

Coordinators Foreword

The second issue of the *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Digitalia*, offers a selection of papers and projects that were presented on the occasion of the first conference of the Digital Humanities Transylvania Centre, DigiHUBB, titled 'Early digital computing in Eastern-Europe', held on the 28 and the 29th of November 2017 at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. The conference was inaugurated with the key-note speech given by Professor Willard McCarty, one of the first scholars to enthusiastically support the launch and the activities of DigiHUBB, the first digital humanities centre in Romania. In his plenary lecture, professor McCarty underlined the fact that the prospects of a new centre always brings into mind the causes of the disappearance of once brilliant ones, with the main reason being *the lack of an intellectual agenda*. In his paper entitled **The programmer and the scholar: A conversation** which opens the volume, the professor interrogates the meaning of the 'common understanding' that is vital for the resistance of the digital humanities as a field, a common ground understood as 'a fundamentally interdisciplinary and methodological enterprise' that gives value to the field of 'intellectual ecology of the arts and the letters'. For McCarty, the programmer and the scholar are not two different kinds of people but 'two states being in an evolving cognitive resonance'. Thus, the intersection between machine and the enquirer creates an intersection 'where a genuine digital humanities – a practice *of* as well as *in* the human disciplines – takes place.'

The two papers that follow, **The story of the first electronic computer in Hungary** (Balint Domolki) and **Computer Oriented higher education in Hungary – The beginnings** (Edit Sántáné-Tóth) present the stories of the first electronic computer in Hungary, the M-3 which was a medium sized member of one of the first families of Soviet computers and brought to Hungary from Russia around 1957. This computer was successfully used to solve many real-life problems both for scientific-engineering calculations and in mathematical economics, also in educating computer experts: many of the future leading personalities – both on the development and on the application side – got acquainted with computing around it. The second paper continues with the initiatives of the University of Szeged, and also treats the institutes of higher learning offering education in computer studies in the late 1980s; among those the Budapest Technology.

In the study **Past and present of the field of Informatics at „Babeş-Bolyai” University and other institutions in Cluj-Napoca**, professor Grigor Moldovan highlights the pioneering endeavours in the field of informatics in Romania and more specifically

in Cluj-Napoca, spanning from the 50s and all the way up to the 90s and tracing the opening, and transformations, and eventual closure of research centres, laboratories, and various institutional collaborations. A special attention is given to the entity of the Calculus Centre at Babeş-Bolyai University, founded in 1975, as the author himself was its director for 17 years until it was dismantled in 1992.

We were honoured to have as guests to this first edition of the DigiHUBB Days such great personalities that left vibrant marks in the history of computing in Eastern Europe. We add to the names previously mentioned those of Mircea Rusu and Mihai Stanislav Jalobeanu. In **Memories, Recollection, and Landmarks or How I Became a Pioneer**, Mihai Jalobeanu presents, with humour and passion, his realizations in the field of computer graphics, from the joy of having the first plotter to the public debut and the meeting with Herbert Franke, in 1974, in Bucharest. He also references the time he participated at international exhibitions as well as offering the first Romanian course on Computer Graphics at Arad University.

The activity of these Romanian scholars in computing-related research and education is outstanding and has to be underlined for being exceptional in the difficult times of the communist regime. Mircea Rusu, in **A short history of computer use at the Faculty of Physics – University of Bucharest**, selected the main fields of interest that were connected with problem-solving: programmed solutions, simulations and modelling, computer application and software during the time, with examples from computation in tradition physics, to biology, chemistry, astronomy, medicine to data processing and visualization, data management and so on. The fields as nonlinear dynamics, complexity, chaos and fractals, as well as fluid dynamics, atomic, molecular or nuclear physics, earth or stellar physics, connected to improvement of the experiments and devices via artificial intelligence are exemplified.

The last part of the journal presents digital humanities projects accomplished or in progress in Romania. In **Valuable insights into „Albina Bank”, history revealed by the lecture of digital economic journal „Revista economica” (1899 – 1918)**, the group of researchers from the Babes-Bolyai University present a study based on digital resources, in particular, the Economic Review journal “Revista economica” spanning 20 years (1899-1918). Using a qualitative research method based on narrative inquiry and research techniques correlated to the type of data used, the study resorted to documentary research, historiography or the critical review of the business literature, and discourse analysis. The last but not least important are the presentations of Călina Bârză and Andrada Cațavei, two young and passionate researchers, whose projects are new and valuable to digital humanities: **Daguerreobase: Digitizing photographic heritage** and **The study of a project: a collective memory 1950-2000**, two excellent examples of the way in which digital humanities shapes cultural heritage.

Corina Moldovan and Christian Schuster

Editors