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PERSPECTIVES OF CULTURAL STUDIES  
(CONCEPTUALISATION OF EMOTIONS  
IN THE DISCOURSE OF CULTURAL STUDIES)

1. DEFINITION ARRANGEMENTS

Emotions form a relatively new object of study within cultural studies, cultural anthropology, ethnology, but also within broadly understood social and humanistic sciences (except for psychological studies and philosophical thought). William M. Reddy<sup>1</sup> points to the last fifty years (since the 1970s) as the time of the growth of cultural studies. The discourse of American researchers glorifies emotions, attributing them with a special role in the shaping of individuality and subjectivity (Arlie Hochschild's *emotional labor*),<sup>2</sup> while the European discourse examines historically and culturally conditioned constructs, focusing more on the cultural contexts of emotions rather than emotions themselves. Such a constructivist-cultural perspective is represented by Steven Gordon,<sup>3</sup> Jan Stets and Jonathan Turner,<sup>4</sup> Maggie Colleen

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<sup>1</sup> William M. REDDY, "Przeciw konstruktywizmowi. Etnografia historyczna emocji," in *Emocje w kulturze*, ed. Małgorzata Rajtar and Justyna Straczuk (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2012), 101.

<sup>2</sup> Arlie HOCHSCHILD, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," *American Journal of Sociology* 85, no. 3 (1979): 551–75.

<sup>3</sup> Steven GORDON, "The Sociology of Sentiments and Emotions," in *Social Psychology: Sociological Perspectives*, ed. Morris Rosenberg and Jonathan H. Turner (New York: Routledge, 1981), 562–92.

Cobb,<sup>5</sup> William Wenthworth, Michael Hammond, Paul Ricoeur, Jean-Paul Sartre. The paradigm of constructed emotions is present also in the natural sciences and economy.<sup>6</sup> Another perspective is biological determinism which places emotions in the subjective, physical, non-rational sphere.

A key research question in the discourse on emotions is their origin: the issue of the disputed nature–culture opposition, which is expressed in the question whether emotions are universal and conditioned biologically, or whether they are relative and determined by culture. Also, what elements of culture and nature (and in what way) have contact with each other and influence each other in a given emotion. A discussion on the involvement of nature and culture in the emotional processes concerns the described differences in the experiencing and expressing of emotions in various contexts.<sup>7</sup> This issue shows the complexity and the multi-layered and multi-faceted character of culture, as well as heterogeneity of emotions.

The analysis of the available literature suggests that the interpretation of differences in the abovementioned discussion depends on the adopted research perspective. In extreme cases, these views manifest themselves in universalism (biologic perspective) or cultural relativism. Contemporary emotional universalists, supporters of biological determinism, are in favour of fundamental similarities, while relativists, supporters of socio-cultural constructivism, are in favour of differences.<sup>8</sup>

Even though the literature on the origin of emotions can be reduced to two stances, biological determinism/biological reductionism and socio-cultural constructivism, it should be stressed that these have many variants.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Jonathan TURNER, “The Sociology of Emotions: Basic Theoretical Arguments,” *Emotion Review* 1, no. 4 (2009): 350; Jan E. STETS, Jonathan Turner, *The Sociology of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Maggie C. COBB, “Casualties of Debate: A Critique of the Sociology of Emotion,” *Sociology Compass* 12, no. 2 (2018): 1–13.

<sup>6</sup> Irena PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach - pedagogika i codzienność szkolna* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach*.

<sup>8</sup> Phillip R. SHAVER, Shelley WU, and Judith C. SCHWARTZ, “Cross-cultural Similarities and Differences in Emotion and its Representation,” in *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, ed. Margaret S. Clark (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1992), 175–212; PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach*, 49.

<sup>9</sup> Andrzej DĄBROWSKI, “Natura i kultura w tworzeniu emocji”, in *Emocjonalne aspekty kultury*, eds. Maria Bielawka, Łukasz Trzeciński, and Katarzyna Skowronek (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademia Górniczo-Hutnicza im. Stanisława Staszica, 2017), 9–10.

### 1.1 BIOLOGICAL DETERMINISM/BIOLOGICAL REDUCTIONISM

The supporters of the biological perspective claim that emotions are the result of (neuro)physiological influences, and physiological changes are a necessary component of all emotions. The evolutionary-biological principles of organisation are primary in relation to others, i.e. psychological, social and cultural. Different variants of reductionism assume nature shaping emotions to a various extent, starting from orthodox (emotions are basic biological phenomena and that culture does not have any effect on them), through moderate: some emotions (basic, biological) may be strongly determined by biology, while others cannot.<sup>10</sup>

The following facts support biological determinism.

