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Ideological Functions and Nationalism in the main news bulletins

Vasilios Tzotzis*

Abstract

The paper attempts to investigate the role of 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.

Keywords: nationalism, media, Greek-Turkish relations, CDA, content analysis.

Introduction

The Greco-Turkish relations as well as their projection by the media have been the subject of inquiry by many researchers throughout the years. The convey of facts, the building of the "national self" image and also of the "national other", the ideological prism of the distortion of reality, repeating dominant nationalist patterns, are only some of the aspects of journalistic "language" that are under investigation. The perpetual friction between the two countries which takes place within the international arena has been greatly affected by the latter. The international upsurge of the far right (Katsika, 2019) as a political choice for the reconstitution of capitalism within national borders, the historic reclassifications after the two circles of the decade long financial crisis of the Lehman Brothers and the Covid-19 pandemic (Friderike Marx & Gern Beder, 2020), as well as competition for the exploitation for submarine fossil fuels are new traits in the continuum of history. The tension between the two countries in conjunction with a one-sided manifestation of the matter by the media, reintroduce the narrative of a conflict, not seen for years (Mastrogeorgiou, 2007).

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The present paper researches the theoretical relation of Power, Ideology, Nationalism, so as to try analyze the message by the media, the reception and perception of said message by the viewer and the socially predefined basis of this course. The aim of this endeavor is to point out the ideological functions within the journalistic speech, the proof of the existence of the ethnocentric idiom and the relationship that exists between the above. The basic aim of this project is to distinguish between the facts and the dominant state ideology and furthermore to defend the concept of peace and friendship among peoples.

The subjects of this research are the contents of three news bulletins by two private television channels (STAR, OPEN) and of the state channel (ERT) on 7/10/2021 which was the day that the Greek parliament voted in favor of the military agreement between Greece and France. The above agreement was the main event of the day for the mainstream media with live broadcast, continuous reports, comments by numerous so-called experts on such matters and many other sensationalized instances. More than that there were a number of other issues that emerged concerning the international arena, alliances between countries, the plans for both the economy and the energy produced in the region and the military armament of the countries involved.

The applied mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative) employs ideas from the content analysis and also from the analysis of critical speech. The content analysis was used for the formation of the categories (Yannas, 2015), per ideological function in the first assortment and per school of thought of nationalism for the second. The structuring of ideological classifications is based on the available literature on the functions of this ideology. On a second level the analysis of critical speech is used so as to analyze what has been said or silenced in the broadcast message in parallel with the wider sociopolitical front. The interpretive and the explanatory analysis (Stamou, 2014) are placed at the epicenter with the aim to understand the ideological and political functions of speech. The conclusions which were drawn were based on the processing of the quantitative data, on the application of the analysis of critical speech which was used for the current project, as well as on the functions of ideology and nationalistic speech.

Basic theoretical assertions for Political Power, Ideology and Nationalism

The theoretical foundation of the notions of Power, Ideology and Nationalism, as with every cognitive perception, requires the understanding of their materialistic background, the historical emergence and finally the historic necessity which created them. Thus, the idea of Power, of the dominant Ideology and of Nationalism, as a driving force on the level of ideas in the age of modernity, can be found in the distribution of the surplus wealth on a basis which is "unequal but nevertheless legal" (Habermas, 1980:35). In the age of mass industrial production this collective cultural web of institutions, ideas, values, built on the economic way of production was named Superstructure (Marx, 2010:19).

The same conjecture concerns the matters of Power and Ideology, as more often than not the role of violence and dominance is hidden or obscured with a result to study solely the field of ideas. Power is foremost the monopoly of organized state violence of the dominant class upon its dominated classes. "The state is a distinctive force of oppression" (Lenin, 1976:80). In this socioeconomic margin we see the appearance of the dominant ideology, as the ideology of the dominant classes both the economic and political elites (through the state). "The ideas of the dominant class are the dominant ideas in every day and age. In other words, the class which dominates the material production of society is simultaneously the dominant ideological force" (Marx & Engels, 1999:94). The processing and the instillation of the dominant ideology occurs in the field of the movements of society and in the actions of the ideological mechanisms of the state according to the analysis by the West-European Marxism (Althusser, 1976).

Nationalism should be studied under the assumption of it being the encompassing ideology in the margins of modernity, a historic counterpart of religion in traditional societies. "The ideology of one being a political and constitutional entity has a dominant position in the dominant ideology of this way of production, usurping the religious ideology within the dominant ideology of the feudalistic way of production" (Poulantzas, 1975:177). In accordance with the former, Lekkas (2011:162) notices that: "… most forms of the nationalist ideology want to provide a new social binding connection so as to replace religious bonds with the elaboration of the notion of the idea of nation, which among others formed the traditional society". Religion continued to be used as an element of the individual ideology on a new basis, connected directly to politics, but this happened under the guidance of the new ideology of nationalism.

