Mediated Politics and Ideology: Towards a New Synthesis
A case study from the Greek General Election of May 2012

Angelos Kissas,
MSc in Politics and Communication

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ABSTRACT

The ubiquity of media in late modern societies has led a strand in the field of political communication to the radical claim that the political process no longer exists as we knew it, but it has been dominated by the spectacular theatricality of the media politainment. In this project I am particularly interested in the alleged extinction of ideology because of the rapid process of mediatization of politics, an assumption which I shall call the 'fallacy of de-ideologization of politics in the age of mediatization'.

Other than the aforementioned media-centric and evolutionist understanding of mediated politics, the fallacy of de-ideologization is also fueled by an essentialist and reductionist understanding of ideology, which has led some intellectual circles to completely repudiate the concept. In this paper, I shall try to show that we can get rid of this fallacy by espousing a revisionist perspective which stresses the dialectical character of mediation and the dynamic-productive character of ideology. I shall also try to argue that the ideological aspect of mediated symbolic constructs of politics is neither a priori impossible nor de facto possible. Only a systematic and consistent analysis (Critical Discourse Analysis) of mediated forms of political communication can shed light on the potentiality of ideology.

Empirically, this project will be framed by a case study, the Greek general election of May 2012, and will focus on one genre of mediated politics, the televised political advertising (spots of the two major parties). The analysis will show that mediated symbolic constructs not only they are not inherently de-ideologizing but also they can constitute platforms for the configuration of ideology, since their aesthetic, personalistic, simplistic and sensational qualities do not distort the political content but try to (unless they have already done) appropriate it.

INTRODUCTION: The fallacy of de-ideologization of politics in the age of mediatization

> "I don't think the American people want politics and the presidency to become the plaything of the high-pressure man, of ghostwriters, of the public relations men [...]. This isn't a soap opera, this isn't Ivory Soap versus Palmolive"
> (Adlai Stevenson, Democratic candidate for the presidency in 1952, quoted by Diamond and Bates, 1992, p.58)

The above quote sheds light on a widespread concern, in the Anglo-American political community of the mid-twentieth century, about the potential impact of media marketing practices on parties' ideological principles. In the twenty first century the initial qualms have been displaced by the massive and systematic use of several forms of mediated political communication, such as political advertising, televised interviews and debates, etc. The question of "what happened to ideology" was set aside by the relevant literature which preferred to focus mainly on the efficacy in conveying the political message (Valentino et. al., 2002, Lowry and Naser, 2010) and the effects on voters (Shaw, 1999, Franz and Ridout, 2010, Kaid et.al, 2011).

However, as I wish to argue, an indirect answer to the above question can be elicited by the so-called 'theory of mediatization' (Hjarvard, 2008). Mediatization of politics is argued to be the particular historical form mediation takes in the highly modernized societies, in which political parties have entered the phase of destabilization (decline of partisanship, legitimacy crisis, etc.) and the mass media have been considerably empowered because of the rapid technological progress (proliferation of media outlets) and the institutional reforms of deregulation and privatization (Asp and Esaiasson, 1996, Strömbäck and Kaid 2008). As a consequence of these transformations, political institutions in order to attract voters have to rely on media techniques, losing their autonomy and the control over political communication. The political logic (e.g. ideology, beliefs, arguments) is colonized by the media logic (sound bites, dramatic and spectacular appeals, etc.) (Mazzoleni, 1987, Meyer, 2002).

Other than the mediatitization thesis, ideology has been also relentlessly attacked in the last decades by a post-modern rhetoric which promulgates the 'end of ideology'. In political theory, the end of ideology is officially marked in the post-war period in which politics is argued to resemble a mere managerial process and as a result the 'grand narratives' of the past such as liberalism, socialism, etc. are rendered meaningless (see Jost, 2006). In post-

modern cultural studies, on the other hand, ideology being identified with the Marxist legacy of false consciousness (or mass deception in Adorno's and Horkheimer's terms), is argued not to have place in the fragmented, heterogeneous and hybridized societies of the twenty first century (see Kellner,1995 Curran, 2002,). However, in both cases instead of the end of ideology I see the failure of post-modernism to provide an understanding of ideology beyond monolithic conceptualizations. Consequently, as I wish to argue, the post-modern paradigm along with the mediatization debate gives rise to what I shall call the 'fallacy of de-ideologization of politics in the age of mediatization'.

These accounts are fallacious because they conceive mediated politics as a media-centric (colonization of politics by the media logic) and evolutionist (in advanced modernized societies) process and fail to provide an understanding of ideology beyond the reductionism of the Marxian legacy (false consciousness) and the essentialism of classical political theory (grand narratives). In this paper, I shall try to challenge this fallacy by articulating a revisionist perspective of the two core concepts of this study. Particularly, I understand mediated politics as the socially constitutive and conditioned symbolic act of media and ideology as a process of making political meaning imbricated with power. This reconceptualization will also allow us to examine how ideology can be potentially configured by mediated symbolic constructs of politics.

This last task is, however, only analytically attainable and for this reason I shall try to develop an analytical framework (drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis) through which the ideological aspect of mediated symbolic constructs of politics can be systematically and consistently explored. This framework will be applied to one genre of mediated politics, the televised political advertising, contextualized in a specific case study: the Greek general election of May 2012. Let me start, however, by theoretically revisiting the two core concepts of this study: mediated politics and ideology.

SECTION I: THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

This first section of the project consists in three chapters, two of which explicate the core theoretical concepts underpin this work and the last one presents the analytical framework according to which the empirical analysis included in Section II has been conducted.

Chapter 1: Mediated Politics

By criticizing the mediatization thesis I do not try to dispute the fact that political institutions face tremendous destabilizing forces in the fluid and risky times of late modernity or that the media constitute a focal mechanism of political socialization (Dahlgren and Gurevitch, 2005). Neither do I try to deny that contemporary politics is dominated by sound-bites and image-bites (Castells, 2009), conversationalized rhetoric (Fairclough, 1995), spectacular dramatic appeals as well as stylistic and aesthetic differences of telegenic personalities (Edelman, 1988). These developments and practices are self-evident in late modern societies. What is not so self-evident, however, is if they constitute de-politicizing effects of media.

As Jamieson succinctly puts it: "those who pine for presidential campaigns as they were in Jefferson, Jackson, or Lincoln's times and who see our nation's political decline and fall mirrored in the rise of political spot advertising remember a halcyon past that never was. [...] Their messages were briefer [...] than those of any sixty second spot ad. The air then was filled not with substantive disputes but with simplification, sloganeering and slander" (1986, in McNair, 2007, p.90). Consequently, what is presented as the malicious impact of media logic upon politics is an ever-recurring situation which in the pre-media era was considered political but in the media-era de-politicizing (for more about this aphoristic thesis see Postman, 1986, Habermas, 1989).

As I wish to argue in order to understand the 'media-politics complex', to borrow Swanson's (1997) phrase, we need subtler and more nuanced perspectives, without this implying less critical or more abstract. Instead of a media-centric evolutionism which mourns the unilateral surrender of politics to the media logic, in the advanced modernized societies, we have to recognize a pendulum of continuities and discontinuities in the co-shaping of politics with the media. In order to further develop this approach which owes much to the seminal work of Roger Silverstone (adapted in the field of political communication) I shall begin with an understanding of mediation qua adaptation of political parties to the changing political

and media logic, as it is explicated in the work of Negrine. Marking the limits of this perspective, I will abandon the 'media-political logic' dualism and in its place I will provide an understanding of mediation as the symbolic act of media which is situated in specific institutional settings, drawing on the works of Bourdieu, Couldry, Davis and Thompson.

Negrine, in his work on the transformation of political communication (2008) argues that instead of ruptures and 'epochal shifts' what underlies the course of political communication in the 20th century is a process of *constant adaptation* of political actors to the changes within political and media systems. However, adaptation for Negrine is not a passive, defensive stance but an active, strategic response of political actors to the challenges raised by the surrounding environment. For example, political developments, such as the decline of the traditional base of supporters and funding and technological-institutional developments of media, such as the emergence of television and mass communication, led parties to reposition themselves in the political arena transitioning from the mass-membership to the catch-all style party.

Negrine's analysis arguably goes beyond the unidimensionality of mediatization, but as I wish to argue, it is still anchored in some problematic notions which inevitably limit its explanatory critique and sometimes threaten even its core principles. Although he invites us to think of the dynamic process of adaptation at the level of political parties, as far as the media level is concerned, Negrine confines himself in arguing that ''the force of 'media logic' must therefore be taken into account while considering the transformation of political communication'' (2008, p.158), providing as a supportive evidence Meyer's account of colonization.

