



## Editorial Foreword

Dear Reader, we are glad to offer you the first issue of *Communicatio* – the newest journal series within the larger family of *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae* periodicals. This journal, as a publication based at the Sapientia Hungarian University of Romania, aims to gather and present the newest ongoing research on traditional and virtual communication, or new (mass and social) media, with a highlight on Central-Eastern Europe, and global perspectives. The main focus of the journal will be the study of new media, of their impact on generations, and of how they transform contemporary society in the region.

New media can be defined as a (convergent) constellation comprising digital technology, information technology, networking communication and the newest form of communication surpassing “the boundaries of direct interpersonal communication” with the help of instruments and techniques, more technology-dependent than any other before.

In this respect, the sociologist is interested rather in the ways of how do the technical-technological changes influence the social activity, the everyday life of human communities or individuals. Generation Z uses the most intensively these machines, surrounding themselves with this digital environment – it is legitimate thus to study them with more attention.

As an unavoidable peculiar task in the study of new media, we have to interpret an alternative reality forming in the network of computers, which can be created, accessed or represented only by technical means, and which we call temporarily for want of better: virtual reality. This means that the sociologist cannot ignore the unprecedentedly complex and never before so human machine, combined of hard and soft (body and soul) elements. Or, better said, research cannot disregard the relationship between human and computer, a system of relations between human and technical object/device more complex than ever.

We have to think further Bruno Latour’s statement, focusing on the process called by him translation, a continuous movement between the social and the technical, human and non-human poles. We have to observe the practices carefully and in detail, starting from the premise that the object–user relation is constructed through serial transmissions transferring meanings. These synergic actions are characterized by collisions, bargains, serial modifications, corrections, as well as efforts made to understand and represent them – all implied in the concept of translation –, the semantic field of which falls thus quite far away

from the meaning of (linguistic) translation, interpretation, which might come to our mind in the first place when hearing the term. In this practice, social and technical logic coexist.

We must gradually get accustomed to the idea that the research of mass media phenomena does not offer ultimate answers for any queries. The reason of this is that the human behaviours and the prospects, TV shows, debates, media representations presenting and popularizing the explanations and social effects of these behaviours are in constant interaction.

Bearing in mind these premises, we release the first issue of our journal, which offers valuable insights into the most recent scholarly study of the field. In the opening, you can read an essay about the philosophy of the Internet (*Prolegomena to a Web-Life-Theory*) by László Ropolyi, a leading theorist from Hungary. The “Case Studies” chapter comprises five empirical surveys and media analyses: two research studies on media habits and communication attitudes of Generation Z (*How Generations Think* by Mária Törőcsik’s research group from Pécs University, Hungary, and the “shadow research” *On the Move* by Ádám Guld and Gyula Maksa from the same University) followed by Rita Glózer’s study (*Freedom of Expression through Parodistic Videos*) analysing Hungarian YouTube memes; while the next two articles present the relationship of younger generations to the Internet and social media in Romania (Rozália Klára Bakó: *Children Online* and Gyöngyvér Tőkés: *Social Networking Practices of Romanian Young People* – both researchers are from the Sapientia University). The next chapter is dedicated to shorter research notes of ongoing projects – two investigations from the Sapientia University, Romania (*New Media, New Idols?* by Orsolya Gergely and *They Already Know Everything* by József Gagyí), and one inquiry from Hungary into the world of online videogames (Áron Bakos’s article *Potentiality and Actuality*). The issue is closed by an outlook into the international field: a book review written by Erika Both and Arnold Péter on the recent conference volume published in Szeged (2014) under the supervision of István Povedák: *Heroes and Celebrities in Central and Eastern Europe*.

Hoping that You will find relevant and valuable results and information in this introductory volume, we wish all our readers a pleasant lecture.

The editors