The Relationship between Science, Ideology and Politics in Modern Greece: the case of the scientific discourse during the Kosovo “war”

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The study deals with the role and the influence of intellectuals in public opinion during the Kosovo conflict. More specifically, it focuses on the political, social and ideological implication of the scientific discourse of Greek intellectuals during the above period, not only in the construction of a social consensus on national issues related to national stereotypes, but also in the external policy.

This study refers to the procedures through which the Greek scientists intellectuals as political and social subjects influenced specifically the public sphere in Greece during the Kosovo conflict. The examined period includes the 78 days of bombardment and is extended from 22\textsuperscript{nd} of March 1999 up to end of June 1999. The scientific discourse of Greek intellectuals is analysed and interpreted through a selective corpus of articles, texts and publications in press during the above period.

This effort doesn’t concern the study of the “real” question -in material terms- that results from the NATO “intervention” in ex-Yugoslavia or in a more general frame from the complex situation in the Balkans, and therefore it won’t implicate an analysis on the level of international relations or political science in the strict sense. On the contrary, it will be focused on the examination, analysis and deconstruction of the different discourses that were articulated round this question.

The research aims to explore the ideological aspect of the scientific discourse in question related to the construction of a national identity and a social consensus on national matters, offering often rational alibis to nationalist manifestations. Furthermore, the analysis is focused on the mechanism through which the intellectuals, taking advantage of their social status and image as
scientists, who work for official institutions such as universities, centres of research, etc, comment on national matters having a privileged relation with the mass media and a significant influence on public opinion. Their discourse as political subjects either in the form of rational arguments or in a more ideological form, enjoys a wide importance in the social and political system and the public sphere.

The choice of examining the scientific discourse concerning national topics, especially through the analysis of texts referring to Kosovo crisis, arose from three reasons. Firstly, the period in question is characterized by particular interest, because of the qualitative particularity of NATO “military intervention” in former Yugoslavia, which was characterized and was nominated as a “humanitarian intervention” on behalf of NATO, imposing thus substantially a “new military humanism”. Secondly, this intervention raised various and particularly intense reactions of an important part of the Greek population and generally the Greek political environment for two reasons. On the one hand, there was the threat that war (and especially ethnic war) pose to neighbouring countries. On the other hand, there was a certain polarisation of Greek public opinion against the “military intervention” of NATO and a “sympathy” in favour of the Serbs, for historical, cultural and geopolitical reasons, mythological constructions and ideological stereotypes as the historical relationship with the orthodox Serbs and a nominally “anti-imperialist” ideological construction (“ideologeme”) of profoundly nationalist orientations. We should also notice the particular interest of the discourse certain intellectuals (not only scientists), so much in Greece as in other western countries, who through rational arguments and alibis, not only influenced and formed public opinion (with the “help” of the media), in favour or against NATO’s intervention, but furthermore, they offered to NATO the theoretical and ideological necessary support to justify and legitimate its actions or on the contrary demolished every arguments in favour of the “humanitarian character” of the above intervention. The analysis, is
expected to examine questions concerning the institutional dimension of intellectuals and the ideological conditions of production of the academic discourse, the hegemony of their discourse in academic, social and political level and the opposition between sovereignty and justice (Mill, Kant). Thirdly, this case study constitutes fertile ground for the examination of certain issues such as identity and nationalism, because of the above-mentioned role of the intellectuals, and of the disguised and inconspicuous ideological even nationalistic elements that often structure their discourse.

The analysis aims to explore the relationship between science (social science) and ideology as different aspects of discourse. The analysis is based on theoretical formulations regarding ideology, truth, power, politics and intellectuals. Therefore, different topics that extend over wider theoretical scientific areas come into question. It won't be possible to choose and apply one and pure theoretical model "X", but the effort will be concentrate on the selection, synthesis and adjustment of different formulations and conceptual schemas. This alternative is expected to bend on a more complete approach.

More specifically, there are three main hypotheses, which constitute the principal axes of the analysis:

1. **Scientific discourse and ideology**

*Scientific discourse* is considered as a political discourse. The emphasis is given to the study and articulation of power relations inside this discourse, in combination with the ideological conditions of production and hegemony at the scientific, social and political level.

The specific scientific discourse, since it is enunciated from a political subject, is constituted also as an ideological discourse. Because this political subject has been constituted and functions as such, in other words is acting and interacting
politically in a particular social formation, in a political, economic system and in a specific environment of cultural values, it also produces ideology. It produces knowledge in a specific political and socio-economic system, which means that it both implicates and creates power relations. But this fact doesn’t affect negatively its scientificity and doesn’t transform it into something non-scientific, non-real or untruthful. So, beyond its strictly scientific role, it exercises also another wider role in relation with the social reality, an ideological role. In this context, the research will concentrate on the power relations within discourse, in its internal structure, as well as on the ideological conditions of production and hegemony on a scientific, social and political level.