A positive definition of Power

The definition of Power solely through the relation between state violence and dominance is not adequate, since it hides its emotional dimensions. Some aspects of political power can function as a bilateral entity together with science and administration, knowledge, the truth, rationalization, Discourse, legality, state suctioned stances and more.

Foucault (1987:21) defined power as something which is beyond prohibition and simplified control. "What makes power hold on tight, what makes it acceptable is that it does not weigh on us as a force that says ‘no’, but surpasses social dimensions, produces notions, brings pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces Discourse". Power is deeply rooted in the system of social relations and interactions. Discourse and its practices are connected with power in a complicated manner, they are connected with relationships characterized by dependence and submission, they restrict, they set the limits and modify the actions of people, defining their desires, their limits of freedom and pleasure. In parallel with the regime of truth, power is surrounded by a state of logic and knowledge. Knowledge and power have a symbiotic relationship. An alternative view as far as power is concerned points out its practices as it is

reflected on the practices of its subjects, its guiding role in their basic understanding (Lirigis, 1995).

Habermas (1980:10) notes that in the modern world the legality of the law stems from the system of social work, which transforms to productive work from a political one. The rationality of production and distribution as well as the ideology of equal exchange feed power with multiple meanings. The cognitive functions of power combine former techniques, which had previously been used by the Christian church (Doxiadis, 1988), with the ability to "customized" and to do the exact opposite rendering and individual being binatural as both one and part of a whole at the same time, and thus enforcing itself on the subjects. These thoughts seem valuable in the effort to understand the simultaneous entity of the liberal individualism of the citizen with the holistic entity of the nation. The analysis of this certain way of using power, the sophistication of the methods of power, the technologies of controlling the self, the methods and the degree of rationalization, next to the regime of violent enforcement paint the dialectic image of power in the modern era. Lukacs (2001:414) makes a simile in which he equalizes the effect that both the natural world and the rut of everyday life has on the ideas of the people with the awe that an astronomer feels upon gazing the sunrise, even though Copernicus has taught us otherwise. On the above premise, Lukacs relates to the necessity to describe in detail all the aspects of power: "in all actuality, although in certain occasions the enforcing roles of society are materialistic in a tough and animalistic way, every source of power of every society is basically spiritual and only knowledge can liberate us from it…".

Ideology through the perspective of Althusser

According to Althusser (1976:73) "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of a person with the real conditions of their being". During the course of his thought social practices in the fields of ideology will be added and mainly “Philosophy is, ultimately, the struggle of the classes within the theory” (Althusser, 1983:68). Althusser’s relationship with ideology can be compared with that of Spinoza’s relationship with God. Ideology is compared with the subconscious; it has always been within people during their historical existence. Ideology is conveyed within each person and the sum of these individual wills is its effect on earthly reality, its existence depends on individuals, while the subjects act through it. "Therefore, we are not relating to a traditional creationist God (…), who creates willingly a parallel word, but to an infinite creative force, which does not only exist in an immobile manner but in itself is an endless internal dynamic of self-replication that manifests wholly on its products, which are not its equals but an expression of said force" (Goudeli, 2015:9).

The basic function of ideology according to Althusser, is the "calling" of the individual and their transformation to a subject. The process of **recognition** and **submission** to the "Divine" place a central role (Althusser, 1976). In this specific relationship the possible element of misconception by the subject must also be taken into consideration, the process of agreement with the “Devine” as well as the need to compare it to an objective truth (Doxiades, 1988).

What is crucial is the fact that ideology remolds the individual's life experiences with the conditions of their existence. The way with which the person experiences and understands their life so that it is worth-living concerns ideology.

The above theorem does not only insert philosophical matters concerning the truth and the production of meaning, but it also encompasses the psychoanalytical defining tools of desire, imagination and of the insignificant Other. It must be understood that the world in which we leave has already been defined, the ideology is a redefinition of reality, the rationalization of the social actions of the subjects in relation to their conditions of their life. The self-critic of modernity has derived from this basis (Demertzis & Lipowatz, 1998), of the deeper understanding of social reality, the reimagining of the same analytical tools for the understanding of the world.

