



Peep Behind the Scenes: Hanga András (ed.), *Kommunikációs terek*¹

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Certainly a progress begins with publishing *Kommunikációs terek*, which is blissful for the science of communication and media, on the one hand, because the first volume of the future series promotes the appreciation of communication in scientific grounds by manifesting what communication research means nowadays and, on the other hand, by revealing how much communication research means nowadays. This book is like a soup: it contains several ingredients, some of them are essential and some of them are responsible only for its characteristic. But all of them are necessary in order for it to taste just right.

The editor of *Kommunikációs terek*, Hanga András, is the President of the National Association of Doctors' (NAD) Department of Communication and Media Science (DCMS) and student of the Corvinus University of Budapest's Doctoral School of Social Communication. She and 15 fellow authors keep direct or indirect contact with the NAD and the doctoral school. Judging by the coherence of the texts, it becomes clearly palpable that the authors are either former or present students of Özséb Horányi's school. And coherence manifests in a good sense, not in a dogmatic way. Unity appears not in the papers' content but in their style: the authors let their personality unfold, whether it is a study related to their research or a review. This is a kind of an inverse coherence, where plurality stemming from writers' freedom interlaces the different papers. There is one common feature, and that is the discipline of communication. Its diversity reflects in the authors' plural approaches, in the number of methods, how communication can be disserted.

Kommunikációs terek – as the title explicitly shows – stays inside the margins of communication science. As it is a multi- or even interdisciplinary science, talking about margins is perhaps irrelevant. It is better to point out the common feature which distinguishes the area of communication science: this is problem solving,

1 András, H. (ed.), 2015, *Kommunikációs terek*, Budapest-Oradea: DOSZ-PARTIUM-ÚMK, ISBN: 9786158004473. The title's translation is: *Communication Spaces*.

which creates context for each text. “This constitutive state can be searched in every little detail of human life, and experts of communication science – such as the members of NAD – are in search of the traces of this state” (András, 2015: 7).

The volume’s goal – as it is explicitly stated in the editor’s foreword – is to create tradition. The NAD’s Department of Communication and Media Science was founded in September 2014. *Kommunikációs terek* is supposed to discuss the scientific activities of the last year; therefore, the chapter entitled *Essays* contains some of the presentations of the *Tavaszi Szél* Conference 2015. Creating a tradition can be observed in two goals; besides the editor’s summary of the yearly contributions of DCMS, a mission is expressed: by this volume, the editor’s aim is to legitimate and propagate the often undeservingly undervalued science of communication.

Certainly, the most efficient way of legitimization is to give a forum to the scientific contributions, to have a discourse about communication researches. Several volumes participate in this discourse, such as the recently published *Konstruált világok*² or the Horányi students’ tracts summarizing *A kommunikatív állapot*.³ Both of them contains well-known or acknowledged researchers’ and professors’ studies; however, neither of these published contributions have shown smashing changes in legitimating the discipline of communication. Of course, one, or even more similar books are not going to bring salvation for the discipline’s dignity, but participating in the discussion about that means a step forward in certifying it in scientific grounds. Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned that András could not dream bigger than reaching the co-disciplines’ actors. The book has a narrow target audience: researchers, collaborators of the academic and scientific fields. Therefore, it hardly has a role in opinion leading, but it is able to accomplish its goal, which is to root the profession by participating in the discussion.

The way András’s volume brings something new – compared to Demeter’s one or to *A kommunikatív állapot* – is that mainly young authors were published in this book. This freshness is not defined by age. It includes parts of Ph.D. theses in progress, reviews of recently published books, results of the latest empirical researches, brand new aspects, and experiments of doctoral students which could be the base of a future thesis, or even get rejected. This volume allows the reader to take a look behind the scenes, reveals what perspectives evolve if there is an opportunity for free research. The intention is keenly different from other books that comprise acknowledged experts’ studies. *Kommunikációs terek* offers a new, fresh perspective for the reader.

2 Demeter, M. (ed.), 2014. *Konstruált világok – Ajelenségek kommunikatív leírása*, Budapest: Typotex. The title’s translation is: *Constructed Worlds – Communicative Description of the Phenomena*.