Paraphrasing Louis Althusser’s position on ideology, and considering that politics is structured through power relations and confrontation, which means a way of acting over the others’ actions according to Foucault’s analysis, the concept of ideology is contemplated as the political aspect of discourse. This means that it is interpreted as the exercise of power by means of discourse, and as political conflict and social confrontation within discourse. The concept of subject constitution through ideology, the examination of the ideological enclosure as a narrative process and the analysis of power relations within discourse as a narration make up some of the analytical and theoretical tools of this study.

Furthermore, the concepts of knowledge, truth, power and their correlation define the background of the analysis. The concept of power isn’t approached only negatively as repression but also positively as something productive. Power relations extend beyond the government area all over society. So, we approach knowledge as something that produces power and constitutes a “regime of truth”. This “regime of truth” is not only a discursive order but is more

2 Doxiadis Kyrkos, “Foucault, ideology, communication”, in Hellenic review of Social Research, issue 71, 1988, pp. 18-43.
extensively an institutional, political and economical regime related to its equivalent political, economical, ideological mechanisms such as the university, the army, the mass media... This indicates the existence of a whole system of rules, which separate and determine the following dipoles: truth - false, scientific - non-scientific. According to Foucaults’ analysis there is always a battle for the truth or about truth. This battle aims to ensure the status and role of truth on political and social becoming³.

2. Intellectuals and power

The intellectuals' role and function, as a particular social category, enjoying a privileged position through power relations over a wide social configuration, will substantially constitute a central topic of this inquiring effort. In fact, because of the above particularity, their ideological function influences not only what we called "public opinion" but often the entire political system. Their privileged position inside/within the system of power social relations results substantially from their symbolic identity as political subjects.

In the case of Greece, the particular role of intellectuals as subjects of scientific discourse is closely related to their ambiguous identity: they are considered as "specific intellectuals" in their scientific area and as "universal intellectuals" in the political and social system. This analysis focuses on this particularity of the identity and the role of the scientist intellectuals as "specific" and "universal" intellectuals according to Foucaults' approach⁴ in relation with Gramsci's theory and the dipole organic-traditional intellectuals. Their ideological function and institutional form, as well as their privileged relation with the mass media appear as an essential aspect of this approach. So that, on the one hand specific intellectuals are also regarded as organic

⁴ Ibid. pp. 109-133.
intellectuals, having some common characteristics with this second category and a specialisation directly related to a particular social formation and very often, liable to a governmental, political, ideological mechanism such as university even if the latter gains a particular autonomy. On the other hand, universal intellectuals are closely related to traditional intellectuals as they are characterised by a continuous presence and enjoy universal approval. The ideological dimension of their discourse as political subjects tends to be underestimated, but because of their status and authority as "specific intellectuals"-scientists, their discourse is widely accepted, having a significant influence on public opinion.

In this context, the discourse of "specific" and also "universal" intellectuals concerning national questions, is deeply ideological, is articulated through undeniably ideological elements and involves certain ideological components. In others words, every time that, through the scientific discourse, the subjects in question express a personal opinion at the same time they proceed in an evaluative judgement. Comparing this particular discourse (scientific discourse) with a purely ideological discourse, we certainly distinguish qualitative but also quantitative differences between them. But, even if we classified it in a qualitatively different category of ideological discourse, this would not reverse its ideological dimension, since it constitutes a discourse of political subjects who function in a particular social configuration. More specifically, regarding the Greek case we could, completely empirically and more instinctually (for the moment), classify the discourses of the Greek intellectuals scientists in six basic categories, without disregarding the proportional qualitative fluctuations in their interior.

1. Condemnation both of the NATO military intervention and of the "Albanian genocide", but finally in favour of the “Right of the most Powerful”.

2. Condemnation of the NATO military intervention, which is considered worse than the “Albanian genocide”.

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3. Condemnation of the NATO military intervention and justification of Milosevic.

4. Against both of the NATO military intervention and of Milosevic’s policy.

5. Theoretically in favour of the NATO military intervention, as a “humanitarian intervention”, but expressing at the same time an intense criticism and disapproval concerning the way of its realisation, and also against the “Albanian genocide”.