Ideology must merge with repression, not in a relationship of a zero sum but in a dialectic one. In modern societies violence is not the basic means of achieving concession on the contrary the subjects internalize the social and behavioral norms, widening the field of the study of Ideologist. "The fear of the masses must be conceived in a dual form: subjective and objective. It is the fear that the masses feel, but it is also the fear that the masses convey to whomever is in a position of power or acts politically and thus the state itself" (Balibar, 2010:27-8).

Ideology and common sense

The process of connection between the individual and the group also concerns the realm of ideas. On the political level the individual approaches the group through the paradigm of citizen/nation, in the field of ideology this route has more complicated lines.

The inevitable national identity for every person (Gelner, 1992) has an ideological counterpart. "Even if you don't realize it, you are so closely connected to your homeland that you can't be isolated or distance yourself from it without feeling the effects of your illusion" (Kedurie, 2017:40). Nationalism is interpreted by and interprets ideas, deeds and emotions. Those who define nationalism as an idea, study the reasons and the actions of nationalist intellectuals and activists. Those who perceive it as an emotion focus on the development of some type of code and a collective way of life as well as their effects on the political arena. However, those who view nationalism as a mass movement emphasize political activity and conflicts (Ozkirimli, 2013). The premise stands, nobody can escape the general force of ideology, they are defined by it and act through it.

Ideology does not only concern single individuals, but social constructs, which adopt it as part of their collective life. In a psychoanalytical approach of ideologies, the notion of perspective is used under the weight of ideological predefinition. "Therefore, the ideology of nationalism is the one that 'builds' the national 'sentiment' and the nation, which in turn, when created, sustains and remolds nationalism. In this case besides the imaginary the symbolic also

fundamentally takes part: the main notion ‘Greece’ creates the ‘Greeks’, who imagine that they ‘always were’ with their predefined fate" (Demertzis & Lipowatz, 1998:131).

With these thoughts we are driven to the hypothesis of the relation between the dominant ideology as a process which co-exists with the formation of common sense. "The dominant ideology is made up by all the members of society who perceive the dominant social relations as natural and indestructible, on the level of common sense. The dominant ideology to a degree which is expressed through the knowledge acquired by educational normality, consists a processed form of the misconceptions of the common sense" (Pavlidis, 2004:65). While Poulantzas (1975) also asserts that the revolutionary ideology, as antagonistic, must be formed as a perpetual critic against the impulsive ideology, the common sense through the Marxist science.

The functions of Ideology

At this point the basic functions of Ideology will be listed in brief. There will be an attempt to categorize these functions as they are utilized in the quantitative/thematic analysis of the research material. It is interesting that the majority of the contentions understand ideology through the contrasting lenses of the relations of power, as a system of opinions, opposed to the social reality or the objective truth.

According to the paper by Demertzis – Lipowatz (1998), the definition given by Eagleton (2018) and the categorization by both Lekkas (2011) and Lukacs (2001), the basic and interconnected points of the ideological functions are:

- The justification – legalization of the relations of power.
- The unification of the subjects in a unilateral field, in a symbolic space, beyond any antithesis (class, race, religion etc).
- The division of various social groups, targeting those prone to anti-systemic action.
- Covering up reality from the subjects.
- The mobilization of the subjects based on ideological imperative.
- Solidification as a means of perceiving reality; with the attempt to present a "part" as a "whole".
- The generation of meaning and the use of ready tools of interpretation of reality.
- The naturalization of reality, presenting the historical routes as a static/final reality.
- The pseudo conscious as a result of alienation and fetishization of commerce.
- The construction of identity.

It is important to underline that the naming of each function is connected to the way the subjects interprets/internalizes every aspect giving defining space to the codification of the subject matter.

Some assertions about Nationalism

According to Kedurie (2017) nationalism is an Ideology. This admission defines the initial approach. Nationalism has replaced religion in modernity as a unified consciousness. "Most forms of nationalistic ideology have the ambition to generate a new social glue replacing the religious ties with the process of the notion of nation, which, among others, constituted the traditional society" (Lekkas, 2011:162). Nationalism can be compared to the beginning of an a priori knowledge of space and time according to Kant's thought (Marcatos, 2010) if space is the external shape of structure, then time is the shape of the internal self-consciousness of the mind; nationalism is the basic source of generating meaning.

"The main classifications, as have been suggested by Antony Smith are divided into three categories (with several subcategories): Primitive nationalism, Modernity and national symbolism" (Ozkirimli, 2013:15). The initial question is whether nationalism is a social relation, a timeless unchangeable entity or if it can be defined by symbols and emotions. The deferent approaches can be combined constructively under the light of the total stand towards nationalism as an antagonistic, conflicting, class ideology of the bourgeoisie, a historic counterpart of Marxism and the working class (Milios, 1996).