1. Emotions are innate, they are present at the moment of birth: Charles Darwin<sup>11</sup> (genetic determinism), Silvan Tomkins<sup>12</sup> (affect theory and script theory), Talcott Parsons (expressive actions), Max Weber (affective actions),<sup>13</sup> Paul Ekman,<sup>14</sup> Matsumoto and Juang,<sup>15</sup> Richard J. Davidson.<sup>16</sup> This thesis allows for the possibility of acquiring and socializing of some activities which activate emotions.

2. Emotions are universal, i.e., they exist independently of social and cultural conditions: Charles Darwin, Zygmunt Freud, Paul Ekman, Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt,<sup>17</sup> Donald E. Brown, Phillip R. Shaver, John C. Schwartz. Universal events triggering emotions, universal facial (and vocal) expressions, and universal impulses testify to the universal character of emotions. The above-mentioned studies were subject to criticism.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>10</sup> DĄBROWSKI, "Natura i kultura", 22.

<sup>11</sup> Charles DARWIN, *O wyrazie uczuć u człowieka i zwierząt* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Tomkins SILVAN, *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, vol. 1, *The Positive Affects* (New York: Springer, 1962); TOMKINS, *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, vol. 2, *The Negative Affects* (New York: Springer, 1963).

<sup>13</sup> Max WEBER, *Gospodarka i społeczeństwo. Zarys socjologii rozumiejącej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> Paul EKMAN, *Emotions Revealed, Second Edition: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life* (London: Owl Books Publishing, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> David MATSUMOTO and Linda JUANG, *Psychologia międzykulturowa* (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Paul EKMAN and Richard J. DAVIDSON, eds., *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> Irenaus EIBL-EIBESFELDT, "The Expressive Behavior of the Deaf-and-Blind Born," in *Social Communication and Movement*, ed. Ian Vine (London: Academic Press, 1973).

<sup>18</sup> James A. RUSSELL, "Is There Universal Recognition of Emotion from Facial Expression? A Review of the Cross-Cultural-Studies," *Psychological Bulletin* 115, no. 1 (1984): 115.

3. Emotions have a neurobiological basis: Baruch Spinoza, James W. Papez,<sup>19</sup> Paul D. MacLean,<sup>20</sup> Joseph E. LeDoux.<sup>21</sup> Carroll Izard rejected the thesis of a possibility of multicultural acquisition of expressing universal emotions. The brain studies conducted by J. LeDoux supported the evidence for a neurobiological basis of emotions, independent of culture.

4. Emotions are the consequence of the genetic nature. Genetic endowment, not the environment or education, decide who we are (personality) and determine our temper.

5. Emotions are the result of evolution. According to evolutionary psychologists, emotions are the result of evolution and are genetically endowed because of the evolutionary adaptive function: Jesse Prinz<sup>22</sup> and Randolph M. Nesse.<sup>23</sup>

Reductionism was the object of criticism for anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, Ray Birdwhistell, Edward Twitchell Hall, Gregory Bateson, Ray Birdwhistell or the psychologist Charles Egerton Osgood.

## 1.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Cultural studies ground their views on emotions in the criticism of universal (biological) concepts and in supporting social constructivism. Horace Romano Harré,<sup>24</sup> Paul Heelas,<sup>25</sup> Catherine A. Lutz among others, highlight cultural distinctness of emotional experience, meaning, expression. C. A. Lutz claims that attributing emotions with naturalness is a cultural construct. By learning a given culture we learn emotions.<sup>26</sup>

The analysed constructivist-cultural perspective assumes the primacy of culture, understood as a set of beliefs respected in a given society, over its

<sup>19</sup> James W. PAPEZ, "A Proposed Mechanism of Emotion," *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 7, no. 1 (1995): 103–28.

<sup>20</sup> Paul D. MACLEAN, *A Triune Concept of the Brain and Behaviour* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973).

<sup>21</sup> Joseph E. LEDOUX, *The Emotional Brain* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> Jesse PRINZ, *Gut Reactions: A Perceptual Theory of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Randolph M. NESSE, "Evolutionary Explanations of Emotions," *Human Nature* 1, no. 3 (1990), 261–89.

<sup>24</sup> Rom HARRÉ, "The Social Constructionist View Point," in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford–New York: Blackwell, 1986), 2–14.

<sup>25</sup> Paul HEELAS, "Emotional Talk Across Cultures," in *The Social Construction of Emotions*, ed. Rom Harré (Oxford–New York: Blackwell, 1986), 16–29.

