The London School of Economics and Political Science

Ideology in the age of mediatized politics:
A study on the aesthetics and politics of charisma, ordinariness, and spectacle
from the 2015 election advertising campaigns in the UK and Greece

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to explore the place and role of ideology in political communication under conditions of mediatization. Exploring the place of ideology, as I will argue, involves exploring the ways political meaning is produced through the mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation and dramatisation, while exploring its role involves exploring the ways political power is exercised through these practices. Particularly, the thesis builds upon an *analytics of mediatization* according to which ideology lies in, the textually-discursively organised and ordered, performative capacity of mediatic practices to recall and rework institutional symbolisms from the past serving the institutional exercise of power in the present, or the *recontextualizing dynamic of media performativity*.

To operationalise this analytical approach, the thesis employs a *paradigmatic case study*; the study of political advertisements produced by the two major political parties in Greece and the UK in the run-up to the January and May 2015, respectively, General Elections. The empirical analysis seeks to demonstrate that central to all the ideological mediatic practices is the fusion of the *private* with the *public* through different aesthetic regimes, such as the authenticity of charisma, the intimacy of ordinariness, and the ritualism of spectacle, each emerging invested with its own recontextualizing dynamic – the politics of mission, everyday life and belonging. Each, in other words, has its own capacity to emotive-cognitively and spatiotemporally rework institutionally symbolic meanings from the past enacting different forms of institutional agency (e.g. partisan or cross-partisan) and ordering (e.g. displacement, temporalisation or eternalisation) in the present.

The overarching contribution of this analysis is to argue/establish that we cannot gain a full understanding of how political parties' ideology is renegotiated nowadays without a critical interrogation of the recontextualizing dynamic of mediatic performances. Nor can we

gain a full understanding of how parties and other political institutions ideologically deal with the pragmatic challenges of the present without a critical interrogation of the aestheticity and affectivity of (mediatized) political discourse.

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Introduction

Political communication, mediatization, and the question of ideology

'We are living in what may be termed an ideological age, an age characterised by the fact that ideological strife, a thing normal enough in domestic politics, has overflowed from these into the international relations field, where it has combined with traditional power politics to form a most dangerous compound […]. How long this age will last and how soon it will be succeeded by an epoch, say, of power politics pure and simple, and unaffected by ideological issues, no one can possibly tell. In this context the essential point is that the life of the present generation has indeed been dominated by ideological strife'.

This formidable statement about world political affairs was made by Finnish politician, former presidential candidate, and Professor of political science Jan Magnus Jansson, during a lecture he delivered at the London School of Economics. I will not disclose for the moment the date that this lecture was given, just to allow some space for speculation about the sociohistorical context to which it refers. I did not know the date myself when I first came across the above extract and, unsurprisingly, I started making my own, rather intuitive, inferences about when this 'ideological age' might be, until I eventually found out.

What intrigued me most in this statement was the claim that 'traditional power politics' and 'ideological strife' form a 'dangerous compound'. Could it refer to the post-Iraq War tensions between the Western bloc, Russia and the Middle East amid reheated Islamic neo-fundamentalism and state-making aspirations? The dramatic re-intensification of anti-immigration rhetoric along with its racist and xenophobic implications during and after the 2016 EU referendum campaign in the UK and the US presidential election campaign of the same year? The radical-leftist move by established political parties, such as the British Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, away from consensual centrism? Or, relatedly, did it refer to the astonishing empowerment of extreme right-wing parties, such as National Front, whose leader Marine Le Pen was a finalist in the 2017 French presidential election, and

Alternative for Germany (AfD), which is the first far-right party to enter the Bundestag since the Second World War?

It could have referred to any of these, but in fact it did not. The lecture dates back to 1958[1], apparently referring to Cold War polarisation, and Professor Jansson never had the chance to consider the aforementioned political developments as he passed away in 2003. Nevertheless, does this historical description offer some insight into the politics of the second decade of the twenty-first century or is it characterised by an exaggerated exceptionality which no longer applies to the post-Cold War era? Did the 'ideological age' come to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union and communist regimes in Eastern Europe or have we never ceased to live in such an age? Is there any space for 'ideological strife' in the politics of the twenty-first century, and if yes, what place does ideology have and what role it plays in contemporary politics? The question of the place and role of ideology in contemporary politics and, particularly, in contemporary political communication is the heart of my entire thesis.

