebjerg, I. - Jerslev, A.(eds.): Realism and "Reality" in Film and Media (Film and Media Studies Yearbook 2002). Copenhagen : Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Fichnová, Katarína - Wojciechowski, Lukas - Polakevičová, Ivana (2010): Subiektywne postrzeganie przez dojrzewającą młodzież pojęć oznaczających media. In: Media v edukacji - poglądy. Toruń : Zastosowania. Społeczne spostrzeganie. - Adam Marszałek. ISBN 978-83-7611-685-3.
- Holt, Julia (2005): The Osbournes. Livewire Real Lives Series. Hodder Education. ISBN034090397X.
- Jones, Steve (2005): MTV: The Medium was the Message. Critical Studies in Media Communication. Vol. 22, No. 1, March 2005. Avialable online: <http://steve-jones.me/pubs/2005/CSMC-MTV.pdf>
- Koopmans, Andy (2003): The Osbournes. Lucent Books, 2003. ISBN 1590184513.
- Osbourne, Ozzy (2009): I am Ozzy. Sphere. 2009. ISBN-10: 184744346X.
- Pavelka, Jiří (2006): Diskurzivní analýza ve výzkumu masové komunikace. [The discourse analysis in the mass communication research] In: Masmédiálna komunikácia v interdisciplinárnom výskume. Trnava : UCM, 2006. ISBN 80-89220-48-7.
- Programe plan of TV Markíza. 2006. [doc document online]. [Week 39, 2006]. [20.4.2007]. Avialable online: http://www1.markiza.sk/markiza/data/71327/__extra_6052-anota3906.doc
- Spálová, Lucia - Fichnová, Katarína (2008): Analýza diskurzu gender stereotypu vytvárených médií v postmoderní spoločnosti. [The discourse analysis of gender stereotypes created by media in postmodern society]In: Mezi modernou a postmodernou III. Ostrava : Technical university in Ostrava. ISBN 978-80-248-1730-9.
- Szabo, Peter (2007): Televízny seriál v kontexte literatúry a umenia. [Television series in the context of literature and arts.] In: Fichnová, K. (ed.): (KO)MÉDIÁ : monografia odborných a vedeckých štúdií. Nitra : UKF, 2007.

O AUTORZE:

Peter Mikuláš, Ph.D - pracownik naukowy w Katedrze komunikacji medialnej I reklamy na Wydziale Filozoficznym Uniwersytetu Konstantína Filozofa w Nitrze (Słowacja).