I would not say that Negrine espouses this perspective, however, his persistence with the Mazzolenian dualism of 'media-political logic' leads him to this paradox. As it was made clear above, this dualistic way of thinking is fundamentally flawed, since what is considered to be 'media logic', actually preexisted the emergence of the technological and institutional infrastructure of mass media. I do not underestimate the fact that the media have gained their own institutional and legal context, developing professional norms, practices and codes of deontology (Alexander, 1981). However, as I wish to argue, these media practices cannot be conceived as externalities which determine or colonize the political practices, since the former constitute the product of the ongoing coevolution with the latter in the course of everyday activity.

As Silverstone has put it, media other than the primary agents "in the general circulation of symbols in the social life" (2002, p.762) are "technologies whose symbolic and functional characteristics claim a place in both institutional and individual practice" (2005, p.200-201).

For grasping the institutional practice of politics I will borrow the term 'field' from Bourdieu's sociology. 'Fields' are the social spaces within which individuals act and interact in a structured way, drawing on the recourses or capitals that are accumulated within these spaces (Thompson, 1991). The form of action which is based on the possession of cultural (knowledge, skills, etc.) and symbolic capital (prestige, reputation, honour) of political fields, is what Bourdieu calls symbolic power or what I prefer to call *symbolic act,* avoiding a formalist distinction between different forms of power. Symbolic act is "the power of constitution, the power to make groups (groups that are already established and have to be consecrated or groups that have yet to be constituted [...]), to impose upon other minds a vision, old or new, of social divisions [...]" (Bourdieu, 1989, p.23).

Couldry (2003), as several other media scholars, has used the concept of symbolic power in order to describe the socially constitutive power of media. Couldry, however, refuses the conceptualization of media as a distinctive social field – e.g. Bourdieu's 'journalistic field' – since he argues that this approach cannot grasp the ubiquity of media in late modern societies. Instead, he suggests we think of media as being above all the other social fields, as the hubs in which symbolic power is concentrated. Arguably, for Couldry, other than the field-based capitals there is a 'media meta-capital' on which all social spaces in late modernity are dependent.

However, media maybe cannot be understood as a field of their own but they are constitutive part of the other social fields, not as external unconditioned agents (Couldry's "meta-capital" (2003) or Latour's "panorama" (see Hepp, 2011)) but as internal conditioned components. This is what Davis has tried to show in his work on the mediation of power by inviting us to turn our attention from the macroscopic and abstract study of symbolic act in 'the whole way of life' to the microscopic and concrete understanding of its constitutive role in the 'elite sites of power'(2007).

Within 'sites of power', (which conceptually constitute an adaptation of Bourdieu's 'fields'), inhabitants, such as political actors, interact with media developing values, practices and discourses which subsequently have "material impacts on society" (2007, p.77). Arguably, Davis's perspective encourages my suggestion to look at symbolic act in relation to specific institutional contexts, something that Thompson puts more general by stressing the socially conditioned character of symbolic act (1995).

However, as I wish to argue, Davis concept of 'sites of power' does not grasp the destabilizing flux many institutional contexts, such as political parties, face in late modernity (see Dahlgren and Gurevitch, 2005). Problematically, Davis falls into a reductionism similar to Marx's one, by implying that symbolic act is socially consequential because it derives from

contexts whose position in power is taken for granted. In so doing, he ignores the more active role of symbolic act in claiming and reclaiming existing or constituting new positions in the matrix of power, which has been stated so eloquently by Bourdieu (see above). Consequently, symbolic act is both conditioned by and constitutive of the institutional context within which it develops.

So far I have not examined how media exercise this socially constitutive and conditioned symbolic act. Thompson provides such an understanding in his definition of symbolic act as the "capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of *the production and transmission of symbolic forms*" (Thompson, 1995, p. 17, emphasis added). In our case, the symbolic act of media upon politics could be defined as the production and transmission of what I call here *technologies of politics*. Technologies of politics (with the term 'technologies' to be borrowed by the Foucauldian concepts 'technologies of self' and 'technologies of power', see Martin et.al., 1988) are discursive practices or discursive formations (see Fairclough, 2003), within which the political is construed (constitution of social groups and identities, articulation of collective goals, etc.) in a given historical period.

By saying that media produce technologies of politics we should not imply that media construct the political in their own way. In fact, the media offer t*echnologies of communication* (such as television, radio, etc.) which are necessary for the fixation, storage, reproduction and transmission of *technologies of politics*. The latter are always produced within political fields, by the interaction between the inhabitants of these fields (political actors) and the accumulated cultural and symbolic capital. But in order technologies of politics to be successfully fixated in and transmitted by technologies of communication, some "rules and procedures for encoding and decoding information or symbolic content" (Thompson, 1995, p.17) have to be followed by the relevant actors.

Arguably, Negrine's adaptation thesis would be useful to this point, as we can argue that political actors have to be adapted to conventions that are necessary for the politically functional use of the medium. However, by referring to these conventions I do not imply an autonomous and intrinsic logic of the medium but a product of the coexistence and coevolution of the medium with political actors within specific fields of which both are integral parts. (see Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006 for 'recombinant' or 'social shaping' approaches of media technologies). Consequently, when we refer to the symbolic act of media upon politics or alternatively to the mediation of politics we should bear in mind that this is an abridgement of the dialectic or co-shaping between technologies of politics and

technologies of communication, which is simultaneously constitutive of and conditioned by the institutional context (political field) within which it takes place.

However, the reconceptualization of mediated politics is a necessary but not sufficient presupposition for challenging the fallacy of de-ideologization. Technologies of communication may allow the formation of technologies of politics, without these to be colonized by the media logic, but if ideology is by definition incompatible with them in late modernity, as the post-modern paradigm in political and cultural theory supports, there is no reason to study it at all (this seems to be Corner's (2001) conclusion). Consequently, my next step is to try to articulate a revised concept of ideology so as to be congruent with the complexity and fluidity of late modern societies.

Chapter 2: The Concept of Ideology

In this chapter, I shall propose a revised concept for the second pillar of this study: ideology. Arguably, the logic of grand narratives and false consciousness which has led post-modernism to the repudiation of ideology has no place in this concept. My approach is informed by both critical socio-cultural (Stuart Hall and John B. Thompson) and political (Michael Freeden) insights which stress two fundamental dimensions that, in my account, form the backbone of the (revised) concept of ideology. The first one refers to the conceptualization of ideology as a *dynamic process of meaning-making or construing the social reality* and the second stresses the *relation between meaning making and power* which also lies at the heart of ideology.

Central to the understanding of ideology as a meaning making process is the concept of representations (Hall) or symbolic forms (Thompson). In the Marxian schools of thought representations are conceived as distortions of the social reality and therefore ideology is defined as false consciousness. Hall (2006) takes a critical position against this view arguing that representations *are the only means* we have at our disposal to make sense of the existing, out there reality. They do not distort but construct how reality exists for each of us and consequently how we position ourselves within it. However, at the same time, since reality exists independently from its representations (the latter by no means construct a social subject ex nihilo), the way it is structured crucially influences the production of social representations.

This double articulation of representations to the social is summarized in Hall's definition of ideology, which is partly borrowed by Althusser: Ideology consists in "sets of representations and discourses through which *we lived out* 'in an imaginary way, our relation to our *real conditions* of existence' (2006, p. 148, emphasis added), without this experience to necessarily presuppose misrecognition.

The understanding of Ideology as a not necessarily erroneous meaning-making process, constitutive of but also conditioned by social reality, is also apparent in Thompson's work. As he puts it: "symbolic forms are continuously and creatively implicated in the constitution of social relations as such" (1990, p.58), but the same time "symbolic forms are always embedded in socially structured contexts and processes" (1990, p.59).

Freeden (2006), through the prism of political theory, argues that ideology is not simply a meaning making process but a process of making political meaning, of configuring the political ideas of each historical period. The new dimension Freeden adds offers the necessary criterion to distinguish political ideology from the other forms of cultural production, avoiding in this way a holistic approach according to which any case of meaning making is ideological. Arguably, the two aforementioned perspectives by relating ideology to the production of any kind of representations or symbolic forms carry this risk.

However, Freeden's (2006) conceptualization of the political avoids the structuralism and essentialism which lies at the heart of the understanding ideology as pre-structured and coherent set of grand ideas. In his rather post-structuralist view, discourse in late modernity is inherently multivalent and contestable without, however, this to preclude ideological ferments. Ideology appears as the management of this inconsistency and indeterminacy, the effort to "impose specific meanings onto the indeterminate range of meanings" (Freeden, 2006, p.19).