<sup>26</sup> Catherine A. LUTZ, "Emocje, rozum i wyobcowanie. Emocje jako kategoria kulturowa," in *Emocje w kulturze*, ed. Małgorzata Rajtar and Justyna Straczuk (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2012), 44.

cognitive constitution. “Emotions are socially formed or constructed in such a sense that what people feel is conditioned by their socialising in culture and participation in social structures.”<sup>27</sup>

The main thesis of socio-cultural constructivism assumes that culture has a fundamental effect on the shaping of emotions as they are cultural constructs (or social constructs), and not mental states.<sup>28</sup> Whether something is considered an emotion is culture dependent (context dependent). Cultures come with their typical emotions. Intercultural differences result in deep, substantial differences in emotions, implied by definitive symbolisation of emotions in a specific cultural convention.<sup>29</sup>

The thesis proposed by constructivists, claiming that emotions are cultural and social constructs, is supported by facts and arguments.

- Culture suggests which factors are important for the activation of certain emotions;<sup>30</sup>

- Culture formulates the evaluation of emotions;

- Culture creates separate ways of the categorisation of emotional experience. Eva Illouz, when introducing the concept of “ontology of emotions”, suggests that emotions can be separated from their subject in order to be explained and controlled.<sup>31</sup> By reducing emotions to external objects, one can observe and evaluate them. They become a product which can be produced and processed for the sake of media coverage, e.g. related to the COVID-19 pandemic;

- Culture shapes the cultural norms of the expression of emotions in social practice.<sup>32</sup> Owing to the access to certain affective scripts,<sup>33</sup> mentefacts (Donald W. Klopff), cultural scripts (Arlie Hochschild), “expression rules”,<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Renata GÓRALSKA, “Kultura emocjonalna. W poszukiwaniu nowych ujęć praktyki szkolnej,” *Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 41 (2018): 66.

<sup>28</sup> GORDON, “The Sociology of Sentiments,” 562–92.

<sup>29</sup> Evaluation of emotions present in different cultures should be treated with caution as the visible differences between emotions may be due to verbal nature of language. However, lexical differences may not necessarily entail different social constructs.

<sup>30</sup> LUTZ, “*Emocje, rozum*,” 44; James R. AVERILL, “A Constructivist View of Emotion,” in *Emotion: Theory, Research and Experience*, vol. 1, *Theories of Emotion*, ed. Robert Plutchik and Helen Kellerman (Cambridge: Academic Press, 1980), 305–39.

<sup>31</sup> Eva ILLOUZ, *Cold Intimacies. The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 55.

<sup>32</sup> GORDON, “The Sociology of Sentiments,” 562–92; HOCHSCHILD, “Emotion Work,” 551–75.

<sup>33</sup> Norbert ELIAS, *The Civilizing Process*, vol. 2, *State Formation and Civilization* (Basil: Blackwell, 1982), 327; Anna WIERZBICKA, *Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> GORDON, “The Sociology of Sentiments,” 562–92.

“feeling rules”,<sup>35</sup> we know what emotions to feel and how to express them. Emotions are not pre-social and pre-cultural but rather form a medley of cultural meanings and social experience (Steven Gordon, Morris Rosenberg);

- Culture influences the centralisation of emotions. Each culture favours certain emotions, i.e. they are lexicalised in language, there are discussed widely, while others are less prominent;

- Culture formulates the language that helps to identify and describe emotions: emotional community<sup>36</sup> and cultural emotion. The names of some emotions which are common in Europe may seem rare and peculiar for other cultures.<sup>37</sup> For constructivists, according to Harré,<sup>38</sup> the evidence for a social origin of emotions is language, which names and describes emotional events. Anxiety, euphoria, embarrassment are not abstract notions for constructivists, which would only reflect the dynamics of our experiences, but tell us about what it means to be happy, angry, sad, bored, and also how to experience these emotions. They draw the attention to specific actions and their significance in a given cultural context.”<sup>39</sup> Heelas points out to the local character of emotional talk, related to a specific culture and society;<sup>40</sup>

- Culture offers different strategies of expressing emotions and methods of coping with them (e.g. Steven Gordon’s “expression rules”). Anna Wierzbicka points to some forms of affective scripts which regulate emotions and are shared by a group. Analogically, Nancy Scheper-Hughes claims that emotions are a discourse, they are constructed and created in language and cannot be understood without the cultural context—“without our culture we wouldn’t know what to feel”;<sup>41</sup>

- Culture rationalises emotions. The way they are experienced and manifested is subject to rationalisation and cultural standardisation (Hochschild’s *emotional labor*). Although the categories used are borrowed from the field of economics (e.g. effectiveness or usefulness), they affect the values and

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<sup>35</sup> TURNER and STETS, *The Sociology of Emotions*.

<sup>36</sup> BARBARA H. ROSENWEIN, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2005): 13–55.