6. In favour the NATO military intervention, as the inevitable way of avoiding the unacceptable “Albanian genocide”.

3. Nationalism and social consensus

Another aspect of this analysis deals with nationalism and the articulation of the scientific discourse with ideological, nationalist elements in combination with the double dimension of Greek identity. The intellectuals play an important role in the formation of a social consensus. In fact, because of their ambiguous identity, they offer very often a rational alibi to nationalist manifestations. The double dimension of the Greek (neo-Hellenic) identity: Hellenism, admiration of antiquity and orthodoxy, confront the occidental model and conclude in the well-known contradiction: we vs. others. Regarding globalisation, the Greek intellectual community in all its components (academics, journalists, politicians, prominent scientists, members of the clergy, artists), has largely consolidated itself around a nominally “anti-imperialist” ideologeme of profoundly nationalist orientations - and this holds true regarding the whole of the political spectrum, from the extreme left to the extreme right. The sympathy, mainly in favour of Serbs, considering them like “brothers”, for historical, cultural, religious, political and geo-political reasons in relation with anti-imperialistic and especially anti-American sentiments, inspired by the “common belief” on NATO's

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3 The common Orthodox confession between Greeks and Serbs in relation with an also common “dislike” against Albanians, for different economic, political, social and religious reasons in both States, leads crucially to the particular position of the Greek media with reference to the Kosovo crisis.
implication in Greek national affairs, mainly during the Civil War in the period 1946-1949, the establishment of the seven-year military dictatorship in Greece in 1967, as well as the invasion of Cyprus by the Turkish army in 1974, influenced decisively the discourse of the Greek media, despite the variations and the differences concerning not only the rhetoric but also the ideological level of enunciation.

It was not the first time that the Greek intellectuals and media, faced with "national crisis" and "ethnic confrontations", contributed to the creation (with some exceptions, of course) of such a nationalistic and ethnocentric climate. In 1991, with the "Macedonian affair", concerning the parentage and the use of the name "Macedonia", which was supposed to be an ancient and historical heritage of Northern Greece, and in the mid 1990s with the "crisis of Imia", when Greece and Turkey claimed the ownership of a tiny uninhabited island in the Eastern Aegean Sea. Before the Kosovo crisis, there were the ethnic and nationalist wars in Bosnia and Croatia that awoke "national" and “anti-Occidental” sentiments and increased their impact for the balance on the Balkan Peninsula.

The "globalisation vs. nation-state dilemma" therefore in the case of Greece has acquired dramatic political proportions, and presents a strong challenge to any person who believes that things could be seen otherwise. Greece has the particularity of being both in the European Union and one of the Balkan countries; so its status in political and ideological terms can at best serve as a linkage between the two, and at worst may become a hindrance to the integration of the latter within the former.

In this context, there will arise various theoretical issues concerning sovereignty and the right to self-determination. In the Kosovo case, the question to answer is whether and to what extent, the Kosovo problem and the crisis in former Yugoslavia, is one of internal administrative status, in which case
sovereign rights of Serbia over the territory of Kosovo should take precedence over the rights of the majority population of the region. Or, whether it concerns a clear case of self-determination, involving the secession of the local population (mainly ethnic Albanian population), in which case the international state borders of probably three or four, states might be affected. Therefore, the "new" humanitarian role of NATO as "defender" of the Human Rights and the astonishing, for the international community, circumvention of the Security Council and the violation of the Chart of the United Nations, bring to the fore a fundamental contradiction of Liberalism. On the one hand, a sovereign nation and people's right to self-determination, and on the other hand, the universality of the human rights regardless of national borders. This contradiction leads to thematics concerning the Law/Ethic, the rights of minorities, the change of the borders, the right of intervention for humanitarian reasons in the interior of a state, the role of NATO and the European Union in similar crises, etc. Furthermore, it brings up to the discussion of the question of the maintenance, of the Nation-State in its existing form.

The central issue therefore is how these questions and problems are represented and diffused in Greek society through the role of the intellectuals and what are the implications of this process.

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METHODS

In this study the methodological approach is focused on discourse analysis of the above publications and is closely related to Foucault’s analysis (which appears in the *Archaeology of Knowledge*). There will be four axes of analysis⁷:

1. **Axis of objects**

This axis corresponds to the objective elements of reality, the elements, which exist independently of the discourse itself. In this case study and depending on the text that is examined each time, such elements can be considered as the geographic borders of Greece, the historical period to which each scientific discourse, refers the Greek language, the actual developments of the NATO intervention in Kosovo, certain socio-economic data, etc.

2. **Axis of modes of enunciation**

In this axis there are two levels of analysis: The first level is related to the external conditions of enunciation (e.g. the conditions of production of the particular discourse). In the research in question, elements such as the scientific status of the writer, the selected means of communication such as radio and TV programme or a particular newspaper, the political backup of this newspaper, the fact that the writer has a regular co-operation or not with the selected press, or the articles of opinion as particular category, constitute certain external conditions which offer to the discourse that is examined an additional specification.