In this process someone has to recognize, according to Freeden, two factors that have been systematically neglected or misjudged by political science: The first one is the role of emotion "not as a regrettable lapse from the strictures of logic and rational debate, but as [...] passion or intensity that are incorporated into all political language and that serve as major conveyors and enhancers of the messages that political concepts carry (Freeden, 2006, p.20). The second is the role of image and non-verbal sounds to the rapid dissemination of ideas. The political meaning of various spectacular rituals of social life, such as "marches, riots, [...] the architecture of public institutions, [...] the facial expression of immigration officers [...]" (Freeden, 2006, p. 21) has been widely underestimated in the logocentric Western modern societies.

Let me now examine how the 'management of indeterminacy', that Freeden emphasizes, can be discursively attained. Hall, influenced by the Gramscian 'war of positions', understands the discursive practice of making meaning as the struggle of different social accentings in the arena of the politics of signification for gaining reliability and constituting what Foucault calls 'regime of truth' (Hall, 1997, 2006). The success of this task depends on the effective struggle to "disarticulate a signifier from one, preferred or dominant meaning system, and rearticulate it within another, different chain of connotations" (Hall, 2006, p.147).

Thompson has shown that the (mediated) de/re-contextualization of symbols can be seen as a process of 'inventing tradition' which involves a fundamentally ideological function (1995). He has also proposed several strategies of symbolic construction which can be considered re-contextualizing, without, however, recognizing them as such (see chapter 3). Finally, Freeden pinpoints the recontextualization of the traditional ideological families, such as liberalism, conservatism, socialism, etc. These narratives "are taken over by wider social circles not as mere consumers but as opinion formers, programmatic entrepreneurs and originators of new political messages" (Freeden, 2000, p.11).

Consequently, although ideology should not be identified with the monolithically structured set of ideas of the past, it can be seen as a process of recontextualizing – eclectically appropriating in new discursive and social contexts –political symbols of the past which gives rise to new political ideas (meanings). Let me now examine the second dimension of the revised concept of ideology: the relation between meaning making and power.

Hall argues that a social accenting can amount to a regime of truth by eliciting the consent of the other competitive views. His understanding of the 'manufacturing of consent' is informed by the Gramscian concept of hegemony which illustrates the ongoing, active and constantly uncertain domination of the beliefs of some groups over the others (2006). Thompson makes more explicit the relation between meaning making and power by arguing that the former is ideological "*in so far as* it serves, in particular social-historical circumstances, to establish and sustain relations of domination" (1990, p.56), understanding domination as "established relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical […]" (1990, p.59).

Arguably, the emphasis on the dynamic and constitutive role of meaning making (what in the previous chapter was called symbolic act) in establishing hegemony or domination disavows the Marxist reductionism, according to which intellectual power is a by-product of the already established, by those possessing the material means of production, domination. However, the concept of hegemony or symbolically established domination still provides a unilateral understanding of power as to be only negative and concentrated by specific groups and elites.

As Foucault has argued power is also productive in the sense that it can constitute new intersubjective relations, without necessarily to abolish the old ones, allowing the micro-physics of power to operate along with the broader template of generalized subjection (Krips, 1990, Hall, 2001). In Castell's work this productive aspect of power is exemplified by the dimension of the 'network-making' power, the power to construct, programme and switch networks (2009).

Power in the network society "is not located in one particular social sphere or institution, but it is distributed throughout the entire realm of human action. (Castells, 2009, p.15). This does not mean that domination is unachievable in late modern societies but rather that it is hardly sustainable and reproducible; asymmetries are so multi-directional and complex that cannot be predicted in advance and so unstable and fluid that are constantly substituted by new ones (Bauman,2000). Consequently, distributed, or as I prefer to say, diffused power does not mean less power, as pluralist would argue (see Lukes, 2005) but many different and usually countervailing forms of exercising power. Symbolic acts which seek to challenge a specific set of structured social relations may, consciously or not, encourage the empowerment or establishment of another (Terdiman, 1985) and as a result, they should not be subsumed into the misleading category of counter-power but they have to be considered as forms of exercising power. From this point of view it makes sense to speak of socialism or communism as ideological currents (they criticize a specific social order but they also envisage the establishment of a new one) (see also Eagleton, 1991).

Consequently, meaning making is inextricably tied with the exercise of power in late modern societies, not as process of consolidating hegemony or establishing and sustaining relations of domination, but as making specific fields key-nodes (maybe by downgrading others) in the networked society (see Castells, 2009).

To sum up, ideology is the *discursive practice* which *recontextualize political symbols producing political ideas* (making political meaning, what in the previous chapter was called technologies of politics) in such a way so as the political fields (in this case political parties) within which this practice is situated to be rendered *key-nodes in* the networked society.

Chapter 3: The Conceptual and Analytical Framework

Conceptual Framework

So far in this project I have tried to provide a revised concept of mediated politics and ideology so that both are relevant to the complexity and fluidity of late modern societies as well as compatible with each other. According to this revisionist account mediated politics can be understood as the dialectical articulation of technologies of politics with technologies of communication (symbolic act) which is situated at and impacts upon specific political fields, political parties in our case (institutional context politics). Ideology, on the other hand, is understood as a technology of politics which re-contextualizes political symbols in such a way so as a specific social field to strengthen its position in the distribution of power.

However, the fact that ideology is not incompatible with mediated politics in late modernity should not lead us from the aphoristic account of post-modernism to the holistic view, represented by a strand in critical theory, that the mediation (of politics) is inherently ideological (see the works of Hall, 1977, Herman and Chomsky, 1988). As it can be inferred by the above overview of the revised concepts, mediated politics is ideological *in so far as* media technologies (technologies of communication) become platforms propitious for the recontextualization of political symbols, which have been decontextualized from the reservoirs of political parties' history, in the current socio-political reality (technology of politics), in a way that aims at influencing the balance of power in favour of parties' institutional action.

Research Questions and data selection

If mediated politics can potentially and not necessarily constitute the laboratory of ideological experimentation in late modernity, there is an urgent need to identify the different practices by which this 'experimentation' is (when) conducted. More particularly, as far as the current project is concerned, I will interrogate mediated symbolic constructs for:

- o the role of technologies of communication to the articulation of technologies of politics (representational techniques and genres),
- o how the recontextualization of political symbols is facilitated by mediated symbolic constructs (semiotic strategies of symbolic construction),
- o the ways the recontextualizing practice impacts upon the social context within which political parties operate (social functions of symbolic act).

In the empirical part of this work, I will try to provide some preliminary answers to these questions, focusing only on one genre of mediated politics, the televised political advertising. I see this choice as a starting point which I hope to incentivize researchers to further examine the ideological aspect of other genres of mediated politics (such as televised political debates, interviews, news bulletins, etc.) following the conceptual and analytical framework I develop here.

The research material for this study comprises of four political spots, produced by the two (former) major political parties in Greece for the general election of May 2012. The selection of Greece as a case study was dictated, other than the author's personal interest for the political developments in this national context, by the fact that the country experiences the most tremendous economic and socio-political crisis in its post-dictatorship history. Ideological ferments are expected to be more intensive during such periods because political parties (especially the major ones which are indebted the largest portion of responsibility) are called to manage the destabilizing impact the crisis has upon them (Higgs, 1987) such as the increasing disaffection of voters. At the same time, as I have already noted, the destabilizing trends forces even more political parties to resort to media techniques, in order, for example, to re-attract the disaffected voters (see chapter 1). Consequently, the current situation in Greece provides the appropriate context to set the question that underlies this project: Is the 'enhanced' mediation conducive to the reconfiguration of ideology, and if yes, how?

The Analytical Framework

According to the conceptual framework I delineated above, both mediated politics and ideology are socially constitutive and conditioned discursive practices, with the former to be also a technological practice and the latter to be particularly a recontextualizing (discursive) practice. Arguably, the social consequentiality and conditionality of discourse and especially the imbrication of the latter with power is the par excellence object of study for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2003). For the needs of this project I will draw on the core principle of CDA, the multi-dimensionality of discourse (ibid), focusing on the intertextual (textual and discursive) formulation and the interdiscursive (discursive and socio-cultural) articulation of the mediated recontextualizating practice. Let me elaborate in some more length on these analytical presuppositions and provide also their concrete methodological operationalization (for a summary see table 1).

