

NEWS AND VIEWS ABOUT EUROPE IN GREECE

GEORGE PLEIOS

UNIVERSITY OF GREECE

Abstract

Many research findings have shown until now that, in a great extent, European news, including EU news, are considered, in most state members, media, as foreign ones (De Vreese, 2001; Peters, Semetko & de Vreese, 2003). Despite the broader process of globalization and regionalization of the news (Hjarvard, 1993, 2001), media coverage of the European affairs, in general, can be described by what the theory already called “domestication” of the news” (Gurevitch, Levy & Roeh, 1991; Clausen, 2004; Thussu, 2004). European affairs are defined in news bulletins as external ones and they are constructed appropriately to be consumed by internal national audiences in each individual country. This phenomenon has been found and measured in Greece and other countries in press or electronic media (Chapman, 1992; Moisy, 1996; Uttley, 1997; Hoge, 1997; Madger, 2003; Lang & Lang, 2000; Papathanassopoulos, 1997; Wu, 2004, Pleios *et al*, 2008).

Keywords

European Integration; Television; European News; Domestication; Representations of Europe.

Theory about domestication and journalistic interest
in foreign affairs in Greece

We can consider the following as factors of utmost importance for the domestication of the news:

Financial limitations: this leads to a limited number of correspondents and consequently leads to the use of officials in the foreign country as information sources; it also leads to the use of global news agencies (Uttley, 1997; Madger, 2003; Hess, 1996; Paterson, 1998). The same reason is valid concerning EU news in Greece (Theodosiou, Kostarella & Tsantopoulos, 2005).

Market competition: in a commercial communication system this favours the rise of an entertaining news and information program (Bennett, 2002; Fairclough, 1994) which may neglect foreign policy and political issues (Arnett, 1998) and/or focus on the “internal view” on things, derived from country’s particular culture (Hachten, 1999; Metykova, 2008). From this point of view it is becoming more and more difficult for EU and other European news stories to be placed among the most newsworthy stories if they are characterized by lack of dramatization (Chaban *et al*, 2004).

Modernization of society. As it emerges from a sociological point of view, a higher degree of modernization perhaps favours the expansion and proliferation of global interests of national audiences.

News ideology. Nationalism on one hand and the specific political ideology of journalists and media producers on the other are seem to be the most important criteria for assessing international affairs, including European ones (Morgan & Shanahan, 1999; Clausen, 2004; Trenz, 2008). In our opinion, news’ ideology plays a crucial role for placement of EU news among international news in TV bulletins (Theodosiou, Kostarella & Tsantopoulos, 2005).

Nature/“grammar” of the medium. Newspapers, brochures and magazines have played a crucial role in the past to the rise and expansion of political nationalism (Anderson, 1986; McLuhan, 1964). It seems that radio and television are rather connected to the cultural nationalism and state interventionism (Cardiff & Scannell, 1987; Pleios, 2005; Demertzis, 1996, pp. 352-358).

Domestication of the news in Greece is an intense phenomenon (Papathanasopoulos, 1997; Pleios *et al.*, 2008). Its presence is substantial regarding all foreign news, including European ones. But if we take into account that there are no significant ideological differences between main Greek TV stations about Europe and EU, as well as that we analyze only television news, then different views about Europe in Greek TV news emerge from the other mentioned factors.

Financial limitations and commercial competition can maximize or minimize differences between different types of TV stations (state-private). Consequently, in our consideration, the tensions and confrontations between tradition and modernization in all fronts and the presence of nationalism, especially cultural nationalism, play a crucial role in the production and reproduction of Europe’s image in Greek television news. Perhaps, those EU issues that have been overanalyzed in TV news are connected to the Greek foreign relations (e.g., Greek – Turkish relations, Cyprus issue, Turkish-origin minority in Western Thrace, Kurdish issue, etc.) (Theodosiou, Kostarella & Tsantopou-

los, 2005), on which nationalism is more apparent and they are considered as “national issues” (Giannouloupoulos, 1999).

