



Guest Lecture

Alternative post-digital futures: A deep technoethical foresight perspective in a turquoise world

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Tuesday, 6 September 2022
15:00 – 16:30, AFL-E-022

The ongoing technological upheaval has a profound ontological impact on what it means to be "human". It is transforming the way governance, society, and the self are re-organized, leading to unpredictable, alternative techno-futures, influenced by collective action here and now, where the post-digital may disrupt humanity for better or worse. As human societies and digital technologies dynamically co-evolve, ethical issues such as privacy, justice, responsibility, choice, and autonomy are colored within the online networks that shape our experience and co-existence. The dominant color here is the turquoise color as a mixture between blue (digital technologies) and green (physical environment and life). In this post-internet "turquoise world", forecasts and predictions are insufficient; instead, scenarios help to foresee, anticipate, and discuss new morphologies of inequality and power and potential outcomes "beyond the numbers".

Overall, analyzing macro-trends and uncertainties, estimating socio-ethical impacts, scanning the horizon, constructing scenarios, and cultivating open collective intelligence become key activities for more adaptive, resilient, antifragile, and peaceful systems. In parallel, our analytic attention is turned on the ambivalent dynamics of digitalization, as well as on the need to overcome relevant theoretical dualisms and the one-sided "either-or" logic. This in favor of a creative "both-and" framework of interdisciplinary thought and the liberal principles of co-creation and co-evolution over the obsolete principles of optimization and top-down administration and control. Emphasis must be also placed on the examination of the existential risks and dangers of the post-internet turquoise world in which big data, advanced algorithms, synthetic media, social bots, and wide-scale surveillance (dataveillance) aim to control societal dynamics and individual behaviors.

The above pertains to a radical upgrade of ways of thinking and practice, i.e., deep ethics. In specific, the combination of deep technoethics and strategic foresight, namely, deep technoethical foresight, is crucial for our future well-being. What it is further needed is to understand how the technology relationally interacts with the local context and the culture (rather than reifying it), as well as to enhance the role of human imagination and creativity in all areas of digital life in the future. The lecture concludes with novel and holistic sociological approaches on how to redefine collective trust and build platforms to support democratic citizenship and core societal values, as well as how to rehumanize digital innovation and boost futures-thinking, and inclusive and sustainable growth.

Prof. Dr. Charalambos Tsekeris is a Research Fellow on Digital Sociology at the National Centre for Social Research in Athens and Professor Extraordinary at the School of Public Leadership, Stellenbosch University. He is also the coordinator of the Greek World Internet Project (WIP) team. His research focuses on relational and network approaches to the study of social behavior and new technologies, social media and political culture, digital communication and democracy, within Globalization 4.0 and nonlinear human complex systems.