Intertextuality

Intertextuality is an analytical term necessary for deconstructing the recontextualizing practice, since, according to one of its inventors, it implies "the insertion of a text into history (society) and of this text into history" (Kristeva, 1986, in Fairclough, 1992, p.279). More particularly, intertextual analysis is concerned with the identification of specific semiotic strategies through which different "discourses that surround texts are drawn into them" (Chouliaraki, 2000, p.297). From this point of view, *intertextuality* explicates how the textual dimension of recontextualization intersects with the discursive one. Thompson in his work on ideology (1990) has proposed several semiotic strategies of symbolic construction, some of which can be said to perform the recontextualizing practice, such as narrativization, displacement, differentiation, symbolization of unity and eternalization[1].

We should be aware that these strategies and the corresponding discourses they draw into texts are articulated not only by verbal (oral and written) (as the rationalistic logocentric bias implies, see also Freeden's view in chapter 2) but also by visual cues (still and moving image), with each one to play its own distinctive role (Chouliaraki, 2000). As Chouliaraki has pointed out the role of the visual is to offer a specific degree of authenticity while the role of the verbal is to order and organize the flow of images through a specific point of view (2006). In mediated symbolic constructs the visual-verbal correspondence is coordinated by the different *representational techniques of the medium* (such as shots distance, frames, camera angles - see Monaco, 2000).

To sum up, by focusing on intertextuality we are called to investigate how, through different *representational techniques,* the *visual-verbal correspondence* gives birth to *strategies of symbolic construction* which are directed at mobilizing specific discursive practices.

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[1] The semiotic strategy of *narrativization* refers to the recounting of symbols which have a prominent place in tradition and it is customarily used to legitimize (or de-legitimize) a social order. *Symbolization of unity* is the strategy which evokes symbols in order to symbolize unity seeking the unification of social groups and *differentiation* is exactly the opposite strategy which points to the fragmentation of society. The strategy of *displacement* describes a process of transferring positive or negative connotations that customarily accompany one symbol to another which seeks dissimulation (or uncovering of social relations). Finally *eternalization* refers to the use of political symbols of the past in an ahistorical way which implies that what happens today is not a product of the current problematic conditions but an ever-recurring situation, seeking to reify a social order (see Thompson, 1990, p.60-66).

Interdiscursivity

If intertextuality is the nodal point at the intersection of the textual with the discursive dimension of recontextualization, *interdiscursivity* is the respective point at the intersection of the discursive with the social dimension. As Fairclough argues discourses are always associated with particular institutional settings and, as I showed in chapter 1, mediated discourses are associated with some conventionalized codes of articulation (necessary for the successful fixation and transmission of discourses) which are enacted by the interaction between the features of the medium and the institutional context. This "relatively stable set of conventions that is associated with and partly enacts a socially ratified type of activity" to uses Fairclough's terms (1992, p.284), constitutes the *genre* into which a mediated symbolic construct can be said to belong.

The concept of interdiscursivity has been invented to grasp how the socio-institutional hybridity that characterizes late modern fields of interaction (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) figures in the discursive level. This is to say that different discourses are genres constantly intertwined with each other in order different ways of seeing the world (representations), being (identities) and acting (social activities) in it (multi-functionality of discursive practices) to be contrived (ibid). In the co-articulation of different discourses not only cognitive but also emotional processes are activated as it has been already argued in chapter 2. As we know from the, still underdeveloped, political sociology of emotions, emotions are not mutually exclusive with political cognitions but they can crucially influence the way we prioritize, perceive and process the latter (Berezin, 2002).

Some of the social functions and effects of the interdiscursive devices are described by Thompson as modes of operation of ideology (which correspond to the aforementioned strategies of symbolic construction), such as legitimization, dissimulation, fragmentation or unification and reification (1990). Since ideology is conceived by Thompson as a meaning making process which seeks to establish and sustain relations of domination, de-legitimation and uncovering of asymmetrical relations cannot be considered ideological. However, according to the revised concept of ideology I presented in chapter 2, the productive and networked aspect of power, which treats resistance as a constitutive component of the exercise of power and not as an externality to it, does not allow us to exclude the dimension of challenge (de-legitimation and uncovering conceived here as the opposites of legitimation and dissimulation respectively) from the ideological function of discourse.

To sum up, by focusing on intediscursivity we are called to investigate the *genre or chain of genres* and the *emotional-cognitive correspondence* that underlie the discourses that are

spliced together in mediated symbolic constructs, as well as the specific *social functions* of the recontextualized discourses.

Table 1: The operational steps of the Analytical Framework

Intertextuality	Interdiscursivity

• *Representational techniques* particular uses of camera, shots distance, angle, etc.
 	
• *Visual-verbal correspondence* visual and verbal re-articulation of disarticulated signifiers or signifieds with new signifieds or signifiers respectively.
 	
• *Semiotic strategies of symbolic construction*
  - Narrativization
  - Displacement
  - Differentiation/ Symbolization of unity
  - Eternalization
	• *Genres or chain of genres* the conventional elements that underlie a specific mediated symbolic constructs
	
	• *Emotional-cognitive correspondence* the point of view and emotional appeal via which discourses are spliced together
	
	• *Discursive modes of operation of ideology*:
	  - Legitimation/ delegitimation
	  - Dissimulation/ uncovering
	  - Fragmentation/ Unification
	  - Reification

Replying to some critiques

First Critique: *The lack of the dimension of reception*

The analytical framework I sketched out in this chapter can be said to ignore the active engagement of the recipients in the production of meaning which has passionately been manifested by revisionist studies of media content (see Curran, 2002). According to the latter, the media discourse is inherently ambiguous, rendering the identification of dominant meanings impossible (ibid). However, as Morley (1980) has acutely argued media texts are actually characterized by a 'structured polysemy', which means that discursive practices of the media "[...] cue audiences to 'preferred' meaning whilst suppressing others" (Chouliaraki, 2000, p.295). CDA can consequently be perceived as a method to identify these preferred meanings and not every possible interpretation but this suffices for answering the research

question of this project, since ideology can be argued to be the preferred meaning political parties seek to inculcate in mediated symbolic constructs.

Second Critique: *The self-fulfilling prophecy of interpretation*

CDA as a hermeneutical method is vulnerable to the criticism of subjectivism in interpretation. More particularly, it is argued that analysts treat texts in such a way so that anticipated meanings, those affirm their theoretical assumptions or personal predispositions, are elicited (Widdowson, 1996). However, this is a serious but not insurmountable risk. It reminds the analyst that s/he has to be as self-reflexive s/he can by following a systematically organized and consistently operationalized analysis of the research material. According to Rose such an analysis uses evidence from the material itself, pays attention to "the coherence of the analysis" and to "the coherence of the study in relation to previous related research" (Rose, 2007, p.161), to mention a few. This is the difference between the work of an analyst and of an ordinary reader (Fairclough, 1996).

SECTION II EMPIRICAL RESULTS

This second Section of the project consists in four chapters which introduce the case study that contextualizes the empirical analysis (chapter 4), present(chapter 5 and 6) and discuss the findings in relation to the conceptual framework underpin the current work (chapter 7), respectively.

Chapter 4: Introducing the case study: Mediated Politics and Ideology in Greece

Within a two-year period before the general election of May 2012, Greece, facing the most formidable fiscal crisis in its post-war history, was forced twice to ask for bailout from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. A swath of measures of strict fiscal consolidation, including considerable wage and pension cuts as well as tax increases, had to be implemented by the Greek government in exchange for the financial aid.

The developments within the two major political parties, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and New Democracy (ND), were rapid. After the tremendous social reactions the government resigned (November, 2011) and was replaced by a technocratic transitional government with the support of three parliamentary parties (PASOK, ND and LAOS). For the first time in the post-dictatorship era, the two major parties, received together less than 50% of the popular vote in the election of May 2012. The incumbent PASOK was elected third party having lost more than three quarters of the electoral impact it had in 2009. ND was elected first party with less than 20% of votes and the left-wing party SYRIZA nearly missed to win the election (Ministry of Interior, 2012).

Arguably, the crisis accelerated and exacerbated destabilizing trends that were already in progress. For example, the clientelistic system, on which Greek political parties have been built, is in decline from 90s, because of the country's adaptation to the European and international rules, downsizing parties' traditional base of support (Charalambis and Demertzis, 1993). On the other hand, mass media and especially television have dominated political life emphasizing on scandals, spectacle and cockfighting between politicians (Papathanassopoulos, 2000). Political parties have increasingly relied to media practices in order to run their campaigns, employing media experts and focusing on televised political advertising (ibid). However, it would be an unsubstantiated claim to say that Greek politics has been colonized by the media logic, since the latter was never alien to politics. Political parallelism is strong in Greek media (Hallin and Mancini, 2004) and the media political

practices and consultancy are always 'filtered' by party cadres (Papathanassopoulos, 2007). Arguably, the understanding of media-political logics as co-evolving and mutually constituted, which underlies the conceptual framework of mediated politics I proposed in chapter 1, is applicable to the Greek context.