In Greek society there are significant, in terms of quantity and quality, vivid and structural remains of (the normative and legitimizing aspects of) tradition (Tsoukalas, 1996a; Diamantouros, 2002; Sevastakis, 2004) according to Thompson’s terminology (Thompson, 1995, pp. 184-188). Thus, confrontation or/and compromise of modernity and tradition in economy, society, politics and culture still remains a significant mechanism of societal development and identity formation. While the idea or ideology of modernization brings Greece in European-Western multicultural family, in the political and cultural sense of the word, the presence of a normative and legitimizing tradition feeds a kind of national cultural – differentiation from Europe (Tsoukalas, 1996b). For this reason, as it emerges from various research projects, the controversial relationship of modernity and tradition has been transformed, among many other forms, to a controversial view and stance of identification and differentiation or even confrontation between Greece and Europe resulting in many cases in the subordination of European culture to the Greek culture (Kokosalakis, 2004).

In this perspective, Europe is understood often as a field and benchmark or even ideal of socio-economic and political modernization and growth as well as political alliance regarding Greek foreign policy and foreign relations in general (Ioakimidis, 2001b). At the same time Greece is considered as culturally different compared to Europe (Sereti, 2004).

We assume this view as predominant among elite and non elite economic, social, political and especially cultural groups, a fact that has detected by empirical research even recently (Sereti, 2004). In other words, perhaps the most widespread relevant concept in Greece accepts European integration, but in such a form which does not abolishes the cultural identity deriving from tradition, even though it collides with certain requisites of integration.

Hypotheses and research

Greek television, especially television news as the main political gatekeeper in Bennett’s words (Bennett, 2002), expresses and takes part in the formation of the above mentioned views. To put it more accurately:

1. The solid presence of tradition not only produces the notion of a significant

dissimilarity between Greek and European cultures, but also an extensive informational introversion which in TV news is expressed in the form of a rather low percentage of European news (in the various versions of Europe). Additionally, it is being expressed as an ethnocentric approach to European life, as other research findings have show (mentioned above). Otherwise, European news would appear in Greek TV more frequently and would have much greater significance if relevant events concerned Greek interests. Of course this tendency is not exclusively Greek, but more intense in Greek television.

2. As we underlined, Europe, especially the EU, is thought of as a powerful factor in socio-economic development of Greece, as well as an institution for successfully dealing with internal and external (political) issues. For this reason its presence will be quite frequent in Greek TV news. We expect to observe the opposite regarding Balkan countries, excluding Turkey, with which Greece has controversial relations. In addition, the presence of the USA, which plays a leading role in world politics, should be significant too. Besides, this is an "attitude" of Greek media since the Cold War period.
3. Greek TV news about EU will appear more frequently if their content concerns socio-economic or political issues (e.g. subsidies, institutional modernization, EU-Turkish relations, EU enlargement, etc). Such EU news should appear even more often if they concern Greece rather than the EU itself. In this kind of television news, the term "European" will mean the EU integrated socio-economic and political space. On the contrary, the number of news reports concerning cultural issues will be limited, especially if they do not somehow concern Greece or the Greek culture. Here, the term "European" will mean a rather dissimilar culture which is deployed in other parts of the European continent.
4. Consequently, the terms "EU" and "Europe" in socio-economic and especially in political news stories will have almost the same notion. But in cultural news stories there will be some more or less of a distinction between EU and European states, especially Greece, or lack of the term "European". Beyond that, there will be a significant percentage of socio-economic and political news reports about the EU but a low percentage of cultural ones, while there will be a higher percentage of cultural news and a comparatively lower percentage of socio-economic and political news about European states. Finally, the term "European" will be used less frequently and is more likely to mean a non-antagonistic relation between different cultures. Even more, journalists may

establish cultural commonalities between Greece and other nation-states, depending on stereotypes about the given states and national cultures.

In order to control these hypotheses we conducted a secondary analysis of the data which was gathered by four research projects of the Laboratory for Social Research on Mass Media, of the Department of Communication and Media Studies, of the University of Athens.

In our research projects, we applied a combination of both content and discourse analysis. Our analysis unit was the individual news story, constituted by anchorman's speech and video or live cover, referring to one or more issues. In the "Content and quality of television news" research we analyzed a sample of 33% (89 news bulletins, consisted of 1878 news stories) from a total amount of about 400 news bulletins, of the eight most popular nationwide Greek TV stations (Alpha, Alter, Antenna, ET1, ET3, Mega, NET and Star), broadcast between 20/11/2004 and 31/12/2004. The list of the- matics we examined includes politics and economy, expensiveness (of goods), unem- ployment, social security, public health, public administration, religion-church, educa- tion, mass media, culture and arts, showbiz, science, environment, family issues, law and justice, crime and deviance, defence, army and armament, sports, police activ- ity, public transportation, human interest issues, war, natural disasters, tourism, and a category named "other".