<sup>37</sup> WIERZBICKA, *Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals*, 24.

<sup>38</sup> HARRÉ, “The Social Constructionist View Point,” 2–14.

<sup>39</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach*, 34.

<sup>40</sup> HEELAS, “Emotional Talk Across Cultures”, 16–29.

<sup>41</sup> NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES, “Matka Boska Bolesna. Polityczna ekonomia emocji,” in *Emocje w kulturze*, ed. Małgorzata Rajtar and Justyna Straczuk (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2012), 432.

emotional judgments made by people; and the management of emotions in a private (emotional work) and a professional (emotional labor) sphere;<sup>42</sup>

– Culture sets and reconstructs the standards of a given epoch (emotionology), which include the common beliefs and values connected with emotions.<sup>43</sup>

Socio-cultural studies, as noted by Paul. E. Griffiths<sup>44</sup> focus on, among others, searching for differences in ways of the understanding, experiencing and expressing of emotions (studying changeable patterns of expression) and determining the types of actions which trigger emotions. Social constructivism analyses two models of the social construct of emotions: the model of social concept described by Robert Solomon and Carl Ratner and the model of social role as proposed by James R. Averill. Social concept is related to the construct of situations which generate emotions. It is based on the assumption that an emotion is parallel with the thought that the current situation generates emotions. No thought can exist independently from those who speak and think, hence all the thoughts and concepts have their origins through the socio-linguistic process.<sup>45</sup> According to Robert Solomon,<sup>46</sup> we view the world with the help of emotions. When we are scared we judge the situation as dangerous. Such a classification is possible only in a given cultural context. Emotions are generated through an unnatural approach, acquired and explained in relation to socio-cultural contexts. Because emotions are related to beliefs and desires connected with cultural artifacts, they vary from culture to culture. Carl Ratner believed that emotions are actions which we can control.<sup>47</sup>

The model of social role is related to the formation of emotions and a sequence of events through which an emotion is manifested. According to

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<sup>42</sup> HOCHSCHILD, "Emotion Work," 551–75; John ALLEN, "Symbolic Economies: The 'Culturalization' of Economic Knowledge," in *Cultural Economy. Cultural Analysis and Commercial Life*, ed. Paul du Gay and Michael Pyrke (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 39–58; Magdalena SZPUNAR, *(Nie)potrzebna wrażliwość* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 2018).

<sup>43</sup> Peter N. STEARNS and Carol Z. STEARNS, "Emocjonologia: objaśnienie historii emocji i standardów emocjonalnych," in *Emocje w kulturze*, ed. Małgorzata Rajtar and Justyna Straczuk (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2012), 143–79; SZPUNAR, *(Nie)potrzebna wrażliwość*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Paul E. GRIFFITHS, *What Emotions Really Are: The Problem of Psychological Categories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> DĄBROWSKI, "Natura i kultura", 19.

<sup>46</sup> Robert SOLOMON, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1993).

<sup>47</sup> Carl RATNER, "A Social Constructionist Critique of Naturalistic Theories of Emotion," *Journal of Mind and Behavior* 3 (1989): 213.

James R. Averill,<sup>48</sup> even though emotions are not actions, it is due to emotions that people can achieve social and individual goals. Emotions are thus forms of individual improvisation, based on the interpretation of a given situation (a socially-guided reaction must be pre-planned by a subject with the use of knowledge of cultural norms). Hence Averill regards emotions as a transient social role, acknowledging the evaluation of a given situation. This model, together with the previous one, has been criticised by Paul E. Griffiths.

A new model of interpreting text and culture, and consequently the world, human works and emotions, was put forward by Jacques Derrida, who introduced the notion of deconstruction (deconstructionism). Deconstruction does not aim to elicit a precise and unequivocal meaning (similarly to the hermeneutic method) but allows to construct many meanings, even contradictory to each other. According to the classics of postmodernism, the Western culture exhausted the possibilities of generating new structures, hence we can deal only with cultural games (e.g. a game of science, a game of art, a game of religion). It involves restructuring and reinterpreting, hence criticising of the endowed theories, visions, hypotheses. It should be accompanied by awareness of fictionality and auto-irony (therapeutic). The fallacy of “centrism” should be avoided, which intends to search for universal truths and universal “first rules”, which were supposed to guide our cognition, morality, creativity. In other words, deconstructionism was a first step towards relativism and scepticism. The arts and literature should be granted the freedom of expression and creation, it should be described by radical eclecticism (stylistically dirty art), mixture of styles, a loose play with tradition. What is unified in terms of style should be deconstructed. The universally accepted truth and methods of gaining knowledge are rejected. The truth is constructed rather than discovered. Anti-scientism undermines science by denying it the right to possess a monopoly for the truth. Language does not reflect anything apart from itself. Derrida considers the truth a theological concept, redundant in scientific studies. Knowledge is replaced with information, which is sold and bought.