It has been argued that in countries like Greece, where society is structured by polarized pluralism, ideological cleavages, such as the right-left distinction, are still strong (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). However, we should be aware of the fact that in the Greek case the traditional right-left distinction instead of class and social cleavages represents purely historical cleavages (the evil, tyrannical and parastatal Right, the excluded, oppressed and militant Left) (Lamprinakou, 2010). This would be made clearer by examining how the two major parties positioned and repositioned themselves in this spectrum.

PASOK: the discourse of hope

PASOK, under the charismatic personality of its establisher, Andreas Papandreou, tried to present itself as the genuine descendant of the progressive and democratic forces (Vamvakas, 2006). It emphasized its leftist orientation by articulating an *anti-capitalist* and *anti-imperialist* discourse. It also flirted with a nationalist discourse highlighting *national independence and pride* and demonizing the major opponent, New Democracy, as the malicious Right which oppressed the country for decades in the past. However, above all it manifested the *restoration of the wronged*, the abstract social construct of the 'low-middle class', *the incessant growth* and *the ascendance of People to power,* without however promising the subversion of the establishment but only '*change*' in an indeterminate way (Demertzis, 2004, Voulgaris, 2008).

Arguably, this *populist* and *polarizing* discursive hotchpotch, which I call *discourse of hope*, inspired all these people who expected moral-political vindication without, however, to lose the already acquired privileges (Demertzis, 2004), allowing PASOK to present itself the an anti-systemic force within the system.

In the modernizing period 1996-2004 the discourse of hope harmonized with the European and international course of the country, by being disentangled from the anti-imperialist signifieds, in order to follow pro-European ones, maintaining however its populist and polarizing elements (Voulgaris, 2008). In the last decade, PASOK in order to offset the damaging effect of the long stay in power tried to renew the discourse of hope by appropriating symbols from other European social-democratic parties, such as green growth, new model of governance, e-deliberation (Dimitrakopoulos and Passas, 2011). However,

voters were not persuaded (PASOK lost the 2004 and 2007 elections) and before the 2009 general elections PASOK resorted once again to the populist discourse of hope.

New Democracy

While PASOK had the historical opportunity to capitalize a glorious past, ND could not evoke its right-wing tradition because of the latter's negatively charged past (civil war, dictatorship) (Vamvakas, 2006). Its ideological development was quite unstable and inconsistent. For example, after losing the 1981 election ND abandoned the political moderation it had adopted from its establishment (Karamanlis' period). It evoked symbols that had been carefully buried, such as anti-communism and national pride of Greek homemakers, articulating a *discourse of patriotism* (Voulgaris, 2008).

From mid-80s and henceforth the 'stigmatized' past of the party was silenced one more time and ND followed a liberal and progressive profile articulating a *neo-liberal discourse* for the first time in the Greek post-dictatorship political reality (Lamprinakou, 2010). However, the dominated by the discourse of hope Greek society was not ready at all to accept fiscal adaptation and as a result widely disapproved the discourse of neo-liberalism in the 1993 general elections (ibid).

From mid-90s and henceforth, the party adopted a promising platform, *the middle-ground discourse of social liberalism*, which draw elements from the patriotic discourse (the 'evil past' was too distant) in dealing with national issues (migration, criminality), the neo-liberal discourse (avoiding the aspect of fiscal adaptation) in dealing with economic issues (privatizations, free market) - and the discourse of hope in approaching social issues (growth, wage increases) (Lamprinakou, 2010). This platform was successful (ND won the 2004 and 2007 general elections) not only because it managed to rebrand ND as a catch-all party which avoids the extreme positions but also because it successfully re-contextualized symbols from the party's historical path in the post-dictatorship era.

Arguably, even this brief overview suffices to show that the process of recontextualization is central to the configuration of ideology, as I have argued in chapter 2. Unfortunately, however, there are not empirical projects that illustrate the contribution of mediated symbolic constructs to this process. In the previous chapters I theoretically and analytically tried to shed light on this neglected linkage. In the series of chapters that follows I aspire to provide the starting point for filling also the empirical gap. In chapter 5 and 6 I discuss the analysis of the two spots from PASOK's campaign and the other two from ND's campaign, respectively, and in chapter 7 I summarized these findings through the conceptual prism of this paper.

Chapter 5: PASOK: The discourse of Sacrifice/Adaptation

Spot1[2]

Intertextuality: representational techniques, visual-verbal correspondence and semiotic strategies of symbolic construction

The spot I examine here consists in the testimonials of three lay persons, a storeowner, a teacher and a young unemployed man, which draw into the 'text' the *discourse of austerity* and *the discourse of hope* giving birth to an interdiscursive product – the product of the co-articulation of the two aforementioned discourses - the *discourse of sacrifice/adaptation.*

The simplifying and routinizing connotations of the scenes from the everyday life of the three characters (store, products, customers/ school, children, games/paternal home, friends, family) seeks to provide *authenticity* for the empirical political discourse of lay persons. The voiceovers of the three characters formulate messages which traditionally have a negative meaning: "turnover has dropped 50%", "temporary taxes and contributions" (storeowner), "my wage decreased over and over"(teacher), "I have been unemployed for two years", "I returned to my paternal home" (young man). As I have pointed out in chapter 3 the verbal organizes images through a specific point of view; in this case the verbal seeks to *displace* symbols from the discourse of austerity in order to challenge the naivety that things will be always good, implied by the populist discourse of hope.

Towards the end of this spot the young man is represented to gaze the historical monument of Acropolis, the par excellence symbol of national pride for Greeks, which is also highlighted in the verbal (textually formulated) messages that follow this image: "Lets unite our forces for a Greece without memorandum in three years" (which means for an independent, sovereign Greece), "Greeks struggle and will succeed" (this reminds us of the historical Greek struggles for independence or even the modern struggles for national success, e.g. the Olympics). Consequently, both the visual and the verbal choices at this point recount one of the core signifiers of the discourse of hope, the national pride (see chapter 4) (semiotic strategy of *narrativization*).

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[2] For the compositional structure of the spots see the Appendix

Interdiscursivity:

Genres

As it can be inferred by the analysis of its compositional structure, this spot constitutes a form of 'personal witness ad', the *testimonial* of the lay person, "in which the views of non-candidates are enlisted for the purposes of endorsement" (McNair, 2007, p.97). The latter is argued to propagandize the party message with simplicity and naturalness, contributing to the reconnection of institutional politics with the everyday life (Vamvakas, 2006). In the Greek context of triumphant populism this 'politics of the quotidian' always had a dominant place.

Emotional – cognitive correspondence and the social functions of discourse

In this spot, the testimonials of the three characters re-contextualize symbols of the discourse of hope and the discourse of austerity giving birth to a new (inter)discursive practice: the *discourse of sacrifice/adaptation*. The re-contextualizing practice unfolds through a process of self-reflexivity ("one time I thought […]", "I thought of […]") in which the role of emotion is critical. Three emotional appeals are clearly detectable in this spot: anxiety (storeowner: "I was stressed"), anger (teacher: "how should I feel" – frowned face, young man: "I am angry, disappointed") and optimism (storeowner: "I am optimistic", teacher: "I have to think positive", all the three: facial expression of smile).

Anxiety is the emotion that leads to "careful information processing, […] more attention to the candidate's position on issues" (Castells, 2009, p.148); in this case PASOK calls attention to be paid on its proposal for overcoming the economic crisis. Anger, on the other hand, is an emotion which promotes heuristic processing and greater reliance on partisan stereotypes (Huddy, et al, 2007); PASOK invites its voters to give the party a last chance to do what it could not do in its first, short, term in office. Finally, optimism motivates people to act in the present in such a way which can bring well-being in the future (Castells, 2009); in our case, to do sacrifices in the present for regaining hope in the future.

The aforementioned emotional appeals activate different cognitive process but all foster the social acceptance of the discourse of sacrifice/adaptation. The discourse of austerity (one component of the discourse of sacrifice/adaptation) is recontextualized through the semiotic strategy of displacement in order to *uncover* that the age of presupposionless hope and carelessness, which followed the fall of dictatorship, has gone. On the other hand, the re-contextualization of the discourse of hope (the other component of the discourse of sacrifice/adaptation) through the semiotic strategy of narrativization (in the last example)

seeks to *legitimize* the current and forthcoming 'sacrifices' as necessary, albeit difficult and demanding, efforts of adaptation so that hope can rise again ("our road is difficult but safe"). The message: "Greeks struggle and will succeed" implies that they will succeed if they struggle.