For the analysis of the gathered data we used 74 variables, including, among oth- ers, the stories' main subjects, the countries involved, the order of presentation, the duration as well as some variables (use of music, graphics caption, slow motion, ad- jectives etc) in order to measure visual and discourse dramatization in news stories.

Similar techniques were used in the second research mentioned, "The coverage of political institutions in the TV news bulletins", which was conducted from 20/11/2006 to 20/3/2007. In this research we analyzed all the everyday news bulletins (696) of the 8 most popular nationwide stations (Alpha, Alter, Antenna, ET3, Mega, NET, Sky, and Star) which included 3641 news stories. Beyond the issues mentioned before, in the list of thematics we included political parties, parliamentary and Presidential activi- ties, elections and political system issues.

The third research project mentioned here is «Representations of education in TV news», and it was conducted between 26/11/2004 - 31/1/2005 and 27/2/2005 - 31/3/2005. A total number of 5230 news stories of the eight most popular TV stations (Alpha,

ANT1, Alter, ET1, ET3, Mega, NET and Star) was examined. For the analysis of the gathered data we used 101 variables, including the stories' thematic (administration in education, school knowledge, textbooks, access in education, education–society relations, violence and social behaviour in schools, etc) as well as other variables similar to the abovementioned projects.

The fourth research project mentioned, "News culture", conducted between 1/1/2005 – 30/9/2006 was based on a sample of 10% of TV news bulletins of this period. For the analysis we used 65 variables including stories' main subjects (cinema, theatre, dance, music, TV, religion etc) as well as other forementioned variables.

Analysis

Introversion of Greek TV news and ethnocentrism in TV news about Europe

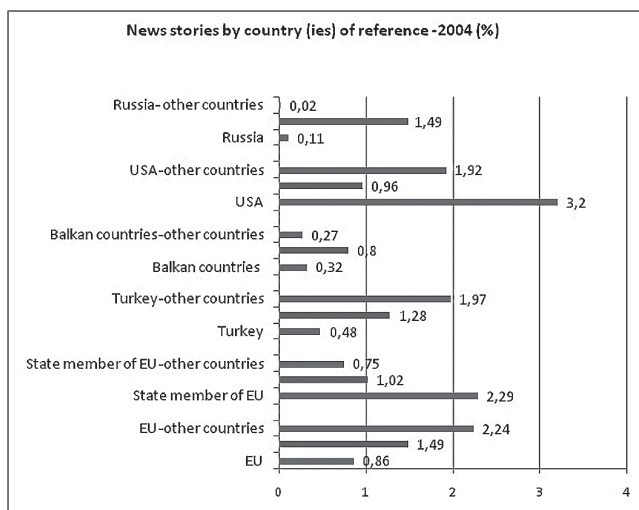
In the research project "Content and quality of Greek television news", which was conducted in 2004, we found that, with the exception of internal Greek news which constitute the 2/3 of the total number of news stories (66,4%) and news stories concerning Greek international relations (12,04%), the second greater percentage of news stories concerns the USA and its international relations (5,12%), followed by the EU and its international relations except for Greece (3, 10%), Member Sates and their international relations except for Greece (3,04%), Turkey and its international relations except for Greece (2,45%), Balkan countries and their international relations except for Greece (0,59%) and finally Russia and its international relations except Greece (0,13%) (Figure 1).

These findings show that the USA, many years after the end of the Cold War or its interference in the Greek domestic matters, still occupies the first place in Greek TV foreign news and their depiction of world politics. The EU and the other European countries takes the second place, which indicates the new international and domestic political and economic environment of the country, followed by Turkey, the other Balkan countries and Russia, which on its turn speaks about the significance of international relations that Greece has with the other countries in the region in the light of recent as well as historical developments.