Apart from deconstruction, another important aspect is the narration-based construction and understanding of the reality. “Narration, i.e. mental forms of understanding the world, structures human experience in terms of categories of human intentions and problems which arise from complications

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<sup>48</sup> James R. AVERILL and John ALLEN, “Symbolic Economies: The ‘Culturalization’ of Economic Knowledge,” in *Cultural Economy. Cultural Analysis and Commercial Life*, ed. Paul du Gay and Michael Pyrke (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 39–58.

on the way to make the intentions real.”<sup>49</sup> Narrations, which help an individual to understand the world, are most frequently constructed socially in a multidimensional way. Firstly, culture provides ready-made, standard scripts of vital stories, helping people to structure their knowledge and experience concerning crucial events in their lives, which are universal or common in their cultural environment (growing up, love, death, etc.). These scripts are present within a culture in the form of myths, religion, legends, ideology, works of literature.<sup>50</sup> Secondly, their (i.e. narrations’) content is shaped through interpersonal negotiation. What is interpreted is the behaviour of the participants of a given culture and their “personality”. They need to “play” a role in jointly constructed narrations. Thirdly, spreading the “seen and experienced” stories to others affects the content memorised by the teller. Thanks to acts of social communication, stories of our past, and especially stories which are still happening, are alive and they change. At the same time, imposing certain interpretations of stories leads to the emergence of cognitive representations of experienced emotions in the human mind.

### 1.3 COMPONENTIAL COMPATIBILITY

Both radical biological reductionism and radical socio-cultural constructivism in the shaping of emotions was met with criticism. Cultural studies (e.g. ethnographic) of emotions provide evidence supporting the view that emotional expression is rather channelled and shaped rather than constructed by culture. Describing emotions as psycho-dynamic or merely discursive is an oversimplification. That is why more and more often a conciliatory approach is taken, replacing extreme beliefs. In the concepts of cultural emotions, e.g. as proposed by Arlie Russell Hochschild<sup>51</sup> emotions understood as “raw material” are subject to the process of socialising and acculturation. Fred Meyers recommends “rejecting each universal determinant of emotions and ‘leaving an open’ relationship between a cultural construction and individual, psychological dynamics”, Hochschild, *emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure*.

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<sup>49</sup> Jerzy TRZEBIŃSKI, “Narracyjne konstruowanie rzeczywistości”, in *Narracja jako sposób rozumienia świata*, ed. Jerzy Trzebiński (Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, 2002), 22; Jerome BRUNER, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1986).

<sup>50</sup> TRZEBIŃSKI, “Narracyjne konstruowanie”, 27–28.

<sup>51</sup> HOCHSCHILD, “Emotion Work,” 551–75.

However, it was moderate constructivism and moderate reductionism that received critical acclaim in the scientific discourse. Jesse Prinz<sup>52</sup> claims that they are compatible and they can take various forms, among others, range compatibility and componential compatibility.

Range compatibility unites constructivism with reductionism as a result of providing them with a different range of usability. It is claimed that apart from basic emotions, which are of an inborn, universal character, there exist superior (cognitive) emotions, which are produced through socialisation. Eduardo Bericat, among others, points out to primary emotions (basic, biologically determined, evolutionary, neurologically inborn, psychological) and secondary emotions as the result of the combining of basic emotions, which are socially and culturally conditioned.<sup>53</sup> Componential compatibility, on the other hand, focuses on the parts through which emotions are built. Emotions are complex units; some of their components are of a biological character (Charles Darwin's genetic determinism), while others are produced in a socio-cultural context: the concept of structures of feelings, the cultural concept of emotions by Arlie Russell Hochschild and the concept of emotional culture by Steven Gordon. According to Andrzej Dąbrowski, emotions understood in the context of componential compatibility are "psycho-physical phenomena, correlated with changes in the body, neurological activity of a subjective character, with a tendency to act and/or to express".<sup>54</sup> Such an approach assumes that particular elements are correlated; none of them is privileged or necessary. All the elements are present in full and strong emotions, fully dimensional emotions. In the case of the not so fully dimensional emotions, some of their components are not present or partially present. Therefore there are many emotions that are dynamic, changeable and gradable.

There remains the question of how nature and culture affect the formation of emotions. We can maintain, after Moreland Perkins,<sup>55</sup> who does not attribute emotions a perceptive or cultural significance, that the physiological and neurological components of emotions are related to biology, while the cognitive component is of a cultural character, or to be more precise, culture affects emotions through a cognitive factor. The nature related to emotions

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<sup>52</sup> Jesse PRINZ, *Gut Reactions: A Perceptual Theory of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 134.