Spot 2

Intertextuality: representational techniques, visual-verbal correspondence and semiotic strategies of symbolic construction

This spot unfolds as an alternation of black-and-white with coloured shots, which both represent the leader within his office. The black-and-white shots create the sense that the represented activity, leader's devotion on his workload, takes place beyond the limelight because it is more substantive and demanding. Obviously, this representational technique highlights the managerial capacity of the leader. On the other hand, the coloured shots bring us back to the front stage of political activity. The leader focuses on camera like looking the spectator directly in his/her eyes, a representational technique which implies that he has nothing to hide. Consequently, these visual choices seek to authenticate the articulated discourses as implementable (managerialism) and reliable (directness and naturalness of personal address).

The verbal message delineates two substantially different political positions: the discourse of responsibility, which consists in signifiers, such as "responsibility", "apology as a political act", "hope and prospect", identified with PASOK ("We"), and the discourse of irresponsibility ("irresponsibility", "partisan selfishness and infeasible proposals"), identified with New Democracy ("Others", "Some") (*semiotic strategy of differentiation*). It also re-appropriates a political symbol that PASOK's discourse monopolized in the previous decades but seems to have abandoned or at least neglected the last two years: the defense of the low-middle class, which also constitutes one of the core signifiers of the discourse of hope (see chapter 4) (*semiotic strategy of narrativization*).

Interdiscursivity:

Genres

This spot draws on the *talking head* genre of televised political advertising (McNair, 2007). This genre highlights the *managerial capacity* of the leader (black-and-white shots); "that he can handle the issues and most importantly that he can handle the job" (Delvin, 1986, in McNair, 2007, p.96) and the same time it cultivates a relationship of "non-reciprocal intimacy at a distance" (Thompson, 1995, p.219) between the spectator and the leader

(coloured shots) which is fostered, as the intertextual analysis also illustrated (coloured shots), by the *directness* and *naturalness* of the televisual image (Campus, 2010).

Cognitive-emotional correspondence and the social functions of discourse

As I have shown, this spot seeks to differentiate PASOK's responsible position from ND's irresponsibility. The perennial practice of polarization (see chapter 4) returns here 'rationalized' as *fragmentation* of the society into those forces that are aligned with the discourse of sacrifice/adaptation, which is presented here as the discourse of responsibility, and those aligned with the populist ("infeasible proposals") and polarizing ("partisan selfishness") discourse of hope, which is presented here as the discourse of irresponsibility. Leader's reference to the latter ("others appear to be irresponsible") is accompanied by a grin which aims at mobilizing *contempt*, the emotion of rejection of the other person, group or even non-human being (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996); in our case the rejection of ND's irresponsible stance.

However, PASOK, as the inventor of the discourse of hope, is aware of the fact that the latter is more attractive to the electorate. Consequently, its option to follow a different, less appealing, discourse reveals that the party is reconciled with the fact that it is not going to be again the hegemonic force it used to be in the last three decades. Therefore, Mr. Venizelos (the leader) condemns the solution of majoritarian governments, fostering cooperation and coalitions ("some believe they can alone", we want [...] to unify the forces of responsibility, solidarity and progressive reforms") and trying simultaneously to maintain a nodal role for itself within them ("we want to have the initiative after the election [...]").

Of course the discourse of hope is by no means absent from PASOK's new discursive formation. Quite the contrary, it is re-contextualized (through the strategy of narrativization) so as the symbol of the 'protection of the middle class' to *legitimize* the party's position for adaptation and social sacrifices.

Chapter 6: New Democracy: The liberal and Patriotic Discourse of hope

Spot 1

Intertextuality: representational techniques, visual-verbal correspondence and semiotic strategies of symbolic construction

The compositional structure of this spot can be distinguished in two parts: the first one uses close shots to represent ordinary people in an outdoor space, emphasizing their contradictory thoughts (visualized in words) and their anxiety or optimism about the future (visualized in facial expressions). The second part represents the leader to interact with people in a friendly and intimate way (he hits someone friendly on his back) and then alone, to look at the camera and talk directly to the spectator (a representational technique which is similar to Mr. Venizelos personal address adopted in PASOK's second spot – see previous chapter).

In the first part, the use of scenes from the everyday life of lay persons exploits the simplicity of the empirical experience in order to provide authenticity for the social rupture that is implied in the visual representation but is more clearly crystalized by the voiceover. The latter formulates contrasting pairs –dipoles –the first pole of which points to signifiers of the discourse of austerity, such as "unemployment", "shame", "disaster", "fear", "punish", "drachma", "small Greece" (humiliation), while the second pole points to signifiers of the discourse of hope such as "job", "dignity", "creation", "hope", "vote", "euro", "GREECE" (national pride). Consequently, the negatively charged discourse of austerity is *differentiated* from the positively charged discourse of hope.

In the second part of the spot, the *visual connotations* of intimacy (interaction with people), directness and naturalness (personal address) claims authenticity for the verbally attempted integration of liberal signifiers ("competitiveness and extroversion") into the discourse of hope ("growth, security and justice", "opportunities"), so that the former are attached the positive connotations of the latter (*semiotic strategy of displacement*).

Interdiscursivity:

Genres

In this spot we can identify elements from the *man-in-the-street*, the *cinéma-vérité* and the *talking head* genres, adapted by Delvin's conventional typology of political advertising (McNair, 2007). The *cinéma-vérité* genre "depicts candidates in 'real life settings interacting

with people'" (in this spot interaction takes place within a working place) (Delvin, 1986, in McNair, 2007, p.96) and the man-in-the-street genre 'exploits' the ordinary voter in order to elicit support for the candidate (in this spot people appear problematized and divided, as a result in need to hear serious proposals) (McNair, 2007). This tactic of 'social realism' in representing the political is in tandem with the disentanglement of the political rhetoric from the grandeur of the past and its migration to what I call the politics of the quotidian (For the conventionalities of the talking head genre see previous chapter).

Cognitive-emotional correspondence and the social functions of discourse

The differentiation of the discourse of austerity from the discourse of hope seeks to *fragment* society in two encampments, the encampment of austerity which is identified with PASOK ("to Those who base their existence on destruction") and the encampment of hope which is identified with ND ("We answer that Greece has future, Greece will make it"). Given that the latter obviously attracts the vast majority of the Greek electorate, by being aligned with it, ND, pursues to maximize its share of votes.

Fragmentation and prioritization of the discourse of hope over the discourse of austerity is also emotionally attained. According to Oatley and Jenkins every "affective expression is a reflective structure of face, voice, etc., which denotes a specific emotion" (1996, p.66). Consequently, the positive (smile) and negative (frowning) facial expressions we encounter in this spot are associated with positive (optimism) and negative (anxiety and fear) emotions, respectively, which in their own turn juxtapose the discourse of hope with the discourse of austerity, respectively.

ND does not actually adopt the discourse of hope as such; it rather evokes it in order to frame its liberal ideas so that the latter are not related with the renounced neo-liberal past of the party (see chapter 4). It does nothing more than renewing the discourse of social liberalism (see chapter 4) presenting it as *liberal discourse of hope*. The re-contextualization of the discourse of hope is also attained through the mobilization of positive emotions – expressed by leader's smile - which encourage people to respond positively to the proposed plan, especially if they do not have enough time to think (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996). The proposed by ND plan, the recontextualized discourse of hope (liberal discourse of hope), seeks to *dissimulate* the party's share of responsibility for the implementation of tough austerity measures by the coalition government which the party itself supported (see chapter 4).

Spot 2

Intertextuality: representational techniques, visual-verbal correspondence and semiotic strategies of symbolic construction

In the first part of this spot ordinary people are again in the 'front stage'. Their blurred faces connote the uncertainty and fear that have dominated Greek society, which is also illustrated in the voiceovers of these shots ("is there tomorrow?", "will we stay in Europe?"). Arguably, this representational technique accentuates the dramatic appeal of the leader: "The election in the 6th of May is the most critical in the post-dictatorship era". The symbol of 'post-dictatorship era', which summarizes the socio-political orientation of the third Greek republic (Voulgaris, 2008), is recounted here (strategy of *narrativization*) in order to stress the inextricable bond between the fate of the country and the result of the election.

In the second part of the spot, Mr. Samaras (the leader) is represented in close shots to personally address the electorate, while people are represented as a shadowed and alienated crowd at the back of the scene. Mr. Samaras tries to be straight, sincere and natural in order to bend peoples' distrust for his intentions, which are explicated in the verbal message he enunciates. As in the previous spot, the latter integrates some liberal signifiers ("to liberate the forces of this place") into the discourse of hope ("new model of growth so as new jobs to be created") (*semiotic strategy of displacement*).