But if we consider the EU, the Member States of the EU, the Balkan countries and Russia all together, the journalistic interest of Greek TV news is more intense-

ly focused on Europe than on the USA. However, the same research demonstrated that international news is ethnocentric, including European agenda, except the news concerning the USA and the European states. Thus the journalistic interest about foreign affairs, at least in quantitative terms, seems to swing between the new European centre and old centre of the Cold War period and even the pre-Cold War period.

FIGURE 1



Source: Research Project "Content and quality of TV news"

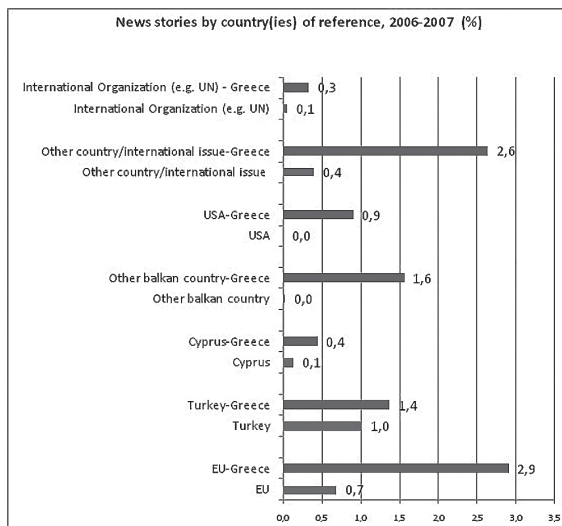
Similar findings were recorded in the second research project mentioned ("The coverage of political institutions in the TV news bulletins"). It is important to underline that this second research focuses not on any kind of TV news stories but only on these news stories which present Greek political parties and actors³³ (figure 2). In this sense, the relevant data speak about political and economic information about EU, Europe or other kind of international relations.

More specifically, the research under consideration saw that the amount of news stories about Greek internal affairs is 87,6%. Thus, we can conclude that political information which Greek TV stations provide in their news bulletins is characterized from an even greater extent of introversion in relation to the introversion of the whole range of news stories (which include human interest stories, news about economy and cultural events, unemployment and criminality, disasters etc). In this sense the

'political EU' and the 'political Europe' are far away from the most important issues in the political information which derives from the news bulletins.

But if we take a closer look at the data about international affairs we can see that the great part of international news stories, including news stories about Greek foreign relations is focused on the EU, followed by Turkey, the USA, Cyprus, international organizations and other countries. Thus, in the political news stories the EU clearly dominates, followed by the neighbours and world political protagonist. Once again, the whole picture of Greek TV news describes a process of transition from the pre-Cold War and Cold War political logic to the contemporary political logic of belonging to the EU as a significant socio-economic and political actor in the international relations as well as regarding Greek interests or coexistence of these two logics.

FIGURE 2



Source: Research project "The coverage of political institutions"

The TV news' neighbourhood of Greece

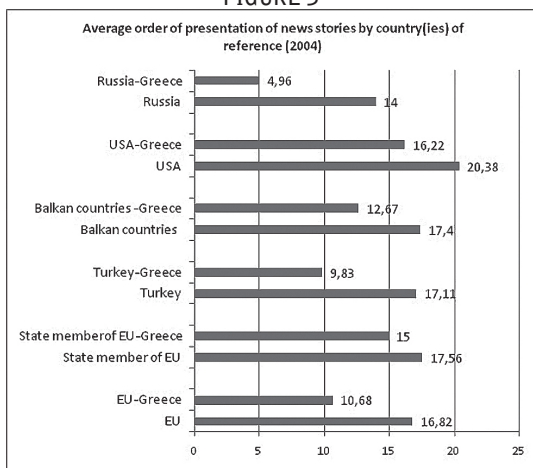
One really important indicator of the presence of European affairs in Greek TV news is the order of presentation of European news, which, especially in television as well as in radio is closely related to the priming effect (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). In fact, such an indicator speaks about the (lack of) salience (Soroka, 2003) of the EU and

European issues in the Greek media agenda. In this perspective, the overall picture of international and Greek-other countries relations seems more complex.

As it emerges from the aforementioned research of 2004, Greek TV news is introvert in a high degree. Nevertheless, the most common order of presentation found involved news stories depicting Greek-Russian and Greek-Turkish relations, followed by those news stories concerning Greek-EU relations and Greece-other Balkan country (figure 3). News stories about the EU itself are placed at the end of news bulletins, however, they come before the stories about Balkan countries and the USA. Hence, from the order of presentation point of view, news bulletins appear to focus much more on the “neighbourhood”.