<sup>53</sup> Eduardo BERICAT, "The Sociology of Emotions: Four Decades of Progress," *Current Sociology* 64, no. 3 (2016): 492.

<sup>54</sup> DĄBROWSKI, "Natura i kultura," 23.

<sup>55</sup> Moreland PERKINS, "Emotions and Feelings," *Philosophical Review* 66 (1975): 139–60.

manifests itself in biological conditioning (the so-called concept of universal emotions as proposed by Paul Ekman<sup>56</sup> and in inborn predispositions. The culture related to emotions manifests itself in a local socio-cultural tradition.

Feelings, a tendency to act and expression are a function of both nature and culture. It should be mentioned that culture (e.g. a lifestyle) can also affect neurophysiological processes, and the cognitive factor is dependent on biological processes, i.e. neurophysiological and evolutionary changes can affect mental powers and cognitive processes. Therefore, these and other interdependencies must be taken into account in further studies on emotions, both multidisciplinary as well as interdisciplinary.<sup>57</sup>

## 2. CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN CULTURAL STUDIES OF EMOTIONS— AN EMOTIONAL TURN

The current discourse used in culture-oriented sciences, when referring to emotions, focuses on the so-called “emotional turn”, also known as “affective turn”, “turn to affect”, or “turn to emotions”.<sup>58</sup> It encompasses four overlapping categories: 1) ontology of emotions, 2) their cultural and social significance, 3) emotional language and narration, 4) epistemological and methodological implications.<sup>59</sup> Such a turn is an attempt to deconstruct false premises concerning the nature and culture of emotions, a rejection of dualistic views of emotions.<sup>60</sup>

A suggested reservoir of ideas, categories, together with their significance in humanistic studies are hermeneutic, phenomenological, feminist, anti-authoritarian approaches, as well as concepts of affective didactics. In particular, these are: the concept of lifeworld (Edmund Husserl), humanistic coefficient (Florian Znaniecki, Wilhelm Dilthey), anti-authoritarian views (Theodor Adorno, Aleksander Sutherland Neill), pedagogy of the heart (Maria Łopatkowa), affective didactics (Władysław Zaczyński) and all-round education (Wincenty Okoń).<sup>61</sup> In the scientific discourse, a turning point was

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<sup>56</sup> EKMAN, DAVIDSON, *The Nature of Emotion*.

<sup>57</sup> DĄBROWSKI, “Natura i kultura,” 23.

<sup>58</sup> David HOPKINS, ed., *Theorizing Emotions. Sociological Explorations and Applications* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009).

<sup>59</sup> Irena PRZYBYLSKA, “Miętkość i zdziwienie: zwrot emocjonalny w nauce i kulturze,” *Chowanna* 1 (2017): 125.

<sup>60</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, “Miętkość i zdziwienie,” 130.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

the development of psychological approach (Paul Ekman, Richard J. Davidson), neurobiological (Antonio Damásio, Joseph E. LeDoux), anthropological (Lila Abu-Lughod), and sociological (Erving Goffman).

The emotional turn questions two basic premises concerning emotions, which can be found in the literature. Firstly, it questions the premise that emotions are inferior to thought: Dawid Hume; Jean Delumeau (the so-called “plumbing” theory of emotions, discourse of “culture of guilt”); René Descartes (fluidity of emotions, the so-called theory of humour pathology).<sup>62</sup> Historians of emotions write about the beginning of the “civilisation of emotions”, triggered by the development of the Enlightenment idea of modernisation.<sup>63</sup> Secondly, it questions the premise that the reason and emotions are distinct and contradictory phenomena: Karol Darwin, William James, Zygmunt Freud, Antonio Damásio (*Descartes’ Error*).<sup>64</sup> The emotional turn is most visible in the crossover from the views of the origin of emotions as primarily physical and secondarily mental, to the extreme cognitive understanding of emotions as a sort of judgment, evaluation,<sup>65</sup> or even embodied thought (Carroll Izard). More and more often emotions are described as cultural constructs (William M. Reddy<sup>66</sup>) and mental processes.<sup>67</sup>

Currently, the concept of emotions proposed by Moreland Perkins<sup>68</sup> is gaining in popularity, which does not attribute emotions with any perceptual or cultural significance. Emotions are locally generated cultural constructs, the sense and meaning of which is internalised through socialising.<sup>69</sup>

A key element in the emotional turn is emotional culture. This concept can be found in the sociological (the dramaturgical theory by Erving Goffman and the theory of sympathy by Candace Clark) and cultural—Steven Gordon, Arlie Hochschild (emotional labor), Andy Hargreaves (“emotional practice” theories of emotions).