Both the leader's personal proclamation (previous part) and interaction with the crowd (third part) unfold in a historical building in the center of Athens, the Zappion Hall. In this place Mr. Samaras presented ND's programme for dealing with crisis, in three declarations (Zappion I, II, III) from the time he was elected leader. In all these declarations the underlying principle was the promotion of growth, constitutive signifier of the discourse of hope. Consequently, Zappion Hall as a symbol of growth in ND's vocabulary points to the discourse of hope *(strategy of narativization)*.

The Zappion Hall is also a symbol of national pride, since it is reminiscent of the historical past of the country, which constitutes another signifier of the discourse of hope. The same signifier is also embedded in Mr. Samaras appeal: "Give me the power of a *nation* in order to win the battle of the *country*", clearly recounting (semiotic strategy of narrativization) a patriotic discourse (see chapter 4), quite widespread in leader's political vocabulary (he comes out of the extreme right – nationalist wing of the party). Finally, the image (towards the end of the spot) of the surrounded by the crowd leader allows us to interpret the verbal references to patriotism not only as a strategy of narrativization but also as a *strategy of symbolizing unity*.

Interdiscursivity

Genres

This spot draws exactly on the same genres with the previous one. The first part which represents the problematized people draws elements from the man-in-the street genre, the second part which represents the leader to address the electorate constitutes an adaptation of the talking head genre, while the third part, in which the leader is approached by the crowd, gesticulating friendly towards it, integrates the *cinéma-vérité* genre (for the conventional meanings of these options see the analysis of the previous spot).

Cognitive-emotional correspondence and the social functions of discourse

By heightening the criticality of the election this symbolic construct seeks to *legitimize* ND's option to persistently and vehemently request for the election to be called as early as possible, mobilizing also the emotion of fear. This emotional appeal leads to the monopolization of attention on the intimidating event (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996) –the potential of a devastating anarchy if a strong government does not derive after the election – which is implied in Mr. Samaras' question: 'Think, on May 7, in what Greece do you want to wake up?'.

As in the previous spot, the *liberal discourse of hope* also seeks to *dissimulate* ND's agreement with the second bailout, since the latter is accompanied by neo-liberally inspired strict commitments of fiscal consolidation. Finally, drawing on ND's nationalist capital (discourse of patriotism) and combining it with the opportunistic patriotism of the discourse of hope (Zappion Hall), this symbolic construct articulates the *patriotic discourse of hope* which seeks to *legitimate* ND's acts by presenting the party as the genuine force of patriotism. It simultaneously tries to *unify* different social groups around the patriotic duty of saving the country, which, however, is better served by a strong government ("our country needs [...] strong government"). Obviously, ND sees unification as a vehicle which will bring it closer to the lusted majority.

Chapter 7: Standardization/Trivialization and Personalization of Politics: De-ideologizing Effects or Potential Ideological Platforms of Mediation?

In chapter 1, I argued that political actors have to be aware of the 'conventions' of the medium so as to articulate meaningful and attractive technologies of politics. Let me explain a little more practically what this means in the case of television with which I grappled in the previous two chapters. Since the viewer gets easily bored with the long and monotonous messages in television, the political message has to be short and 'catchy', consisting in sound bites and slogans (McNair, 2007). It has also to resemble the everyday slang so as to ameliorate the refractory character of mediated experience (Thompson, 1995). In a nutshell, political rhetoric gets standardized or conversationalized in Fairclough's (1995) terms. In a more negative tone this process is described as trivialization of politics since the latter relies more on the sensationalism of image than the substance of arguments (Franklin, 1994).

The standardization or trivialization of the political rhetoric is identifiable in the case study I examine in this paper, especially in the spots which, drawing on the testimonial, cinéma-vérité and man-in-the street genres, highlight the politics of the quotidian. Indeed, the average length of the examined spots is around one minute; phrases are very short and simple; sloganeering is also preeminent ("self-strong Greece"(PASOK), "Greece can, Greece will make it" (ND); images point to the simplicity (testimonial, man-in-the-street genre) and intimate character (*cinéma-vérité* genre) of the political process and the emotion (overt or covert) is pervasive to arguments.

On the other hand, the grammar of television (audio-visual content) and its commercialized character in conjunction with the need of political parties to contrive differences among them, in an era differences wane giving way to catch-all trends, encourage personal features (stylistic, emotional and psychological) to amount to preeminent parameters for differentiating and assessing political efficacy (Nimmo and Felsberg, 1986, Edelman, 1988). Even if personalization (as well as standardization) cannot be considered as a causal effect of the mediation of politics (it rather constitutes an inherent feature of politics in itself), it has been intensified in the contemporary media-saturated era and rendered the prime way of institutionalizing the political (Thompson, 1995, Demertzis, 2002).

Personality politics (Castells, 2007) is clearly identifiable in the examined case study, especially in the spots which draw on the talking head genre. Political leaders personifies the party mechanism and sometimes they are identified with it (see the alternation of "I" with

"We" in PASOK's second spot and the exhortation "I ask for your strong command", "Give me the power [...]" in ND's second spot). Personal stylistic and aesthetic differences (Mr. Venizelos is simply dressed in a shirt while Mr. Samaras follows the traditional political attire – suit) as well as different mentalities (Mr. Venizelos is alone in his office – alienated from the people but protected from the 'tyranny of intimacy' and Mr. Samaras in crowded places – accessible but not 'distinguished' leader) and emotional situations (anger and contempt in PASOK's second spot, optimism and fear in ND's first and second spot respectively) are highlighted.

According to the mediatization paradigm, the standardization/trivialization and personalization of politics are considered de-facto de-ideologizing effects of the media. As I noted earlier on in this paper, in some Marxian-led critical approaches these processes are considered essentially ideological since they distract people from their real problems. However, according to the conceptual framework I employed in this study, the ideological dimension of mediated symbolic constructs cannot be rejected or accepted in advance but it has to be sought analytically. Let me briefly summarize what the preceding analysis showed in this regard.

As I argued above, in the spots which draw on the testimonial, man-in-the-street and *cinéma-vérité* genres the representational techniques and the visual-verbal correspondence promote a sense of simplicity, intimacy and accessibility of politics, which construe the social practice of standardization or trivialization. However, the same compositional practices give rise to semiotic strategies of re-contextualization, which correspond to cognitively and emotionally articulated (inter)discursive practices that seek to influence the social doing. For example, the use of three lay characters in PASOK's first spot mobilizes the politics of the quotidian, through which the discourse of austerity is recontextualized (discourse of sacrifice/adaptation), seeking to uncover the 'irrational exuberance' of the past. In ND's second spot, the interaction between the leader and people mobilizes intimacy and simplicity which serves the re-contextualization of the discourse of patriotism (patriotic discourse of hope) seeking to legitimize ND's actions and unify its voters.

On the other hand, in the spots of the talking head genre, the representational techniques and the verbal-visual correspondence stress the managerial capacity and directness - naturalness of the leader, semiotic evidence of the socially ratified personalization of politics. However, as in the aforementioned cases, we can still identify semiotic strategies of recontextualization and their corresponding discursive practices. For example, in PASOK's second spot, the directness and naturalness connoted by the coloured shots authenticate the differentiation of the populist/polarizing signifiers of the discourse of hope from the discourse of

sacrifice/adaptation, which seeks to fragment society. In ND's first spot, the same connotations serve the re-contextualization (via displacement) of the discourse of hope (liberal discourse of hope) so that ND's responsibility for the implementation of tough neo-liberal policies is dissimulated.

Consequently, the case study from the Greek general election of May 2012 illustrates that in the televised political advertising of the two major parties:

- the technical (audio-visual content and camera use) and the social (personalization and trivialization) features of the medium of television allow the re-contextualization of political symbols, drawn from the parties' recent or distant past (such as hope and austerity, liberalism and patriotism).
- The recontextualizing practice gives rise to discursive practices (discourse of sacrifice/adaptation, patriotic discourse of hope) which have an impact (legitimizing or de-legitimizing, dissimulating or uncovering, unifying or fragmenting) upon the social context (Greek society in the vortex of crisis) by which they are also conditioned. By symbolically impacting upon the broader social context discursive practices seek to reinforce the power role (e.g. electoral impact) of the specific institutional fields (political parties) with which they are associated.

In a nutshell, according to the conceptual framework of this study the examined examples of mediated symbolic constructs of politics operate as platforms of ideological formation.

CONCLUSION

In this project I tried to challenge the fallacy of de-ideologization of politics in the age of mediatization, theoretically by articulating a revisionist account according to which ideology is a potentiality of mediated politics, and empirically, by conducting intertextual and interdiscursive CDA on four political spots drawn from the Greek general election of May 2012.