The following can be considered as the basic conclusions on the study of nationalism:

- The pioneering stand of Anderson (2019) as far as the imaginary aspect of nations is concerned. The emancipation of though from the "narrow"-objective criteria has given a massive boost to the introduction of more defining tools. The imaginary communities in conjunction with the philosophical category of Kastoriades (2010) about the imaginary and the "interchangeable meaning" and compass disciplines of the social science in the study of nationalism.
- The "invention" of tradition by Hobsbawm (1994).
- The high culture, teaching through education and the contribution of the industrial society by Gelner (1992).
- The observation that nationalism creates states, which in turn and in time shape the nation, utilizing nationalism as the formal ideology by the state.
- "The idea of the division of humanity into nations is carved in the consciousness of the people within capitalism" (Harman, 2018:109). This conscious reflection of historic/social production is de-ideologized, lifting the nation as a high political value.
- The observation of Smith that in the eastern nationalism the popular factor is the ultimate critic: " (…) a fact which renders the national realization as 'inter-class' and gives it a more 'populist' scent (…) thus, in the national perception of nation the movement of people place a major role – if not on an actual level, at least on an ethical and rhetorical one" (Smith, 2000:28).This approach gives emphasis to the movement of the people, it has a grassroot approach to the notion of nation, it beautifies the characteristics of the

lower classes since they are the keepers of the national culture in spite of their conditions of life.

- The pre-national group "ethnie", its vertical or lateral development, the creation of the cultural core for the shape of the nation. The treatment of ethnie also as imaginary (Karakasidou, 2000). Its treatment as a "Key ingredient for the cultural/pre-national core which will be the primordial atom of the nation which is under development" (Smith, 2000).
- The participation of the people as a mechanism of national renewal.
- The sophisticated observation by Hroch (1996) that the lack of political democracy and of a tradition in collective and individual freedoms in the Eastern empires brought the social demands on the level of pre-ethnic solidarity.
- Following suit, Smith maintains that in Eastern nationalism the position of the law is usurped by the popular culture and pre-ethic ethics (Smith, 2000) while individual rights are substitute by unlawful relations (Michail, 2015).
- The thought that the various phases of nationalism are closely connected to their penetration in the subordinate classes and not just in circles of the intelligentsia.

The application of the analysis of the subject matter on the research material

The following ideological classification categories are based on the research material and the bibliography and are thus: The calling / nation-state / unification / equalization / otherness / holistic / division / mobilization / legality / covering up / constructional identity / naturalization / pseudo consciousness. While utilizing the criteria for the definition of the nation: primitive nationalism / national symbolism / modernity.

The "theme" is the basic unit of the textual analysis, that is to say the minimum required to produce meaning. The analysis of the subject matter was done with "vertical" writing using Microsoft Excel, with each theme being placed in one "cell" of the software, with a parallel double categorization and comments. The writing of the central section is considered united, regardless of whether the speaker is a presenter, a journalist, a commentator, a reporter, or a politician.

Conclusions

This paper has analyzed the research material according to the directions of quantitative and quality inquires. The categories of analysis derived from the bibliography as well as the definition of the terms Power, Ideology, Nationalism. The quantitative aspect has proven (after analysis) the omnipotent presence of ethnocentric speech in parallel with the intensive presence of the active ideology. The division of the subject matter in minimum speech periods, themes and the ability to categorize it collectively with both criteria was characteristic. In all of the above the eccentricities of the spoken language must also be taken under consideration. The

central idea as for the method was confirmed through the ability of ideological classification of the message.

The ideological functions were recorded axiomatically in their quality connection with the schools of studying nationalism. Their quantitative recording can only give us an idea of the usual speech practices, while under no circumstances shut an ideological function be underestimated by its infrequent presence. The interconnection of ideological functions defines the escalation of the messages as the attempt to generalize would lead to insufficient assertions.

The analytical description of the functions of ideology reinstates reality, the image of "the national other" and of "the national self". The contribution of scientific research is required to shed light on the economic – energy – geopolitical scenarios which are woven in the Mediterranean basin in conjunction with social practices. The struggle for peace concerns both sides of the Aegean since everyday people have nothing to divide among themselves, on the contrary they have a whole world to gain.

Below an example of a three themed ideological categorization is included together with the textual analysis.

Theme Mitsotakis: Will you indicate it yes, or no? The Greek and the French people must know, the Turks must unfortunately also know who are clearly not happy with the signing of this agreement.

Ideological categorization: Indictment/ national symbolism

Text analysis: In the prime minister's speech there are also other ideological and political functions (identity, otherness, legality). However, the most decisive indictment is based on the sentiment of the "national other" who is believed to be unsatisfied with this agreement.

