Foreword

Stamatis Poulakidakos; Maria Matsiola, Anastasia Yannacopoulou

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Anastasia Yannacopoulou*

The Department of Communication and Digital Media of the University of Western Macedonia organized and conducted the 1st International Conference entitled "Envisioning the Future of Communication" (EFoC), which took place in the premises of the Department in Kastoria on December 11-13, 2021, including a wide range of presentations seeking to map the latest advancements in the field of Communication Studies and its various sub-fields, both in Greece and abroad.

The conference aims to provide a forum for academics, researchers, and professionals to share their latest research endeavors and discuss the challenges, trends, and opportunities of the existing communication landscape with the common goal of shaping the future of Communication. The conference explores a variety of themes related but not restricted to:

- Crisis, disaster, and risk communication
- Uses of social media and mass media during crises
- Social media landscape
- Publics, fake news, and citizens' misinformation,
- Corporate communications and public relations
- Political and public communication
- Role of mass media in shaping public perceptions
- Challenges in mass media and social media industries

Dedicated to advancing the public and academic debates, and exchange of ideas, the Department of Communication and Digital Media aspires to organize EFoC conferences on a regular basis, in order to provide academics, researchers and professionals with a tribune to present their work, share their experiences and discuss the present and future of communication.

The first Envisioning the Future of Communication (EFoC) proceedings include some of the thought-provoking presentations included in the conference program, highlighting important aspects of the studies conducted in the field of contemporary communication science.

In the first paper, Mary Karafotia examines the Prespa Agreement, which is connected with the Macedonian issue, a long-standing, intricate and controversial issue within the Greek public

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* All three authors are Assistant Professors at the Department of Communication and Digital Media of the University of Western Macedonia.

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sphere. In the academic debate it is widely recognized that the Macedonian issue has been covered not only in a nation-centred way in/by the Greek media, but furthermore in a strongly nationalistic one. Thus, the subject of the present effort is to study the ideology and the discourse of nationalism through their manifestations in the Greek news websites concerning the Prespa Agreement. According to the author's analysis, which is based on qualitative research methods, the changes detected throughout the research sample regarding the media coverage of the subject under investigation are mainly attributed not to a profound transformation of the way media cover the foreign policy affairs in Greece so far, nor to the internet as a new medium, but to the fact that the Greek media have realized that the Macedonian issue is not the proper one to demonstrate the ideology and the discourse of nationalism through it anymore.

In the second paper, Ioanna Thoma, Michalis Tastsoglou and Loukas Koutsikos focus on the news dramatization of the Covid-19 pandemic: Mass media largely construct our perceptions of the world through their representations. However, the boundaries between the actual conveying of information and the way it is presented by the media are blurred due to infotainment. The purpose of the current research is to analyze the dramatization elements of the news related to the pandemic. It also highlights specific technical aspects of dramatization (music, images, similes/metaphors, adjectives) and correlates them with the news release period, the news length, and whether or not a number of cases is reported. The research method implemented is quantitative content analysis considering the news item (for news bulletins) and the article (for news sites) as unit of analysis.

In the third paper, Georgia and Fotini Gioltzidou focus on the refugees'/immigrants' representations in the Greek Press. In recent years, there has been a sharply distorted perception of the refugee and migration phenomenon. Due to the media's often skewed presentation of the separate issues of immigration and refugee, many have difficulty even understanding the definitions of these two situations. Citizens cannot perceive the difference between immigration as a choice and refugee as a one-way street and coercion. As a result, citizens consider the boundaries of the two situations indistinguishable. The present study investigates the way in which refugees and immigrants are represented in the Greek press, in times of crisis. Through a comparative study on the front pages of Greek political newspapers, the authors seek to analyze how refugees and immigrants are portrayed by Greek journalists. The research question is whether a newspaper's political positions influence the way it portrays refugees. Methodologically, the study is based on the framing theory, which has become a dominant tool for describing, understanding, and evaluating media content.

In the fourth paper of the proceedings, Vasilis Tzotzis attempts to investigate the role of the mass media in shaping public perceptions of the Greek-Turkish conflict in the Aegean and the Southeastern Mediterranean. The purpose of the paper is to analyze the messages conveyed in the light of Ideology and Nationalism, to present the ideological functions of journalistic discourse, the presence of ethnocentric discourse as a coherent element and to highlight the

relations between the above notions. The study derives its theoretical base from the literature referring to the approaches to Ideology and the theoretical Schools of Nationalism. The methodology utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis (quantitative & qualitative). The research demonstrates the dense existence of ideological discourse, as well as the existence of ethnocentric discourse in the transmitted messages. Furthermore, it analyzes both qualitatively and quantitatively, the relations and sequences between the ideological functions and the theoretical approaches of the study of Nationalism. The paper suggests that there is a strong presence of ideological functions in the transmitted messages, a permanent presence of nationalist discourse, a discriminatory construction of national identity, but also a necessary decoding of ethnocentric rhetoric regarding social practice in the protest about peace.

In the fifth paper, Stella Margaritidou and Maria Matsiola examine how digital media created the framework for the evolution of new communication and storytelling forms and their connection to public awareness. The paper attempts to shed light upon the genre of interactive documentary as a new hybrid genre of documentary that employs various multimedia tools that promote audience participation during the evolution of the narrative. The key issue that was addressed was whether this genre can promote public awareness and intention for behavioral change through its inherent potential for audience participation. The experimental part of the study included an audiovisual production of mini documentaries that incorporate different interactive elements, such as quizzes, images, hyperlinks, etc. Quantitative research was carried out to identify audience's perspectives on the genre of interactive documentary, as well as its impact on their awareness. The findings revealed a positive effect on public awareness, while the interactive features enhanced participants' engagement, memory, and active thinking.

