Info-Communication Culture:
Diversity, Power & Media
Editor's Introduction

Info-communication culture is part of our everyday life in the 21st century. We live in an Information Society where the domination of digital technology is a reality. The Cyberspace together with the digital information and communication technologies (ICT) have radically reformed our cultural, economic, political and social systems. The role of information society, the digital technology and the media to access reliable information are having a lot of impact on cultural industries, cultural technology, commercial activity and political systems both locally and globally. Cultural industries have started to modernise their traditional systems by digitally transforming their infrastructures from *Stand Alone Cultural and Electronic Communication Industrial Sectors* (SACECIS) to the compatible digital framework of the Info-Communication Industry. The globalisation of cultural, political and commercial activity in cyberspace, the digitalisation of services and content together with the exponential growth of Internet users are irrevocably changing the traditional structures of our economic, cultural and political systems. Cultural Studies, Communication and Information Technologies (ICT) together with the Info-Communication Policy are very important concepts in examining, analysing and understanding the cyberspace and the media behaviour and performance at local and global levels.

The *'Info-Communication Policy: Information Society, Media Power and Cultural Industries'* is the first issue of the Cultural Technology and Policy Journal (CTPJ) that examines and analyses the role of propaganda, the information society, the cultural diversities in media industries, the new info-communication industry, the electronic commerce and the internet conflicts around the world. The role of

media behaviour and performance, together with the concept of propaganda and cultural diversity are very important factors for the media and info-communication policy making in the21st century. The first article *'The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective'* examines and analyses the concept of propaganda in media behaviour and performance. In this article, Edward Herman argues that 'the propaganda model offers a structural explanation for media behaviour and performance…because the model involved a radical critique of media, and suggests that the reform that falls short of major structural change will not remedy the deficiencies in media performance'. He also argues that 'although the new technologies, the digital media and the information society have great potential for democratic communication, there are little reasons to expect the Internet to serve democratic ends if it is left to market'. He concludes that 'the propaganda model remains a very workable framework for analysing and understanding the mainstream media' and the model has become more relevant due to the increasing commercialisation of media and to the more aggressive use of *'flak'* to discipline the media.

Cultural policy and cultural diversity are very important tools to evaluate media performance in the 21st century. In the second article, Denis McQuail points out that 'diversity has long been an important goal of media policy and a criterion for evaluating media performance in media countries…'. He examines media structures, media policy, media cultural diversity and convergence of media. He analyses the strategies directions for research in media concentrations, policy research, media monitoring, new media, audience research and media organisation. He concludes that 'policy can be supportive and protective, can set some limits to anti-diversity tendencies or media structure, and signal desirable objectives'. Moreover, Cultural Studies and Sociology are important research areas in order to examine and analyse better the media power,

cultural diversity, the information age and the information society. In the third article *'Making Sense of the Information Age: Sociology and Cultural Studies'* Frank Webster examines and analyses the concept of information society, the microelectronic revolution, the network society, the cultural studies and virtuality. He points out 'that there has been a discernable shift away in the information society towards concerns with the character of 'cyberspace' and virtuality'. He concludes that the information Age, with the metaphors of 'networks' and 'flows'…had an important influence on researchers, for instance in analysis of 'electronic communities' and 'information warfare'.

The Information Age, the cyberspace and the globalisation of media services are challenging the traditional obsolete infrastructures, legislation and regulation in the traditional Greek media market. The fourth article 'Digital Communication and Global Innovation: The Info-Communication Industry' examines and analyses the info-communication culture, info-communication policy by taking into consideration the concepts of the 'info-communication industry', 'cultural diversities', 'cultural management', 'cultural technology', 'cultural policy' and 'electronic democracy'. It introduces the term *Stand Alone Cultural and Electronic Communication Industrial Sectors* (SACECIS) and the three-layered Info-Communication Model as an analytical tool to develop a new media policy. It suggests the info-communication policy as an alternative policy making to the Greek media market. It argues that the digital technology is the dominant technology in the Greek media and the Greek and European information society and concludes by strongly recommending to all interested parties in Greece ***to switch off analogue and switch on digital technology*** by 2010. However, the Greek government should take seriously into consideration the new Info-Communication Industry in order to develop the electronic commerce and cultural technology. Moreover, the fifth article 'Consumer Attitudes towards Internet Shopping Adoption in Greece'

examines and analyses the electronic commerce development in Greece and emphasises the role of consumer behaviour analysis. It also presents some preliminary empirical findings on demographic and behavioural characteristics, measures the preferences of electronic consumers in Greece and provides analysis of different characteristics and findings from the survey on the profile of Internet users ('innovators') and interested-to-adopt shoppers in Greece. It concludes that in 'Greek Internet market conditions, pro-active rather than re-active business strategies are required for building brand loyal customers during the development phase of this particular market' and emphasizes the need for future research in Greece for electronic commerce, e-business activity and info-communication policy.

In the 21st century, the Internet is an important platform not only to media and electronic commerce developments but also on war coverage and war-related cyberconflicts. The sixth article 'Direct and Indirect effects of and on the Internet before and during the Iraq War' examines and analyses the internet's effects on coverage during the war and the impact of the war on the internet itself. It concludes that 'the internet integration of internet into mainstream media… challenging official government sources'. Moreover, in the seventh article 'Political Rhetoric and War on Terror: Targets, Targets, Targets…' Peter Wilkin points out that 'the nature of rhetorics in politics and war, focusing in which 'target' are contracted as being and illegitimate in political discourse'. He concludes that the key question remains the structure of the political and economic institutions that constrain and enable the movement towards such targets.

In the Information Age, the Info-Communication culture as a reality plays an important role in future developing of cultural industries. Info-Communication culture, cultural technology and policy together

with media power, cultural diversities and conflicts are examined and analysed in the first version of the CTPJ:*'Info-Communication Policy: Information Society, Media Power and Cultural Industries'* by placing the question on:

'Can we identify the concepts of 'propaganda', 'media power', 'cultural diversity' 'information society', 'info-Communication industry' and 'war cyberconflicts' that affect national and local politics, and if so, to what extent and in what way do such concepts have an impact on national policy making reforms and institutional changes in the sphere of cultural technology, management and policy?

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