Consequently it seems that Greek news is still anchored to the region. It is interesting that Wu described, since the '90s, a greater interest of Greek news production for the Balkans (former Yugoslavia) instead of Europe and other places in the world, unlike many other western countries (Wu, 2004). This fact cannot be explained only with the economic and political regionalization/localization in the globalization process, including the influence of the European Union on the country. It is also helpful to recall all these analysis which describe and explain the significant presence of tradition in contemporary Greek society (Tsoukalas, 1996a) and the consequent presence of a more cultural nationalism (Demertzis, 1997; Lekkas, 2001) in variety of forms (Theodoridis, 2004) and in a great part of the public discourse. Thus, from the point of view of *how much* Greek TV news is reporting the world, the EU–Europe and the USA become the closest neighbours of the country.

FIGURE 3

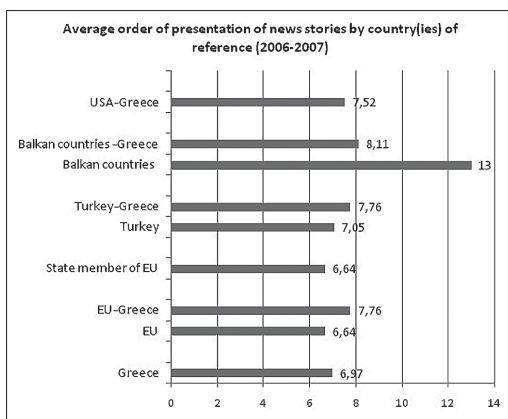


Source: Research Project “Content and quality of TV news”

Thus, from the point of view of the intensity or importance in international reporting, the geographical neighbourhood becomes the neighbourhood in political-informational terms. It seems that the geographical neighbourhood of Greece is close to its European neighbourhood in TV news space.

Quite different is the picture which recorded in the research project “The coverage of political institutions in the TV news bulletins” (2006-2007), which as we mentioned before focuses only on political and economic news stories. In this research was found that the most frequent TV foreign news were news about the EU and the EU member-states or other European countries. Consequently, if such (political and economic) EU or other European matters are referred in the news bulletin, then they attract the highest journalistic interest, among other foreign news. The EU and other European news followed by news about Turkey and Greek-USA relations, the Greek-Turkish relations and EU-Greek relations. We must also take into account that in a certain degree by that time, a main issue in TV news was the EU-Greece and EU-Turkey relations, and the Greek-Turkish relations (figure 4). In this sense, unlike research findings in 2004, in 2007 the “neighbourhood” of Greece is not only the geographically neighbouring states, but Europe as well or even beyond it. However, in 2007, and just like in 2004, the research still shows differences in reporting the EU on one hand and Member States on the other. The political news stories ‘are looking’ at the EU and Europe, while the total variety of the news stories ‘is looking’ mostly at the region. Or, the more the news stories become political the more they are directed towards Europe.

FIGURE 4



Source: Research project “The coverage of political institutions

From politics to culture – from similarity to diversity

The last conclusion gives us the possibility to underline that behind the overall picture of Europe and its various versions (like EU, EU Member States, other European states, Balkan countries, etc.), it is necessary to examine the way in which Europe has been understood. As we already mentioned in the theoretical analysis of our work, EU constitutes a solid institutional frame and powerful factor of socio-economic development and modernization of Greece (Ioakimidis, 2001; Sereti, 2004). Besides, the fulfilment of the modernization prospects in the country was a main reason for a wide acceptance from the Greek citizens side for joining the EU almost three decades ago (Ioakimidis, 2001a).