3 Bajnok, A. – Korpics, M. – Milován, A. – Pólya, T. – Szabó, L. (eds), 2012. *A kommunikatív állapot – Diszciplináris rekonstrukciók*, Budapest: Typotex. The title’s translation is: *The Communicative State – Disciplinary Reconstructions*.

As for the structure, the book consists of three chapters: the first, *Workshop Discussions* contains the NAD DCMS's workshop discussions' presentation abstracts; the second, the most expansive, is the *Essays*, which presents the department members' researches of 2015, and the last one, *Reviews*, contains the reflections of the young researchers' professional inquiries.

Kommunikációs terek can be read both study by study or from cover to cover. The latter option is maybe more favourable because there is a conscious editorial work behind the order of the texts. However, specifically strong coherence can hardly be recognized, but an arch certainly stands out by which the studies are interlaced.

This arch begins with the examination of news preferences, then follow the conjugation of the first two chapters' three papers, each revealing an aspect of cultural communication: two are related to Transylvania and one to eastern Hungary. After that, the topic jumps to the field of marketing communication and media markets. Bonding these with social media usage, there is a text about start-ups showing the characteristic of network communication. Finally, the studies end with a semantic examination in the field of macroeconomy and an essay about physician–patient interactions. This is followed by reviews of recently published books related to communication science such as peace research, cultural memory, social changes indicated by the postmodern, a collection of media researches, technodeterminism, new media democracy, and a critical approach of new social expectations.

The content varies widely and so are the methods of approaches. Firstly, we read studies revealing phenomena by giving new context to acknowledged theories, such as István Kósa's text, who connects the social comparison theory with news selection, or Ágnes Nagy's semantic orientation research of macroeconomic terms. Furthermore, we also encounter results of empirical researches: Hanga András reveals an interesting counterpoint by examining the reception of the National Bonding Day in the Transylvanian Hungarian press; Veronika Pelle unfolds her fairly high-volume research related to media consciousness. We meet thought experiments, like Réka Szondy's paper addressing CSR marketing strategy from the aspect of the consumer and reinterpreting it from the perspective of credibility; Judit Gabriella Tóth's text about the connection between cultural memory and collectivity; or Andrea Balogh's essay about the assertive possibilities of the physician–patient communication. Lastly, there are descriptive analyses: Zoltán Vékey gives a report of the situation of paid content online press, Zsuzsanna Csorba discusses the correspondence between start-ups and network communication, and Zoltán Ilyés disserts the ritual manifestation of national identity.

If the essays on the research activity could not depict the present situation of communication and media research adequately for the inquisitive reader, then further guidance is given by reviews of works – sometimes surprisingly indirectly

– related to this discipline. The eight appraising papers differ not only in their contents but in their elaboration as well. Some of them, barely satisfying the content requirements of reviews, confine themselves to a docket, while others, being refreshing exceptions, unfold the work's disciplinary context, and evaluate its socio-philosophical, sociological, or even media historical interrelations. Also, there are critical pieces too that gently dismiss the authors for their subjective approaches or their incomplete literary references. As it has been mentioned before, *Kommunikációs terek* addresses particularly the actors of communication and media science and researchers of co-disciplines. It can be inspirational for young Ph.D. students and is highly recommended for old stagers of the field as well – for that very reason because they can meet fresh thoughts, latest results of researches, new approaches and perspectives, and studies written with youngish enthusiasm.

Kommunikációs terek is a refreshing dash of colour, even if sometimes the aspect of communication is almost entirely missing from the texts. Quite at the expense of coherence, however, a volume of studies – intentionally or not – always contains ingredients that play only an indirect role in the overall impression.

The palette which communication researchers can dip into is pretty colourful, as is the way each topic can be elaborated. In the case of some essays, style and intonation are expressly entertaining. The question emerges: is this a feature characteristic of communication science or authors of other disciplines are also equally eloquent? It is a specifically refreshing treat to read such studies with serious knowledge, professional preparedness, and fascinating style at the same time. This feature can be an asset in promoting not only communication but other sciences as well.

In a short foreword, Özséb Horányi draws attention to the importance of this effort that can be faced by reading *Kommunikációs terek*. He adds that this could be amplified by the discussion between the researchers – which can be the goal for the NAD DCMS's further editions. I agree that we should not be insatiable; however, I hope that, as the years pass, the science of communication will be richer by a series that proves to be a worthy continuation of the first volume.