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INTRODUCTION

Both the world's and European literature does not sufficiently discuss the topic of media representations of emotions. There are ongoing disputes whether media representations of emotions should be treated as a new paradigm, meta-process,¹ communication space,² social phenomenon³ or research program.⁴ Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone,⁵ in their critical appraisal of the concept made by Stig Hjarvard,⁶ David Deacon and James Stanyer,⁷ Andreas

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¹ Friedrich KROTZ, *Die Mediatisierung kommunikativen Handels. Der Wandel von Alltag und sozialen Beziehungen, Kultur und Gesellschaft durch die Medien* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2007), 258.

² Mirca MADIANOU and Daniel MILLER, "Polymedia: Towards a New Theory of Digital Media in Interpersonal Communication," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 16 (2012): 169–87.

³ Nick COULDRY and Andreas HEPP, *The Mediated Construction of Reality* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

⁴ Peter LUNT and Sonia LIVINGSTONE, "Is 'Mediatization' the New Paradigm for Our Field? A Commentary on Deacon and Stanyer," *Media Culture & Society* 38 (2015): 37–52, <http://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716631288>.

⁵ LUNT, LIVINGSTONE, *Is 'mediatization,'* 47.

⁶ Stig HJARVARD, "The Mediatization of Society: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change," *Nordicom Review* 29 (2008): 105–34.

⁷ David DEACON and James STANYER, "Mediatization: Key Concept or Conceptual Bandwagon?" *Media, Culture & Society* 36, no. 7 (2014): 1032–44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443714542218>.

Hepp, Stig Hjarvard, Knut Lundby,⁸ postulate that the umbrella term “mediatisation” covers too many different theories and studies, bound only by a fascination with the media and their influence on social and private life, rather than by a fully-fledged theory and methodology.

The existing terminological chaos deserves to be arranged in order. The well-established assumptions need to be verified and a new paradigm of studying media representations of emotions ought to be developed. Furthermore, what needs to be described are the mechanisms of generating emotions and mechanisms of their representation in various media (press, radio, television, internet) in various areas of social life (religion, education, consumerism, culture).

Despite the ongoing discussions, we regard the concept of “mediatisation” as a “sensitising” research concept,⁹ opening up a space for empirical, interdisciplinary studies, which could prove inspiring for media experts, sociologists, literature scholars, linguists, cultural experts. The term is used in many contexts to characterise the influence of the media exerted on various spheres of life. Only a limited number of scholars managed to construct and develop theoretical concepts and translate them into a more coherent and precise understanding of the mediatisation as a socio-cultural process.¹⁰ Mediatisation is understood as a media-based (both traditional and digital) mediation between all spheres of the public and private life, as well as a process of transferring an ever increasing number of experiences from the real world to the media world and vice versa, i.e. how media representations of emotions affect emotions in a society.¹¹ On the one hand, according to Stig Hjarvard, the media emerge as independent institutions, with their own logic that other social institutions need to adjust to. On the other hand, they become an integral part of other public institutions (school—educational, work—economic, church—religious, media—cultural) and private institutions (family, religion).¹² “The logic of the media” refers to their institutional and technological functioning, draws from their symbols, values, norms, and—very

⁸ Andreas HEPP, Stig HJARVARD, and Knut LUNDBY, “Mediatization: Theorizing the Interplay between Media, Culture and Society,” *Media, Culture & Society* 37, no. 2 (2015): 314–25.

⁹ Herbert BLUMER, “What is Wrong with Social Theory?” *American Sociological Review* 19, no. 1 (1954): 3–10.

¹⁰ Friedrich KROTZ, “The Meta-Process of ‘Mediatization’ as a Conceptual Frame,” *Global Media and Communication* 3, no. 3 (2007): 256–60; Winfried SCHULZ, “Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept,” *European Journal of Communication* 19 (2004): 87–101; HJARVARD, “The Mediatization,” 105–34.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 105–34.