Thompson argues that the development of media increased the availability of symbolic forms which can be potentially used to establish and sustain relations of domination (1995). In other words, Thompson agrees that the potential of mediation to construe ideological meaning is not a priori impossible. By revisiting and extending this argument in this paper I tried to show that:

> a) mediated symbolic constructs of politics are the products of the dialectical articulation of technologies of politics with technologies of communication, which is constitutive of and conditioned by specific political fields.

> b) this dialectic – the symbolic act of media – is ideological not only in so far as it seeks to establish and sustain relations of domination but also in so far as it recontextualizes political symbols from party's historical past so as to influence power relations either by sustaining or by challenging them (see, for example, the discursive function of uncovering irrational social practices which was identified in one of PASOK's spots).

As the empirical analysis illustrated, some conventional representational techniques that can be found in commercials and the imbrication of sensational images with sloganized verbal messages give rise to semiotic strategies which recontextualize political symbols. It also showed that the genres on which technologies of communication draw personalize and standardize discursive practices without to drain them of their social consequentiality. Instead of claiming the generalizability of these findings, something we are not allowed to do based only on a case study and the in-depth analysis of four mediated symbolic constructs of politics, we can and we have to position them within a broader epistemological debate around the nature of the political in late modernity.

According to this debate the political cannot be foreclosed as a rational, sophisticated and prominent moment of the social doing; it is an ongoing and reflexive social construction that takes place daily in extremely different spheres of social life (from the parliamentarian

debates to the surfing in pornographic sites) (Giddens, 1991, Slater, 2001). Unfortunately, this 'diffusion' of the political has been primarily associated with the emergence of the new politics of social movements and activist groups, setting aside the domain of institutional politics since it is argued to gradually shrink (Bennett, 2003).

This paper, by arguing that political institutions do not fatalistically expect their extinction but actively engage in the production of technologies of politics using technologies of communication, seeks to contribute to our understanding of the reconstitution of the political within institutional politics. The commercial and aesthetic elements overemphasized by media representations try their potential to intervene in the distribution of power, not as falsifying externalities but as constitutive (sometimes recontextualizing) conditions of the political, by giving rise to new discursive practices of construing politics and fashioning the collective identity of the institutional field.

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APPENDIX

The compositional structure of the spots

PASOK spot 1 [The full video of the spot is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnyi0Qq9ohk]

Visual	Verbal
The storeowner	
The owner open the store and take care of the ordering of the products (medium shot)	
He moves towards the exit (full shot)	How people to shop, turnover [...] (voiceover)
Close-up shot of the storeowner	[...] has dropped 50%
He transfer products from a van to the store (medium shot)	Temporary taxes, contributions, rents (voiceover)
He puts products on the selves (medium shot)	I faced many difficulties, (voiceover)
Head and shoulders shot	I was stressed
He looks at people who pass by the shop (medium shot)	But one time I thought what the point is? (voiceover)
He looks at customer who enters the store (head and shoulders shot)	This is the situation (voiceover)
He approaches the customer and chats with him (head and shoulder shot)	But I decided not to give up (voiceover)
Close-up shot of the storeowner	I am optimistic
He smiles (head and shoulder shot)	
The teacher	
The teacher enter the classes approaching pupils	
Close shots on pupils' faces	I have family, my wage decreased over and over [...] (voiceover)
Head and shoulder shot of the teacher	And above hearing about lazy public servants
Close-up shot of the teacher	How to feel?
Teacher plays with children (medium shot)	
The teacher enters her house and her children cuddle her (medium shot)	But for my children I have to think positive (voiceover)
She puts her children to bed	That all this leads somewhere, if not tomorrow, a day after (voiceover)
Close-up shot of the teacher	All will be better
She smiles (head and shoulder shot)	
The young man	
The young man has a coffee-time with his company (head and shoulder shot)	I studied engineering but I have been unemployed for two years (voiceover)
Now in his room sitting at his desk (medium shot)	The temporary job I did [...]
He walks outside stores (head and shoulder shot)	was not for long (voiceover)
He looks at the ads on the store's windows (close shot)	
He sits at his desk (medium shot)	I returned to my paternal home

Close-up shot of the young man	I am angry
Shot of his laptop (job searching)	Disappointed (voiceover)
He goes to the sofa and sits with his mother (full shot)	I thought of leaving abroad but I don't want (voiceover)
Close-up shot of the young man	I want to try here
He gazes the monument of Acropolis from the balcony (head and shoulder shot)	
Consecutive head-and-shoulder shots of the three characters – they smile	
Grey background.	Text: our road is difficult but safe
Same background.	Text: lets unite our forces for a Greece without memorandum in three years
Same background	Text: Greeks struggle and will succeed
Bright white background. Party's logo	Text: self-strong Greece

PASOK spot 2 [The full video of the spot is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5oFS1kYKto]

visual	verbal
Mr. Venizelos sits at his desk reading papers (black-and-white medium shot) [shot a]	I know how frustrated many Greek men and women are (voiceover)
Mr. Venizelos sits at his desk looks directly into camera (coloured medium shot) [shot b]	We take our share of responsibility
[Shot a]	I asked for apology not as a formality
[Shot b]	but as political practice which means a lot. Others appear irresponsible and refuse to take their own share of responsibility
[shot a]	We know what has to be done so as the next day of the election to have hope and prospect
[Shot b]	We want the country to be governed. Some believe they can alone with partisan selfishness and infeasible proposals
[Shot a]	We want to have the initiative after the election
[shot b]	to protect the middle class and the low income groups, to unite all the forces of responsibility, solidarity and progressive reforms Greeks struggle and we succeed
Bright white background. Party's logo	Text: self-strong Greece

ND spot 1 [The full video of this spot is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvdFp9s7Bf0]

visual	verbal
Man-in-the-street genre	
People of different age groups walk in the street (close shots) A man	Voiceover and text (words next to peoples' head) : unemployment (and after a while) job
Old lady and a young girl	Dignity – job (old lady)
A Boy and a girl	Destruction (boy) – creation (girl)

Two gentlemen	Euro (the one) – drachma (the other)
A family (mother, father and the young girl)	Hope (mother) – fear (father)
A lady	I punish – I vote
Many people	Small Greece - GREECE
Gray background	Leader's Voiceover and text: Dilemmas end
cinéma-vérité and personal address genre	
Mr. Samaras speaks to and greets people – he is moving towards camera (from a full to medium shot)	This is the time of decisions, the time to govern the country differently with growth, security and justice (voiceover)
Medium shot of Mr. Samaras	We can create a new model for the country so as growth to come quickly
Close-up shot of the leader	With competitiveness and extroversion so as all to have opportunities
Medium shot of the leader	To those who base their existence on destruction we answer that Greece has future
Head and shoulder shot of the leader	Greece will make it
Party's logo and leader's name	Voiceover : New Democracy, Antonis Samaras
A textual message is added	Text: Greece will make it

ND spot 2 [The full video of this spot is available at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIDaYg4_wQU&feature=relmfu]

visual	verbal
Man-in-the-street genre	
People walking in the street (head-and- shoulders and close-up shots)	Is there tomorrow? Will we stay in Europe I cannot decide Will we make it? (voiceovers) The election in the 6th of May is the most critical in the post-dictatorship era (leader's voiceover)
Personal address genre	
Head-and-shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	
Medium shot of Mr. Samaras – people hardly discernible at the back	It's up to all to go […]
Close-up shot of Mr. Samaras	[…] decisively ahead
Head and shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	To liberate the forces of this place with a new model of governance,
Medium shot of Mr. Samaras – people hardly discernible at the back	with a new model of growth so as new jobs to be created
Head-and-shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	Think, on May 7 […]
Mr. Samaras turn his face towards the crowd (close-up shot)	[…] in what Greece do you want to wake up?
Head-and-shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	Our country needs political stability
Mr. Samaras turn his face on the other side (close-up shot)	It needs strong government, strong voice

Medium shot of Mr. Samaras	To negotiate abroad
Head-and-shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	and act quickly and decisively inside
Medium shot of Mr. Samaras	I ask for your strong command. Give the power of the nation
Head-and-shoulders shot of Mr. Samaras	in order to win the battle of the country
Medium shot of Mr. Samaras – people stand at the back looking at him	Because Greece can, Greece will make it
cinéma-vérité genre	
Mr. Samaras is getting surrounded by people (full shot). The setting of this interaction is the historical monument Zappion Hall.	
Party's logo and leader's name	Voiceover : New Democracy, Antonis Samaras
A textual message is added	Text: Greece will make it

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