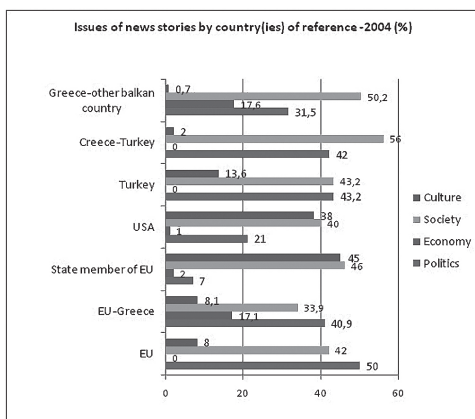
However, it seems that things are different on the cultural level where the EU is being thought of by many Greek citizens of all social categories and classes as something different (Tsoukalas, 1996b; Kokoasalakis, 2004). Thus, we suppose that news stories about the EU with socio-economic and political content, especially if they concern Greece, will appear much more in bulletins, than those with cultural content. For the same reason, news stories with cultural content about Member States of the EU or other European countries will appear more frequently in comparison than the cultural news about EU itself.

More accurately, the 2004 research showed that among TV news stories about the EU and EU–Greek relations those based on political issues are predominating, while cultural issues have only a low percentage (figure 5). Of course this is not a Greek paradox. As de Vreese (2001) and Peter *et al.* (2003) have shown, the EU agenda in news becomes more encompassing when there are important political or economic EU events. These findings can perhaps be explained or explain why socio-economic and political issues are the most referred issues in EU-Greek TV News (Theodosiou, Kostarella & Tsantopoulos, 2005).

But when Greek TV news reports about Member States of the EU and other European countries as well as about the USA, Turkey and the Balkan countries, social issues prevail and with exception of Turkey, there is a significant number of cultural news too. In other words, when TV news reports deal with the “old” world (e.g. the world of nation-states) and the relations of Greece to this world, there are more social and cultural and less political stories in news bulletins. This fact shows that in great extent TV journalists understand the EU more as an economic and political organization and less as a cultural entity. Such phenomenon can be interpreted as a hidden Euro-scepticism. From this

point of view, the aged and strictly defined nationalism still remains much stronger than the vague and weak 'Europeanism' in TV information, especially in countries like Greece or other South-Mediterranean EU countries (Gramacho & Liamazares, 2005).

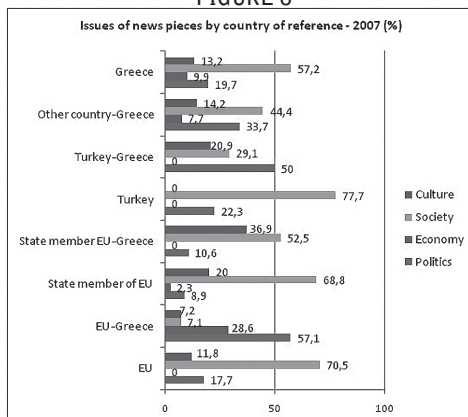
FIGURE 5



Source: Research Project "Content and quality of TV news"

On the other hand, the 2006-2007 research demonstrated that social issues predominate in TV news about all countries, including Greece. Political and economic issues are comparatively more in news stories about EU. Also, comparatively high is the percentage of political news about Turkey as well as for other countries (figure 6).

FIGURE 6

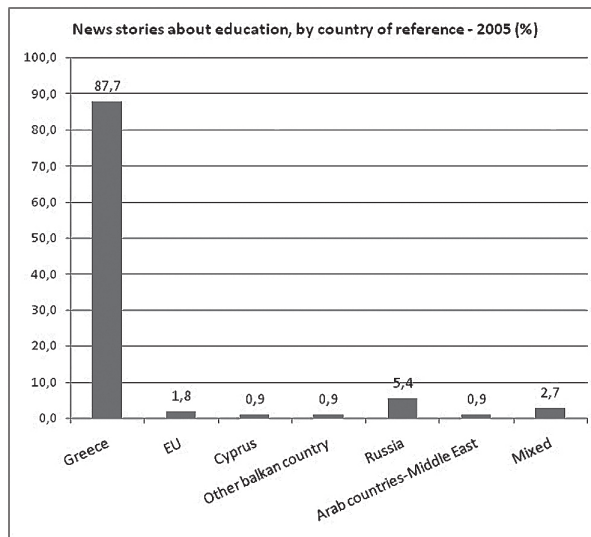


Source: Research project "The coverage of political institutions"

Two more confirmations

More findings which support the above mentioned conclusions were recorded by two more research projects of our Laboratory: first, the empirical research about the representation of education in TV news during 2005, and second, the research about the representation of culture in television news during 2006. The first showed that the percentage of news from other countries, including the EU about a key issue in culture like education is extremely low in Greek TV news (figure 7).

