Review of Diploma Thesis Transmedia Storytelling and Amnesty International in the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom 1993-2013

Diploma thesis prepared by Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue B.A **Transmedia Story telling and Amnesty International in the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom 1993-2013** deals with the issue of the non-profit sector in an exploratory case study of Amnesty International groups at various levels in both the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom through the perspective of transmedia storytelling practices as well as utilisation of SWOT analysis methodology. The author argues that face-to-face fundraising (the most traditional form of fundraising for charities in the West) is not universally successful and this thesis can be documented by the case study of the Czech Republic.

The first chapter (Introduction) ponders upon importance of online communication that is used directly by organisations themselves without mediators of the public sphere such as journalists. By means of direct online communication NGO´s aim at attracting attention to their issues online by initiating a dialogue via online forums and motivating the public to participate in activities that may influence the media as well as political agenda. The first chapter also deals with determination of agenda settings considered to be relevant elements concerning resource mobilization understood as the ability of a movement to acquire resources and mobilize people towards accomplishing the goals of said movement. Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue also states that the time frame of the study encapsulates the two decades stretching from 1993-2013 which in the Czech Republic have been marked by an influx of non-profit organisations including Amnesty International.

At the beginning of the second chapter Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue explains the choice of the topic of her diploma thesis by local presence of an Amnesty International section in Prague, the facilitation of a comparative case study through Amnesty International's presence in many countries, Amnesty International's(AI) global human rights aims which are internationally applicable, etc. She briefly mentions historical aspects of establishment of AI in the United Kingdom, its expansion as well as its recognition by UN structures. She proceeds to partial explanation of historical aspects of transmedia storytellings (communicating information to the masses from the educated to the illiterate) and their current definitions. For the sake of this purpose Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue presents Jenkins' *Convergence Culture* that does not define transmedia storytelling in an academic format but rather in an anecdotic way and she makes decision to use the definition for the purpose of the study.

The aim of the third chapter has become to explain discrepancies between Amnesty International group's agenda setting and resource mobilization in different regions and mainly to present methodology employed. The methodology of the third chapter has become primary data accumulation from approximately fifteen interviews (staff, volunteers and participants related to British and Czech Amnesty International groups) as well as transcription of the information employed from their audio format using Atlas.ti software and procedure of coding. *"Following this the main topics brought into conversation by the interviewees regarding agenda setting and resource mobilisation will be focused on, for example the transition from print to online media, the decline or rise of certain communication forms or the organising of online activists".* The subchapter Data Collections and Instrumentation involves three sections: Data Gathering: Interviews and Online Data Sets, Data Analysis: Atlas Coding and SWPT and Case Study Methodology.

In the forth chapter (named Findings) the first subchapter deals with SWOT Analysis of UK Agenda Settings and Resource Mobilisation [sections strengths (face to face fundraising, retiree volunteers, individual approach), weaknesses (digital media usage), opportunities (origins of AI, language dominance, threats (similarly themed organisations, membership expiration, lack of cross-group, communication) and summary], the second one SWOT Analysis of CZ Agenda Setting and Resource Mobilisation sections [strengths (creative output, digital media use, understanding of regional variances), weaknesses (short-term employment), opportunities (generosity of advertisers, status of artists, political climate, business climate), threats (controversial topics, cultural differences, lack of success with F2F) and summary] and the third one Application of Transmedia Storytelling Practices to Amnesty International's Agenda Setting and Resource Mobilisation.

In the fifth chapter (Conclusion) Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue summarises results of her efforts: (1)approaches to agenda setting and resource mobilisation have indeed faced different issues in both regions (2) diverse forms of agenda setting and resource mobilisation in respective countries are complimentary to the application of transmedia storytelling and (3)concerted effort to further utilise transmedia storytelling practices could likely aid in the development of agenda setting and resource mobilisation in both regions.

Strengths of the diploma thesis elaborated by Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue can be summarized in following points:

(1)Accuracy (precision) concerning choice of the topic (theoretical as well as empirical part of the thesis) and lack of vague formulations

(2)Explanation of theoretical notions relevant for the topic and data gathering (when using various sources) such as agenda setting, transmedia story telling, audiences, resource mobilisation

(3)Clear explanation of the methodology followed by data collection through the comparative perspective of the respective countries (the approach comparing the "cradle" of AI to the post-communist country is very useful for understanding relevant structural differences concerning methods of fundraising in the former First World and the Second World).

(4)Formal aspects of the diploma thesis (elaborated structure and clear evolution of argumentation, glossary of terms, frequent and useful citations, comprehensive bibliography).

<u>Weakness of the diploma thesis elaborated by Véronique Nicole O'Donoghue:</u>

(1)According sociological ethics regarding protection of respondents their identity (including names) should be kept in anonymity (respondents might criticize organisation for which work (AIand their criticism can have negative influence on their professional advancement)

I suggest the final grade excellent.

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Lucie Cviklová 15.9. 2015

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