Theme Gennimata: Our yes, our responsible stance towards the agreement with France, is also connected with the demand for the government to take the necessary initiative so as to utilize the agreement halting Turkish aggression.

Ideological categorization: Indictment/ Modernism

Text analysis: Mrs Gennimata, basing her speech on her party's stance, calls on the government to take institutional initiatives, so as to achieve results against the "national other". Her speech being institutionally constructed and within the predetermined state and international procedures, Mrs. Gennimata "builds" the image of the social relationship which is categorized as modernism. The other ideological functions are (legality, mobility, otherness).

Theme Tsipras: And I ask you: God forbid, with how many body bugs bearing the Greek flag will the Greek forces and the Greek soldiers return from war zones.

Ideological categorization: Indictment/ Premitive nationalism

Text analysis: Mr Tsipra's indictment touches on the boundaries of populism. The picture that he paints is oblique to the hearer. While the flag is a symbol, the frequent use of the adjective Greek and the noun Greeks, intonates the notion of a "common essence" which runs through the above and categorizes it in Primitive nationalism. The other ideological function is mobility.

Theme journalist: Prime minister Mitsotakis explains what was mentioned yesterday on STAR Chanel, that the agreement covers Greece on land, sea and air. So, the defense support is activated.

Ideological categorization: State / national symbolism

Text analysis: The "nation-state" produces definitions and constitutes the experienced reality within the world of modernity. The existence of Nations-States doesn't only describe the function of the states or drawings on a map, but the unique connection of a cultural group with land, time and the nation's state. The above record falls into the category of national symbolism as Greece is defenseless, being in danger on land, sea and air. The way Greece as a nation is conveyed, anxiety is transformed to a feeling prevalent among the masses as far as the defense of the country is concerned. What is interesting is the fact that this mutual sentiment is shared by people who live far from places which are concerned with the FIR and the EEZ. Another ideological function is pseudo consciousness.

Theme Koutsoumpas: Being unable to prevent the offensive inclinations of the Turkish elite, in the past there is no reason to believe that both the French and American weapons can prevent such aggression in the present.

Ideological categorization: State / Primitive Nationalism

Text analysis: The category "Nation-State" seems to be a necessary prerequisite for its existence. Weapons, states and aggression all have the need of a national land. In his speech the Secretary general of the central committee of the Greek Communist Party maintains that the national "essence" seems to define the objects so the categorization is within primitive nationalism. Another ideological function is otherness.

Theme journalist: At this point it is necessary to state what the minister of defense Mr. Panagiotopoulos said today in the parliament regarding the French – Greek agreement.

Ideological categorization: Nation – State / Modernity

Text analysis: In other topics we will find e.g., "the Greek prime minister", changing the categorization. In this addition the nation is not defined by lineage or sentiment, but through the state relations within it, it has institutional representative functions, popular domination responsible work allocation and international relations within international law. The above is placed in modernism. Other ideological functions are unification and legalization.

Theme Mitsotakis: Your populist cries regarding the return of body bags wrapped with the Greek flag is the most awful think I have heard in this room.

Ideological categorization: Unifying / national symbolism

Text analysis: The unifying function appears in the creation of a unified common ground in the phrase "in this room". Parliament is not just a place of conversation; it is the space in which the will of the representatives of the nation unify. The argument is done in a structured way within the limit of the nation, without evolving in an all-out war since the nation has a past as well as a feature to realize. Parliament is a place of unification and common existence. National symbolism is the category in which the above is placed since it has a sentimental value claiming that this is the place where we unify and thus there is no room for populism.

Theme journalist: The parliamentary conversation as for the validation of the defense agreement with France caused a head-to-head conflict.

Ideological categorization: Unifying / modernity

Text analysis: The unifying function is even more intense in this occasion. The head-to-head conflict occurs within the parliamentary limits and those of the parliamentary ideological unification. It cannot interfere with the place where the will of the nation is expressed, in any way the parliament is the political party of the upper class. The above is classified in modernity as the nation comes to existence in the modernity that the state shapes. There is also the notion of pseudo consciousness.

Theme Mitsotakis: These signatures will forever stay in the memory of all Greeks.

Ideological categorization: Unifying / Primitive nationalism

Text analysis: The unifying procedure is constructed in the common memory of the Greeks, the place of unification is the imaginary point of view of the common memory of the members of the nation, in the turbulent history of the nation as the Greeks conceive it. The unification is realized on a reminiscing level, while the national base of the unification is the timeless essence of what it means to be "Greek". The above is why this entry lies within primitive nationalism and not national symbolism.

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