

Preface

Multisensuality in Historical and Cultural Contexts

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This section contains four original articles addressing the matters of interaction, coexistence and representation of the human senses in various historical and cultural contexts.

The multisensory experience of the world in relations to the past, the present and the future constitutes the main theme of the selected articles. The authors analyze how, in various cultural texts and historical moments, human experience was depicted through the prism of sensory perception, sometimes combined with sensory memory and the powerfulness/powerlessness of the (non)human corporeality. The authors analyze a variety of historical and cultural sources to answer the question of the impact of multisensory experience on our view of the world: in the past, the present and the future.

Nina C. Rastinger in her article “Capturing Extraordinary Multisensory Experiences in Writing: Reports on Natural Disasters in an 18th Century Newspaper Corpus” deals with written representations of natural disasters, which constitute extraordinary multisensory experiences, in historical newspaper texts. Natalia Giza in her study “Multisensuality in the Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era in England” shows how sensory perception enhanced visual humor in the satirical prints of Georgian England, examining how English caricaturists used various sensory elements such as sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Jules Sebastian Skutta in his paper “Tactile Vision and Othering: Ethnographic Engagements and Racial Differentiations in 19th Century Travelogues” demonstrates on the basis of ethnographic travelogues from German East Africa and from the time of German colonial rule that the transmission, emergence, and dissemination of features of racial differentiation are based on the interplay of different sensory perceptions. Finally, Bartosz Mroczkowski, in the article entitled “Designing the Future Through Touch” focuses on the sense of touch in the process of designing the future.

The aforementioned articles illustrate that multisensuality is a multidimensional concept that requires a thorough analysis from different academic perspectives and with the use of various methodological approaches.

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