

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Late in his life Jean Monnet, a French entrepreneur, diplomat and political visionary, said that, were he to begin with the European project again, he would start with culture. This is equally important for Central and Eastern Europe – a region which nowadays is experiencing many political, social and economic challenges. This is also the idea behind the publication of texts initiated during the debates at the CEECOM 2021 conference. The CEECOM – Central and Eastern European Communication and Media Conference is organized by the Central and East-European Network of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). Both the CEECOM and the CEE Network seek to strengthen cooperation between the CEE scholars. The works of the last CEECOM participants have been brought out by several publishing institutions: the *Media Research Issues*, published by the Jagiellonian University Press, which devoted this volume to topics related to culture as well as by the Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication of the Jagiellonian University which was the local organizer of CEECOM 2021 and issued the book titled “New Communication Revolution”, and by the Central European Journal of Communication as the co-organizer of the event was the Polish Communication Association.

As the conference participants accentuated in their debates the changes in cultural expression as well as the dynamic development of interactive media, convergence, participatory culture and related new practices of media users, this volume opens a text of Otilia Ármeán Fülöp from the Hungarian University of Transylvania who writes about agency and sense of agency in online cultural practices. Analyzing a case study: Theatertreffen – Berliner Festspiele she experiences online theater as a kind of freedom, as an expansion of possibilities, where online theater opens up new spaces of perception and action. Her text explores the possibilities of agency given to the participants of the cultural event. She sees the new platforms as empowering and inclusive “because addressing an audience otherwise excluded from the experience”. Writing about the “media of presence, of participation” she emphasizes that theater is “now more available than ever, more actual, more engaging, more transformative”.

The second article is authored by Teodora-Elena Grapă from the Babeş-Bolyai University in Romania who critically investigates the Joker's ubiquity within international media discourse and online participatory culture. Using a mixed-methods

design, the research comparatively examines the myth's presence within *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*' news reporting in the years 1999–2020. Identifying prominent news values, she indicates in the research results a high prevalence of consonance, eliteness, proximity, negativity, and superlativeness. She also points to the role of user-generated media in perpetuating or countering dominant hegemonies.

*Unsilencing the Home Village* by Xudong Weng and Siqi Liu, representatives of the Communication University of China (at the time of the conference visiting the Charles University in Czech Republic), is a discursive-theoretical analysis of the construction of the rural in Chinese short video. The Authors, taking into account the rapid rise of digital technologies, research the short video, as a low-tech threshold and high popularity media form, which enables rural subjects to become visible in the public sphere and to realize expression and performance of self-identity. Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, the study finds that the active media practice of short video dislocates the hegemonic identity formation. However, unbalanced power relations between the urban and the rural remain.

Lumnije Bajrami from the University of Tirana is the author of the next article: *Opinion in the Mass Print Media of Albania*. In her text she dwells on the contemporary political communication, characterizing the region and local conditions, analyzing the landscape of mass print media and opinion making in Albania. Writing about the press she mentions citizens who are left with opinions and comments and with no necessary information. Her study highlights the problems of the genre of opinions in the print media as well as of editorial independence, threatened by partisan media regulation.

Another author, Małgorzata Kisilowska-Szurmińska from the University of Warsaw presents a critical literature review on the topic of bingeing, considering whether we are dealing with a fad or a permanent change in media consumption. She examines factors influencing the potential permanence of this specific way of media consumption (binge-watching – binge-listening – binge-reading – binge-gaming). Her article offers a theoretical basis for further quantitative and qualitative research of reception of different media formats and genres

The last text in this volume concerns an initiative of great importance – *The Lexicon of Media Terms*. Kazimierz Wolny-Zmorzyński from the University of Silesia and two scholars from the Jagiellonian University – Ryszard Filas and Paweł Płaneta attempt to synthesize the knowledge about the mediasphere of the 21st century from the Polish perspective. The aim of this significant undertaking – the lexicon – is not only to capture contemporary changes in the media sphere, but above all to present them taking into account the Polish standpoint. It is meant to popularize and highlight the achievements of Polish media and communication scientists. The project will have 3000 entries (not counting cross-references): “This means that we are entering new areas in terms of technology, which results in an exponential growth of entries related to the Internet and digital media in general, as well as that we are taking into account new phenomena, new research areas, and the results of work done by numerous media experts”.

This *Media Research Issues* volume is completed by the reviews as well as information on the CEECOM 2021 conference which are provided in a separate section. The reviews include contributions of Rafał Kuś on *Radio Broadcasting. A History of the Airwaves* (by Gordon Bathgate), Joshua Tan on *Public Television in Poland: Political Pressure and Public Service Media in a Post-communist Country* (by Agnieszka Węglińska) and Weronika Saran on *Good Pictures: A History of Popular Photography* (by Kim Beil).

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