Politics and political communication

Adding a caveat about political communication is not just a strategic choice that delimits the scope of this study – the choice to look for the place and role of ideology particularly in the various forms (e.g. verbal and/or visual) in which and platforms (e.g. door-to-door canvassing, advertising, news bulletins, etc.) via which politics is communicated to the public, instead of political practices in general (e.g. parliamentary debates, cabinet meetings, party manifestos, etc.). It is a necessary choice, since by studying political communication we actually study political discourse, 'all those elements of communication which might be said to constitute a political "image" or identity' (political meaning) as McNair (2007, p.4) argues. And by studying (political) discourse we also study (political) action, as Austin, among other communication philosophers, has astutely observed; 'speaking a language is a social activity

through which individuals establish and renew relations with one another' (political power) (in Thompson, 1995, p.12). As another seminal theorist of communication would argue (Carey, 1992), understanding political communication is not merely understanding the forms in which and the platforms via which politics is communicated, in the sense of being transferred-conveyed to the public, but the communicative/discursive practices by virtue of which politics exists as it exists for the public and has the impact it has upon the public. Therefore, looking for the place and role of ideology in political communication involves, in one way or another, looking for how *political meaning* is produced and circulated and how *political power* is exercised.

I will not embark on the theorisation of the triptych 'ideology', 'political meaning' and 'political power' here, as its intricate epistemological ramifications require their own space to be closely and carefully investigated. I have reserved that discussion for the first chapter of this thesis, in which I delve into some conceptual fault-lines that have historically shaped the debate around the ontology of political ideology, that is, the antinomic approaches to how political meaning is produced and circulated, and around its praxeology, that is, the antinomic approaches to how political meaning serves the exercise of power. For some, as we shall see, political meaning only exists in the form of hermetically sealed belief systems, while for others it is indiscriminately produced through all semiotic systems of signification; for some it is only found in philosophically grounded language, while for others it is any socially situated linguistic act. For some, political meaning serves the exercise of power by mobilising reflexive action, for others by enacting pre-reflective subjectivity; for some, it serves to build socio-political consensus and for others to sustain various relations of domination.

Such ontological and praxeological reflections help us gain insight into the different paradigmatic conceptions of ideology; *exclusionary*, such as the 'action-oriented belief system' and the 'order-sustaining signification system' paradigms, and (partly) *inclusionary*, such as

the 'consensus-building philosophically grounded meaning-making act' and the 'domination-serving socially situated meaning-making act' paradigms. In so doing, they also help us to realise why we need an *integrationist* approach to the study of ideology; a paradigm which transcends antinomic fault-lines paving the way for an analytical interpretation of the ideological *potential* of political communication: the potential of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past in the service of the institutional exercise of power in the present. By foregrounding the analytical concept of *recontextualization* this thesis seeks to contribute to an integrationist, discourse-practice based, reconceptualisation of ideology.

Political Communication and mediatization

Reconceptualising ideology, however, may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for effectively consummating our interpretative task. Different interpretations of the ideological status of political communication not only reflect how we understand ideology but also how we understand politics in general, or what I referred to earlier as the communicative-discursive practices by which politics exists in the way it does for us and has the impact it has upon us. These practices nowadays constitute 'mediatic practices', that is, practices organised around and structured by the institutional and technological dynamics of communication media, from the so-called 'traditional' media of mass communication, such as press, radio and television, to the 'alternative' or 'new' media of what Manuel Castells (2009) calls 'mass self-communication', such as online news-sites, blogs and social media. Mediatic practices are not reducible to media per se, as if they were particularistic effects of technology – like 'medium theory' has them (McLuhan, 1964; Meyrowitz, 1985) – or content – like 'agenda-setting theory' has them (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Rather, they are manifestations of the continuous, recurrent, and conventionalised – institutionalised – use of media as well as of the cumulatively transformative meta-effect this use has on our understanding of politics and,

therefore, on the making of political meaning, what is often called *mediatization*. Mediatized meaning-making could be effectively summarised in that contemporary political communication produces personalised, conversationalised, and dramatised politics.

Personalization alludes to the mediatic practice which construes politics as personal options made by some 'right and good' or 'wrong and bad' guys – by focusing, for instance, on the appealing and/or off-putting characteristics of candidates' and leaders' personalities (see Balmas and Sheafer, 2013; Mancini, 2011; van Aelst et al, 2012), e.g. the 'Iron Lady' Margaret Thatcher or the 'exuberant and brash' Donald Trump – or as I put it in the fifth chapter of this thesis, a *charismatic performance*. Interrelatedly, *conversationalisation* grasps the mediatic practice which construes politics as a mundane activity of everyday life – by favouring, for example, simple and short messages, built up more on sound-bites (e.g. H.W. Bush's famous 'read my lips: no more taxes' or Teresa May's 'Brexit means Brexit') than on complex and sophisticated arguments (see Fairclough, 1994; Mazzoleni, 1987; Patterson, 1993) – or as I put it in the sixth chapter of this thesis, a *performance of ordinariness*. Finally, *dramatisation* refers to the mediatic practice which construes politics as an immersing phantasmagoria – by highlighting, for example, the theatrical and cinematic aspects of political events that would not be much different than a horror or disaster movie (see Edelman, 1988; Graber and Dunaway, 2015; MacKenzie and Porter, 2011), e.g. the notorious depiction of Tony Blair with 'demon eyes' in one of the Tories' political ads for the 1997 general election – or as I put it in the seventh chapter of this thesis, a s*pectacular performance*.