Steven Gordon claims that all emotions are “socially constructed”, hence all emotions are determined by culture, and their meanings are learnt through socialising. Emotions are composed of four components: bodily sensations,

<sup>62</sup> René DESCARTES, *Namiętności duszy* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986).

<sup>63</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, “Miętkość i zdziwienie,” 128.

<sup>64</sup> Antonio DAMASIO, *Descartes’ Error* (New York: Grosset/Putnam, 1994).

<sup>65</sup> Michelle Z. ROSALDO, “Towards an Anthropology of Self and Feeling,” in *Culture Theory. Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion*, ed. Richard A. Shweder and Richard A. LeVine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 143.

<sup>66</sup> REDDY, “Przeciw konstruktywizmowi,” 101–40.

<sup>67</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach*, 130.

<sup>68</sup> PERKINS, “Emotions and Feelings,” 139–60.

<sup>69</sup> PRZYBYLSKA, *Dyskursy o emocjach*, 132.

expressive gestures, social relations and situations, and the emotional culture of a given society). Hence the emotional culture of a given society is, according to Gordon, a conglomerate of emotional lexicons, beliefs, norms specifying when and how emotions should be expressed. Emotional culture is manifested not only through language but also the arts, rituals, religious texts, documents, scientific publications, journals, handbooks, and other elements of culture. Culture imposes two sets of norms on societies: “feeling rules” and “expression rules”, which are a reflection of emotional ideologies and emotional culture of a given society.

Gordon, within the framework of emotional culture, distinguishes between two distinct emotional orientations: institutional and impulsive. In the institutional one, people can see their “I” in behaviour which is consistent with the accepted norms, while in the impulsive orientation, people see their “I” as externalised in spontaneous actions, not necessarily consistent with the accepted norms.<sup>70</sup>

In order to perform comparisons and analyses, we relied on the concept of explication of the meanings of cultural emotions as proposed by Richard A. Schweder. It encompasses the following questions concerning:

- somatic phenomenology: Are people similar to each other or different when it comes to somatic experience (e.g. muscle tone)?
- affective phenomenology: Are people similar to each other or different when it comes to affective experience (e.g. a sense of emptiness)?
- environmental determinants: Are people similar to each other or different when it comes to the previous somatic conditioning and affective experience (e.g. losing a job)?
- evaluation of “I”: Do people perceive the consequences of the previous conditioning (e.g. an irreversible loss) in a similar way?
- social evaluation: Do people demonstrate or act out a given state of consciousness, which could be socially deemed a virtue or a vice, a sign of health or a disease, in the same way?
- management: Do people construct the same or different plans of managing self-evaluation, which are then activated as a part of the script of emotions (e.g. withdrawing from social contacts)?
- communication: Do people make use of similar or different iconic and symbolic means in order to express the whole set of elements (e.g. facial expressions)?<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> GÓRALSKA, “Kultura emocjonalna,” 70–71.

<sup>71</sup> Barbara ŁUKASZEWICZ, *Wyrażanie emocji negatywnych w polonistycznej praktyce glotto-dydaktycznej* (Warsaw: Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2019), 76.

The concept of emotional culture as proposed by Arlie Hochschild fits the cultural theories of emotions. She uses the term *emotional labor* to “describe such a management of emotions so that they become visible in the face and body language. Emotional labour can be sold and *exchange value* can be found for it.”<sup>72</sup> She makes a clear distinction between the managing of emotions in the private sphere (emotional work) and professional (emotional labour). Hochschild notes that we are paid for emotional labour, we sell it to institutions, and it is an integral part of our duties, which were assigned by organisations. In the literature we can find various forms of emotional labour: superficial (external modification of emotional expression), deep (internal change in experienced emotions—Hochschild), natural expression of emotions and the so-called “emotional deviations” (in contrast to the demands of a professional role).<sup>73</sup>

Both the explication of meanings behind cultural emotions, as well as emotional labour is determined by a specific (media-related) discourse, which reflects the authority–subordination relations between the sender and the receiver, and definitions of significant terms and hierarchies of values. Media discourse is “a set of ways of deliberate, intentional use of language used to communicate information, opinions, values, concepts, beliefs regarding various topics.”<sup>74</sup> It is conditioned by history, society, culture, politics; it is shaped by the communicating parties, their knowledge of the world and the interpreting community. It is subject to being pressured by a communication situation and the context of communication. It belongs to a specific type of social communication practice, it has its own institutions, authorities, ideology, community.<sup>75</sup> Power is an important component of the definition of the media discourse. Receivers of media content agree to submit to the influence of the medium (either through reading, listening, or watching). Such an influence is exerted through presented messages, either commented upon or not, and through presented characters. Power is understood as the shaping of attitudes, beliefs, views.<sup>76</sup> A component of power is attributed to the news

<sup>72</sup> HOCHSCHILD, “Emotion Work,” 569.