FIGURE 7



Source: Research project "Representations of education in TV news"

In the second research, although we did not measure cultural news by country analytically, it emerged that the percentage of foreign cultural news is extremely low. A more detailed examination of the relevant data showed that the most reported countries in cultural news were mainly the USA, Member States of the EU and the Balkan countries (figure 8). In this sense, a more detailed analysis of news stories about culture in Greek TV bulletins confirms the previous mentioned conclusions about this question.

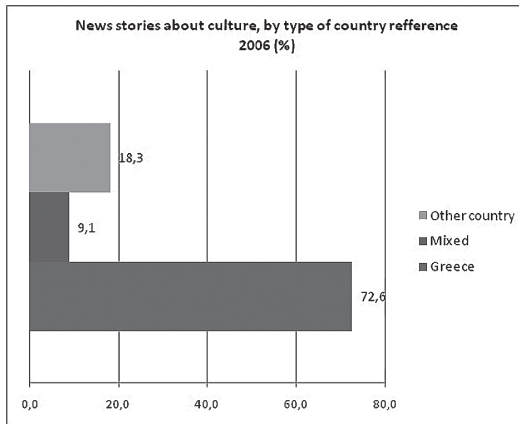


FIGURE 8

Source: Research project “News culture”

A taste of a qualitative approach

Some examples can give us a more comprehensive knowledge about the above mentioned features in Greek televisual information about Europe.

The 2004 period

1. In December 7th 2004, private TV station’s ANTENNA news bulletin had the story about the EU enlargement broadcast second. The story was about Turkey joining the EU. The story didn’t appear in the opening titles because there were no such titles at that time, but its presentation order tells us that reporters considered it as being very important.

And there is the anchorwoman’s comment before the reporters’ video: *“Tayip Erdogan along with major opposition’s leader asked from the Netherlands a definite date for Turkey’s joining the EU”*.

2. In November 26th 2004, in the private station’s Mega news bulletin an EU story was broadcast fifth. The story was about the financial sanctions imposed by the European Court of Justice against Greece. The story is referred to in the opening titles and this fact along with the order of its presentation means that it is important but not so much as the previous story.

The first anchorwoman says: *“The country also has problems with Europe*

(excerpt with USA about FYROM's name). It is quite possible that Greece is to go on trial before the European Court of Justice because of the Economy census.

And there is the second anchorman's comment: "...Commissioner Almunia will ask from the Commission, from his fellows Commissioners, to send Greece on trial for the census of (Greek) economy. The charge will be that the Greek services falsified and cheated on Eurostat... (our) arguments will be very strong and we will not go on trial, he said".

In these two stories, broadcast by the two main private TV channels we can detect the features which were already described: The first issue is the political and the second one is the economic perspective. The former has greater significance than the later as it emerges from the priming of the presentation. Both issues are developed with an ethnocentric point of view and in both stories Europe is identical to the EU. The distinction between the two instances of power, the national and the EU, frames a "federal" point of view in respect to the EU's affairs.

The 2006 – 2007 period

1. In February 2nd2007, the state TV channel "NET" broadcast four (4) stories on European affairs. Two stories concerned EU issues and another two stories concerned Member States' issues.
 - I. The first EU issue is about environmental policy in the Union. Industries must replace old engines with new, more environment friendly ones. It is a socio-economic news story, which was mentioned in the opening titles and was presented third in the main bulletin's body. This means that the story was considered quite significant.

Anchorwoman (among the most influent and respectable in Greece): "EU is getting stricter and proposes the strictest measures ever taken worldwide in order to eliminate pollution caused by automobiles. EC ask from the governments to force industries to replace auto engines in order to decrease gas fumes until 2012. Industries and governments react and qualify these measures as uneconomic. European authorities do not limit their actions only to these measures, but are determined to establish a penal code for those who are committing crimes against the environment".

II. The second EU story is about deepening of the EU political integration and a joint Greek-German parliamentary event in Athens for the European Convention, after its rejection by France and Netherlands. The story was not mentioned in opening titles and was presented in fifteenth, which means that journalists did not consider it as an issue of great importance.