Arguably, now the problematic of this study needs to be updated: looking for the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication amounts to looking for the place and role of ideology in the personalising, conversationalising and dramatising performances-mediatic practices, as they are constitutive of political communication in the age of mediatization. From this point of view, ideology is not the only *explanandum* of this study, in

the sense that for us to be able to start looking for the place and role of ideology in the mediatic practices of political communication, we need not only a conception of ideology but also a conception of mediatized politics, that is, an understanding of how mediatic practices-performances have transformed politics (the making of political meaning and the exercise of political power). After all, as Chang and Glynos have suggested, if mediatization 'signals the contemporary blurring of the mediatic and political aspects […], it becomes increasingly important to rethink the notion of normative and ideological critique in a way that is sensitive to this context' (2011, p. 124). To this rethinking, the current thesis contributes by foregrounding a practice-discourse based institutional reconceptualisation of mediatization which pays distinctive attention to the premediating, self-subjectifying dynamic resulting from the intuition and agony that media are everywhere, ubiquitous in late modern society, or what I shall refer to as the *imaginary of media omnipresence*.

While there is relative unanimity among scholars on the descriptive reference to mediatized politics as personalised, conversationalised and dramatised politics, there is nothing even close to such unanimity regarding the cause, extent, and consequences of the transformative meta-effect of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation as mediatic practices. For this reason, I have reserved the second chapter of this thesis for a consideration of the different accounts of mediatization which I shall present in the form of three theses: the *evolutionist* (mediatization as colonisation of politics by media logic), the *intended* (mediatization as adaptation to perceived media logics), and the *imagined* (mediatization as self-subjection to institutional media performativity) transformation of politics. While the first invites us to rethink political communication in a macrostructural/determinist manner that is sensitive only to the exclusionary paradigms in the study of ideology, the second moves to the other extreme, inviting us to rethink political communication in a microsocial/rationalist manner, sensitive only to one of the inclusionary

paradigms. Finally, the third comes to propose a rethinking of political communication in an discursively institutionalist manner, sensitive to the integrationist paradigm in the study of ideology.

Theoretical and analytical interpretations of the ideological status of political communication

Each of these three theses on mediatization, in conjunction with its epistemologically coterminous understanding of ideology, encourages and a different interpretation of the ideological status of contemporary political communication, what I shall refer to as *de facto non-ideological* or *a priori ideological* (evolutionist transformation), *possibly ideological* (intended transformation), and *potentially ideological* (imagined transformation) political communication. While the distinction between the second and the third interpretation is of crucial importance for this study, especially in terms of the different analytical methodologies to which they direct it (see below), the shift from the first to the last two is even more crucial, as it marks a radical transition from a *theoretical* to an *analytical* kind of interpretation. Both the 'de facto non-ideological' and 'a priori ideological' are interpretations based on grand theories of ideology and mediatization, theories which provide context-independent and often categorical explanations of social phenomena irrespective of the particular (communicative-discursive) practices through which, and contexts within which, they are experienced.

Take for instance Kent Asp's eight hypotheses about mediatized politics, an exemplar of the 'de facto non-ideological' interpretation. 'The more mediatized politics becomes', Asp writes, 'the more it will…(1) be characterized by personification; (2) evolve around politician's personal traits and attributes; (3) be marked by confrontation; (4) be constricted to a small number of clear-cut issues; (5) be marked by attempts to simplify; (6) appear as fragmented and *de-ideologized*; (7) evolve around political profiling and packaging; and (8) be oriented towards the game rather than the substantial politics' (2014a, p.364, emphasis added).

Arguably, all these 'hypotheses' fall into the repertoire of mediatic practices that I introduced earlier on – personalisation (hypotheses 1, 2 and 7), conversationalisation (hypotheses 4 and 5), and dramatisation (3 and 8) – except the sixth, which acts more as an interpretation of the rest: by becoming reduced to personal appeals, oversimplified clever tricks, and dramatic game-like performances, politics also becomes a fragmented and de-ideologised politics.

