

Abstract

The thesis focuses on the nature, practices and position of critical media in Central Europe, specifically on the periodicals Deník Alarm, Kapitál, Krytyka Polityczna and MÉRCE. These media, as defined by Christian Fuchs, produce critical content pointing out the flaws and problems of the current social and media systems, thus strengthening their democratic condition. The aim of this paper is to provide insight into the editorial offices of critical media through qualitative research. I am using the methods of ethnographic observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews to learn about and then also describe the functioning, positions and identities of critical media outlets, as well as how the editors feel within the journalistic communities of the countries in question. The hypothesis of this thesis is that the critical media of the Visegrad Four may have a unique character due to their geographical position and the socialist past of this area. I will try to capture the similarities or, conversely, the differences of the media, while taking into account what their social function is and whether they fit the theory of critical media at all. The thesis fills a gap in research on alternative media of the post-socialist bloc and brings the concept of critical media to the Central European region, where these media may face more obstacles precisely for the reasons already mentioned - especially at a time when neighbouring countries are facing an illiberal turn that is fundamentally affecting the media sphere, as well.