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⁷ I refer to the analysis of Kyrkos Doxiadis in Syllabus of Postgraduate Course in Political Science and Sociology, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Athens, Academic Year 2001-2002, Course description: *Discourse Analysis*, pp. 33-37.
The second level is related to the internal conditions of enunciation. More specifically, it refers to the position that the subject of enunciation holds in the internal structure of discourse, in other words, within discourse, mainly in relation with its narrative function. The discourse is faced as structured and articulated conceptual system. The three modes of narration according to Tzvetan Todorov, the omniscient, the objective and the subjective mode of narration, depending on the relation that exists between the narrator and the characters in a particular text, constitute some of the elements of analysis on this first level. Seeing that the scientific discourse does not consist a fiction, it would be inadmissible and very risky or problematic to use and to apply thoughtless by the above typology. In the analysis in question the subjectivity of the writer (we could consider him as the narrator), the fact that he also constitutes a subject of science, the mode of articulation of his discourse, for example if he writes on the 1st or the 3rd person singular or plural form, they are elements that should be analysed on this axis. In general terms and considering all the hesitations mentioned above, at a first level of analysis one can distinguish an objective dimension of the subject-writer (e.g. scientific concepts or some historical information), we could also perceive certain elements equivalent with the omniscient type of narration.

3. Axis of concepts

This axis consists in the relation of the particular discourse with other discourses (e.g. technical and scientific terms, rhetorical schemas...). It refers to scientific concepts and theoretical propositions situated in a discourse, such as the formulation of "historical continuity" in historiography, “purity of the Greek language” in linguistics, “geopolitical strategy” in international relations or “self-determination” in political science. The concepts of “nation”, “history”, “international legitimacy”, “legitimate order”, “Lechtsstaat”, “International

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Law”, “clash of civilisations” and “religion/orthodoxy”, constitute some of the elements analysed through this axis.

4. **Axis of thematics**

This axis refers to a distinction of the different notional thematics of the particular discourse. It examines the relation of the discourse in question with power and it's closely related to ideology, since it is dealing with issues that are at stake within the discourse, with questions of controversy and conflict. Among others, the role of Greece in Balkans, Greek identity, the unifying role of the church, the historical and cultural links with the Serbs, the ideologeme of anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism, the idea that Turkey is a long standing enemy, are some of the thematics arising from the particular analysis.
This research will be conducted through a selective corpus of different articles and texts published in the press and magazines during the war, and furthermore some publications and books concerning the above period. More precisely, it will focus on the most important and widely distributed daily, weekly and Sunday newspapers, which cover a more or less wide political spectrum. These newspapers enjoy a great influence on public opinion by condensing comments of the most important weekly events and more detailed and analytical publications as articles of opinion. Moreover, this particular type of press contains a significant number of articles written by intellectuals, who comment on the subjects in question. An examination of the Greek media coverage (especially the press) and interpretation of the events during the Kosovo crisis, despite any differences concerning the political or other factors (e.g. variations in the phrasing and in emphasis), demonstrates the particularity of the Greek position, which differed from the vast majority of NATO and other western countries. More specifically, it shows a more or less unanimous but not uniform opposition to the bombing campaign, resulting from a dislike towards NATO, a manifest mistrust towards the Kosovo-Abanian factor and a sympathy for Serbs, that originated from different historical, cultural and geopolitical reasons. According to a limited and a first level analysis of the scientific discourse of the Greek intellectuals, the first impression doesn’t reflect totally the above image. There are some similarities with the mass media position around the Kosovo crisis (like the anti-NATO sentiments), but also a lot of qualitative differences, concerning not only the style but also the substance of their

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9 According to Stefanos Pesmazoglou, during the NATO’s bombardment western public opinion, influenced from the “image of the refugees” that was shown by the western media, identified with NATO humanitarian intervention, and regarded the human, environmental and material losses as “collateral damages”, Pezmantzoglou Stefanos, Kosovo: the Double Insult. Surveillance and Punishment, Athens, Pataki, 2001, pp.12-13.

discourse. Regarding the sources (press and magazines) the following are indicatively mentioned:

**Press:**
1. Eleftherotypia
2. Ethnos
3. Kathimerini
4. Rizospastis
5. Ta Nea
6. To Vima
7. Kathimerini tis Kyriakis (Sunday Kathimerini)
8. Kyriakatiki Avgi (Sunday Avgi)
9. Kyriakatiki Eleftherotypia, (Sunday Eleftherotypia)
10. To Kyriakatiko Vima (Sunday Vima), etc.

**Magazines:**
1. Sychrona Themata
2. Nea Estia
3. Nemecis
4. Politis
5. Anti, etc.

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