In the sixth paper, Nikolas Kouloglou and George Georgarakis focus on public support for European disintegration in Greece and Italy. Since the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent immigration crisis, public opposition to European integration has increased in southern European countries. This disaffection against European integration has coincided with public support for far-right ideologies and parties in Greece and Italy, two southern countries that were hit hard by both crises. However, it is still unclear whether public attitudes toward European integration are driven by economic hardship or cultural concerns. To explore this question, they draw on data from the Eurobarometer between 2012 and 2019. This study aims to provide further evidence about the cultural and utilitarian foundations of the European public opinion.

In the seventh paper, Michalis Tastsoglou scrutinizes the dominant ideas that emerged alongside Efood's labor issue. The food delivery company attempted to achieve a new labor agreement with its employees, but the project fell down as the platform's users objected to the company's practices and they massively started to unregister. His research objective is twofold. First, to analyze and categorize Greek news sites reports according to the readings they suggest. Second, to analyze and categorize the Facebook users' comments in the pages of the same news sites. The research scrutinizes discourses of journalists and citizens in order to enlighten the ideologies hidden behind their positions. The main research question is what ideas can be found

in each discourse and how they are intertwined with the labor nature of the issue. The reports under analysis come from four different news sites and their Facebook pages.

In the eighth paper, Anna Podara and Emilia Kalliri approach the concept of "watching TV", which means different things to different age groups. Even though it has barely changed in the first 50 years of the medium's history, the way we watch TV nowadays is under discussion. Changes in viewing practices derive from technological convergence but also from a set of parameters, that include industrial changes, socio-economic factors, lifestyle, culture & ethics of each generation. This research uses qualitative tools to investigate which are the viewing habits of young viewers (RQ1), which are the differences in the way they consume TV content compared to their parents (RQ2) and how psycho-social factors influence their perceptions of television viewing (RQ3). According to the findings, coexistence with new media and social media offers new psychological and emotional experiences to people of Generation Z (born after 1996). However, several traditional features of the television experience have not changed and seem to be a comparative advantage of traditional television over platforms.

In the ninth paper, Nikolaos Liazos focuses on Turkish Media. Media ownership in Turkey is concentrated in the hands of a few large private groups, which are often part of heterogeneous conglomerates controlled by businessmen. In addition, companies use their influence to support the financial interests of their owners, by also seeking friendly relations with the authorities, which limits any free opinions. The media have also a strong influence on public opinion in Turkey. This research aims to highlight the radical transformation of the Turkish media from 2002, after the Justice and Development Party AKP, led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, took over the power, to the present day. This kind of transformation on media has been aligned with the transformation of the Turkish society as well over the last 20 years. The Turkey's media has undergone a radical transformation since 2002 and this media transformation is reflected in ownership and control relations, as well as in the ideological approaches to media broadcasting. This research addresses the subject of this transformation, considering the social cohesion. It also examines the relations between power and the media from 2002 until today, which is analyzed in the context of the historical approach. The current paper focuses at the beginning on the change in the structure of media ownership and control during the period of the Justice and Development Party, based on the party's hegemonic strategies. Moreover, this paper explores how this change is reflected in the reporting news and aims to illustrate this change, by setting the media as a starting point. Finally, this study discusses how the change in the ownership and control structure of the media is also reflected in the sphere of ideology.

In the tenth paper, Stamatis Poulakidakos and Loukas Koutsikos focus on the online political marketing of Greek politicians. Through social media communities, politicians communicate professional, personal or even private information and try to "connect" with influential figures or ordinary people. More specifically, the use of Instagram by politicians can be approached as a way of producing "visual flows" of professional, personal and private moments. The present research is a comparative study of the ways in which the leaders of the three largest - based on

their electoral percentage - political parties in Greece (New Democracy, SY.RIZ.A., KIN.AL.) shape their "image" through their posts on Instagram during the "multiple" pre-electoral period of 2019 (European elections, Local Regional elections, Parliamentary elections) and a non-pre-electoral period (first half of 2018), in order to identify similarities and differences in the communication strategies of the aforementioned political figures per period.

In the eleventh paper, Chrysopigi Vardikou and Agisilaos Konidaris explore the path of a social media campaign that became viral and to shed light on the reasons why this particular content drove thousands of shares and comments amidst an extensive online dialogue about Facebook's change of logo. The authors have explored the time course of post reactions and new followers and analyzed the post comments with a text analysis software (LIWC) to identify the emotions generated among users.

In the twelfth paper, Athanassios Papadimiriou presents a system, named EaSI that consists of an android application, the DA14583 IoT Sensor adapted to user glasses and a pair of headphones. It uses novel ways of interaction such as head gestures and relies on auditory feedback in order, to reduce user's time and effort, to identify points of interest (POIs) and obtain information about them. System evaluation showed that our prototype significantly reduced user's time and actions in identifying points of interest compared to a conventional application that uses visual interface. Attractiveness and realistic and hedonistic quality were rated with an average score of more than 2, with excellent 3.