¹² *Ibid.*, 105.

importantly for this publication—their emotions. We understand media-tisation of emotions as a process of the media being involved not only in getting to know and creating the social reality but also in steering and moving the social attention in certain directions during the pandemic through emotion-laden media discourses and mechanisms of generating emotions. What is to be analyzed here is the pandemic-related media discourse, understood as “a set of methods concerning a deliberate, intentional use of language in order to convey information, opinions, values, concepts, ideas referring to various topics.”¹³ It points towards “new forms of constructing reality and new conditions of shaping opinions and decisions.”¹⁴ We assume then that the media discourse reflects the authority–subordination relations holding between the senders and the receivers (a component of power), as well as definitions of important concepts and hierarchies of values. The media users agree to be subject (either through reading, listening, or watching) to the influence of a given medium. The influence is exerted either through presenting content or through the mechanism of generating emotions. The component of power is attributed to the news broadcasts, presenting selected data (e.g. on the number of infections and deaths due to the virus) and or selected pieces of news (e.g. dominated by the pandemic), supervising program formats and their topics, thus affecting what the users should think about the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the papers is to synthetically present original studies on the linguistic and visual narrations permeated during the pandemic. Analyses of mechanisms of generating emotions were applied to different types of social life: culture, religion, education, consumption.

This thematic issue is divided into four parts: Emotions, Media, Culture, Society. Except for Emotions, they begin with a theoretical background and provide empirical data. The theoretical part examines a multitude of research perspectives in a given scholarly discipline. An overview of definitions of emotions across scientific disciplines points to a diversity of emotion-related phenomena and displays challenges associated with their classification. Some of them are an extension of traditional psychological and sociological theories, others can be viewed as novel approaches. In this study, we primarily focus on:

¹³ Magdalena LISOWSKA-MAGDZIARZ, *Analiza tekstu w dyskursie medialnym* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 2006), 8.

¹⁴ Stanisław MICHALCZYK, *Spoleczeństwo medialne. Studia z komunikowania masowego* (Katowice: Śląsk, 2008), 15.

- socio-cultural approach, which finds a source of emotions in a cognitive evaluation determined by a given situation or social structure (socio-cultural constructivism, a critical perspective on the media-based cultural studies (part “Culture”), sociological theories: theories of drama and culture, theories of rituals, symbolic interactionism, social exchange, structural theories and theories of evolution (part “Society”));
- a cognitive linguistics approach, which treats language as a cognitive tool and a reflection of a subjective view of the world. It relies on the category of “cultural scripts” and analyses cognitive scripts, embedded in language, allowing for an identification and interpretation of emotions, opening up a context for ethnolinguistic comparative studies (parts “Emotions” and “Media”);
- sociology of art, which places a work of art, viewed as a source of emotions and aesthetic experience, in the social context (part “Culture”).

The empirical part of this issue presents the results of studies related to:

- mechanisms of generating emotions in various types of the media: television (Joanna Sosnowska), the radio and audio-based media (Aneta Wójciszyn-Wasil) and press (Olga Białek-Szwed), during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic—qualitative studies;
- media representations of emotions in various areas related to social and cultural life, on the basis of analyses of media materials in the field of religion (Justyna Szulich-Kałuża), consumerism/economy (Aneta Duda), education (Małgorzata Gruchoła) and culture (Małgorzata Sławek-Czochra)—qualitative and quantitative studies;
- studying media representations of emotions (Aneta Duda, Małgorzata Gruchoła, Małgorzata Sławek-Czochra, Justyna Szulich-Kałuża). The authors/researchers adopted an interdisciplinary approach towards “mediatisation of emotions” and, where the available paradigms of research were not sufficient, developed a new model of studying media representations of emotions.

This publication is a novel project, based on new research tools, however, drawing rich inspiration from many other research areas, and, what is more important, adding new value to them. The appeal of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach towards the research material, with a focus on both the traditional and new media. It is a publication of a comprehensive character, which discusses media representations of emotions and offers a unique, in-depth analysis of the messages created and promoted by the media during the pandemic.

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