<sup>73</sup> Renata GÓRALSKA, “Kultura emocjonalna. W poszukiwaniu nowych ujęć praktyki szkolnej,” *Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 41 (2018): 69.

<sup>74</sup> Magdalena LISOWSKA-MAGDZIARZ, *Analiza tekstu w dyskursie medialnym* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 2006), 8.

<sup>75</sup> Urszula ŻYDEK-BEDNARCZUK, “Dyskurs medialny,” in *Style współczesnej polszczyzny. Przewodnik po stylistyce polskiej*, ed. Ewa Malinowska, Jolanta Nocoń, and Urszula Żydek-Bednarczuk (Kraków: Universitas, 2013), 179–98.

<sup>76</sup> Iwona LOEWE, “Dyskurs medialny – przegląd stanowisk badawczych,” *Forum Lingwistyczne* 1 (2014): 9–16.

programs providing selective data (e.g. when it comes to the number of infections and death due to the pandemic) and selective pieces of news (e.g. dominated by the pandemic), formatting programs and their themes, shaping the users' thoughts on a given topic. The media discourse "is all about controlling societies, and mostly about new ways of controlling social attention, new forms of constructing reality, and new conditions of shaping public opinions and decisions."<sup>77</sup>

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Culture experts underscore cultural and social origins of emotions. Emotions are viewed as a conglomerate of cultural meanings and social experience. They cannot be understood without the culture they are embedded in, which define a set of assumptions on the "proper" manifestation of emotions in a given context, in a given epoch. By being highly rooted in culture, emotions are deeply internalised, and they are non-reflexive dimensions of individual action. It is culture that suggests which factors are important for the activation of emotions. It shapes the evaluation of emotions, creates strategies for their externalisation, ways of categorising emotional experience; it also shapes cultural norms of the expression of emotions in social practice. It affects which emotions are placed at the center of attention, it formulates the language of their description and identification, or finally, it rationalises emotions.

An overview of definitions of emotions offered by cultural studies pointed towards a variety of phenomena linked with emotions, as well as towards some challenges with their classification. The reasons for this is the status of emotions as "penetrating" various anthropological orders, being subject to frequent changes and experienced collectively.

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<sup>77</sup> Stanisław MICHALCZYK, *Spółczesność medialna. Studia z komunikowania masowego* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2008), 15.

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PERSPECTIVES OF CULTURAL STUDIES  
(CONCEPTUALISATION OF EMOTIONS IN THE DISCOURSE OF CULTURAL STUDIES)

Summary

The aim of this article is to conceptualise emotions in the discourse of cultural studies, which were initiated in the 1970s. American discourse focuses on the role of emotions in shaping individuality and subjectivity (emotional labour), while European discourse focuses on their historically and culturally conditioned constructs. Even though they have been regarded in academic discourse as opposed to reason, today it is believed that emotions determine cognitive processes, and cognitive processes can have an effect on emotions.

The article discusses theoretical concepts related to emotions: biological determinism/biological reductionism, socio-cultural constructivism and deconstructionism, affective turn, and culture of emotions.

**Keywords:** affective turn; culture of emotions; cultural studies; deconstructionism; socio-cultural constructivism.

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PERSPEKTYWY NAUK O KULTURZE  
(KONCEPTUALIZACJA EMOCJI W DYSKURSIE NAUK O KULTURZE)

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu była konceptualizacja emocji w dyskursie nauk o kulturze, zapoczątkowanym w latach 70. XX wieku. Dyskurs amerykański koncentruje się na roli emocji w kształtowaniu indywidualności i podmiotowości (praca emocjonalna), podczas gdy dyskurs europejski ogniskuje się na ich historycznie i kulturowo uwarunkowanych konstrukcjach. Choć w dyskursie akademickim traktowano je jako przeciwieństwo rozumu, dziś uważa się, że emocje determinują procesy poznawcze, a procesy poznawcze mogą oddziaływać na emocje. Artykuł omawia teoretyczne koncepcje związane z emocjami: determinizm biologiczny/redukcjonizm biologiczny, konstruktywizm społeczno-kulturowy i dekonstrukcjonizm, zwrot afektywny, kultura emocjonalna.

**Słowa kluczowe:** dekonstrukcjonizm; konstruktywizm społeczno-kulturowy; kultura emocjonalna; nauki o kulturze; zwrot afektywny.