

“A club for all the Greeks”

Home Micros Computer Clubs between Magazines and Stores

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The article offers a history of home microcomputers in Greece, focusing on the role of computer clubs in the second half of the 1980s. It is based on a study of articles published in mostly all Greek computer-related periodicals of this period. We introduce the formation of computer clubs for home microcomputers in Greece by arguing that there were two types of clubs, open and closed. We then elaborate on the role of computer magazines in the development of computer clubs in Greece, and, also, the interaction between computer clubs and computer stores. The article challenges the image of the Greek user of the personal computer as a passive recipient of a fixed technology. Greek users shaped home microcomputers through club-mediated practices which included, but not limited to, the modification, copying and distribution of software and the sharing of technical expertise.

103

Introduction

This article introduces the role of computer clubs in connection with the use of home microcomputers (known also as home micros) in Greece during the 1980s. It aims at contributing to the understanding of the interaction between users and home microcomputing technology in the historical context of the 1980s, which, in the Greek case, was characterized by minimal or no support given to computer users by either computer manufacturers or the state, amidst a parallel lack of formal / standardized education in computing.³ Club members had the opportunity to share experiences with

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3 For the rhetoric about the necessity of big computing technology projects in the 1980s see ARAPOSTATHIS Stathis, TYMPAS Aristotle (eds.), «Introduction. History of Technology in