III. The first Nation-State story of "NET" concerning child pornography and the criminals arrested in Austria. The story was not mentioned in the opening titles and is presented in the thirteenth place, which means that it's estimated as a fair to low significance story.

Anchorwoman: "Authorities estimate that more than 2.000 people from 77 countries are involved in trafficking of hardcore child pornography material through the internet. Vienna informed the administration in countries that were involved and arrests are expected".

2. In February 27th 2007, the private channel "Antenna" broadcast 1 EU story and 5 Member State stories.

I. The EU story was economic telling us about a meeting of Almunia and Alogoskoufis, Greek minister of economy and finance. There were no opening titles and the story was presented fourth (4).

Anchorman: "It seems that through all this noise about (higher) education, the government is trying to carry out secretly plans about many and very serious issues which will determine the future of our lives. It seems that the pensions and the social security issue are going the same way".

Reporter: "The issue will open after elections as it emerges in the meeting between Alogoskoufis and Almounia...".

After that, statements of Almunia and Greek officials on the issue were presented, which verify the comments of the two journalists mentioned above.

II. The first Member State story of Antenna is social, it's about a medium in Italy who claims that he can communicate with dead people. The story is presented ninth and thus has a fair significance.

Anchorman: *“One of thousands charlatans who pretend they are magicians in Italy, manipulating the naivety of those who believe in the possibility to communicate with dead people”*. After that follows a video from Italian TV channel and the Greek reporter conclude that *“He is one of 22.000 people who pretend they are magicians and exploit the naivety of the older women”*.

Anchorman: *“Well, such things do not happen only in Greece”*.

- III. The second story is about a teacher, also in Italy, who cut off a pupil's tongue and the Greek journalists treat the event as if it had happened in Greece. They tell us what the Italian police should do, what parents should expect, etc.

What we can conclude from these six stories from the 2006–2007 period is that:

- a. In Greek TV news bulletins during 2006–2007, especially in state-owned stations, there are more news stories about the EU and Europe in general than in 2004.
- b. Although EU stories usually are presented among the most important stories, they are equal or inferior in quantity compared with news about other European States' stories, especially in private TV channels.
- c. The more significant EU news stories are the political and social ones and they are presented among the first news stories. Beyond this, the notion of EU is the same as the notion of Europe and vice-versa. The EU–Greece relations seem to come under a “federalist” pattern.
- d. News stories about Member States or other European countries are often social and cultural and they are being presented in a moderately low-profile order in news bulletins. Often journalists seek cultural similarities between other countries and Greece. The Greece–other country relations do not come under a common state auspice.

Conclusion

We consider that these findings confirm most of our hypotheses with regard to the image of Europe in Greek TV news, except the hypothesis about economic issues. Al-

though public opinion research in Greece indicates that the EU is conceptualized as an institutional frame which favours economic development and modernization, such views are not the least confirmed by the number of TV news stories concerning this issue. In our opinion it is obvious that cultural issues are absent from EU news while their presence is more extent regarding the “old world”, the world before contemporary globalization.

Europe is not connected to a special cultural agenda, and the economic European agenda is limited. It seems that economy and culture still constitute for TV news a matter of rather national interest than of Pan-European or EU interest. Probably this fact reflects on one hand the European political reality of a large enough social state but on the other hand the strong relation between economy and culture in the postmodern market conditions of commodity-symbol differentiation in Nation-States as well as in the EU (Lash & Urry, 1994).

On the other side, the EU has become a kind of neighbourhood for Greece but side by side with the “old world” of Nation-States, the Balkan neighbourhood and especially the USA, or other States on the epicentre of world politics and international relations. If someone could transfer these findings in current political terms, one could say that, on the TV news level at least, Greece is placed between the “old” and the “new” world. It seems that on some issues Greek news represent the EU as a “co-federation”, on others as “federation” and on very few issues the EU is understood as a kind of “State”.

This picture makes us presume that Greece in its TV news understands EU as a place of living while as a Nation-State it becomes a place of loving and nostalgia (Tsoukalas, 1996b). Or, in Tönnies’ words, in the eyes of TV journalists the EU becomes the wider ‘Gesellschaft’ of nowadays while the Nation becomes a kind of contemporary ‘Gemeinschaft’. This phenomenon is not only a particular Greek phenomenon, but perhaps the contemporary European reality.

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