Abstrakt

The main goal of this diploma thesis was to find patterns on the pages of Na vlastní oči (With One’s Own Eyes) title that define gutter press in its specific form of political tabloid. The analysis was concerned with the time period from 2016 to 2019 during which the said title was published in total of four waves each of which related to the relevant pre-election campaign. The Na vlastní oči title was initially published anonymously and only later Jan Čížek, publisher of the regional town-hall newspaper and a Freedom and Direct Democracy Party (SPD) candidate, claimed to be the publisher. SPD subsequently became the final sponsor of the newspaper.

In the first wave of publishing activity, the authors of the title focused on a disparaging campaign against the then-candidate for the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Parliament and, in a broader context, against the whole opposition within the City Council of the Prague 10 City Ward. In its later publications, the newspaper dealt mostly with topics aimed at spreading fear of an unspecified danger associated with the refugee crisis and concerns about the unknown in the form of the Islamic Religion which was always associated with the threat of terrorism. In the context of its election programme, SPD also communicated groundless criticism of the European Union and placed a strong emphasis on the protection of national interests, patriotism and nationalism. Amongst the political rivals on the domestic political scene, this anti-campaign targeted mainly the Czech Pirate Party which in the relevant period represented a new political entity with high hopes for joining the country’s parliamentary politics. The policy of negative campaign based on mass publications of groundless claims, slanders, hoaxes and half-truths concentrated on this newspaper’s pages into a unique form of a printed political tabloid press.

In terms of content, the Na vlastní oči title meets all graphic and substantive elements of a tabloid press. The title actively operated with these formats in terms of layout of pages where it used disproportionately big headlines which, in comparison with the textual part of the newspaper, in many cases did not correspond with the presented headline. Furthermore, photographs were used as a specific communication tool, being completely the product of the given code in relation to the context of the media. The collages, infographics and colour spectrum used with respect to the criticized persons and parties contrasted with the visual presentation of SPD’s representatives and candidates, as well as politicians close to this party. The title used these European and world politicians repeatedly to demonstrate the breadth of the movement which is not only a local movement but calls for a broader change in the world
By nature, tabloid press presentation is very emotional and in terms of political campaign SPD aims significantly to make use of such influence on voter decision-making at the time of a political election contest. The attained election results suggest that this strategy is especially successful during elections to representative bodies where direct contact between the candidates and the voters is limited. Despite quite massive overall propaganda, the party was relatively less successful during elections to local self-governing bodies.