It is not that Asp, along with numerous other students of political communication who espouse similar interpretations (see indicatively Brock et al., 2005; Castells, 2009; Dahlgren and Gurevitch, 2005), does not provide any empirical evidence for his claims (he certainly does), or that his generalisation is not sensitive to local-contextual particularities, that make this interpretation a purely theoretical one. It is the fact that 'proving' that political discourse is now inundated with the aesthetic and affective elements of mediatic practices and, by extension, is fragmented, incoherent and heterogeneous, is not of itself evidence that aesthetics and affect are superficial idiosyncrasies without real politico-ideological significance or that fragmentation and heterogeneity are disturbances in the meaning-making process with no place in true politico-ideological discourse. These are taken-for-granted assumptions-causations deriving more from a liberal political normativity (see chapter two for more on this normativity) than from an analytical sensibility.

If we now switch our mode of thinking from this normativity to a revisionist political culturalism (see also chapter two), we may see aesthetics and affect as the very means by which political discourse binds people together as a collectivity of shared values, thereby sustaining the status quo. We may also see fragmentation-heterogeneity as the quintessence of a discursive hegemonic struggle, inextricably intertwined with the normalisation of social difference and asymmetry. Instead of de-politicising and de-ideologising political discourse, mediatic practices subtly '*structure* every event they signify, and *accent* them in a manner which reproduces the given ideological structures', as Stuart Hall (1977, p.344, emphasis original)

has powerfully stated, grasping the gist of the interpretation of political communication as 'a priori ideological' (see also Curran and Seaton, 1997; Fuchs, 2016a; Hall, 1982). Like its counterpole, what makes this interpretation a macro-theoretical one is not the lack of contextual evidence on the deep affinity of mediatic aestheticity to the making of political meaning and exercising political power (along with various other studies discussed later in the following chapters, this thesis will by itself provide such evidence), but rather the taken-for-granted assumption that such an affinity bears a testament to politico-ideological discourse as generator of dominant, shared-by-all, cultural values, and as a safeguard of social reproduction.

On the contrary, this study takes the problematic of ideology's place and role in contemporary political communication as an analytical more than a theoretical inquiry. Both the 'possibly' and the 'potentially ideological' political communication are interpretations based on a Foucauldian, *in situ* and *in actu* investigation of social phenomena. Such an investigation provides analytical explanations of social phenomena which take into account the sociohistorical context wherein they occur and the practices whereby they are experienced. Instead of categorically declaring the widely de-ideologising or supremely ideological nature of mediatization, the researcher needs to find the appropriate analytical tools that would allow her to evaluate concrete mediatic practices, as they emerge and operate in a given sociohistorical context, in terms of their 'fidelity to *ideological* ideal' (whatever this might be), to paraphrase John Street (2003, p.98).

The transition from macro-theoretical to micro-and-meso-analytical interpretations does not imply that we no longer need a theory of ideology and mediatization but rather that we need them in a different, heuristic way. Instead of theories that tell us categorically what ideology and mediatization are and are not, we need (first) a theory of ideology that tells *what to look for* when we look for the place and role of ideology in political communication, as the integrationist paradigm tells us to look for the recontextualization of institutional symbolisms

from the past and the ways recontextualization serves the institutional exercise of power in the present. Also needed is a theory of mediatization that tells us *where to look for* what we look, as the thesis of imagined transformation tells us to look into the institutional practices of media performativity. In Eckstein's words, we need a theory 'better conceived as a set of goals than as statements having a specified form' (2000, p.126). Instead of giving us ready-to-hand answers, the theories of ideology and mediatization should help us raise the right analytical questions, the empirical exploration of which will allow us, eventually, to reflect back onto the main problematic of this study.

- How do the conventional, institutionally embedded, patterns of media performativity emerge as concrete mediatic practices-performances at specific moments in time?

- How do these practices enable the recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past?

- What are the specific ways of thinking and acting to which recontextualizing mediatic practices give rise?

- How do these ways of thinking and acting respond to the pragmatic considerations with which institutions are currently confronted?

I shall return to these questions in the fourth chapter of this thesis, reformulating them in a way that speaks directly to the analytical vocabulary I will have introduced in chapter three. Why is such a vocabulary necessary, though? As I pointed out earlier on, there is not only one analytical interpretation of the ideological status of political communication; both the 'possibly ideological' and the 'potentially ideological' are analytical interpretations, but they are premised on different epistemologies about what we need to look for and where, when we look for ideology in political communication. For the 'possibly ideological' interpretation, we need to look for meaning-making as a possibility of the a*cts of adaptation to media logic,* while for the 'potentially ideological', we need to look for meaning-making as a potentiality in the

practices of self-subjection to media performativity (see chapter two for more on this distinction)*.* These epistemologies translate into different analytical methodologies, the methodology of interpretation of subjective, institutionally enabled/constrained, acts and the methodology of interpretation of conventional, institutionally embedded, practices, respectively.

Different analytical methodologies may share the same or different analytical vocabularies, that is, sets of tools for carrying out empirical analysis, or what is conventionally known as 'method'[2]. It is therefore necessary to lay out these tools in a cautious, consistent, systematic, and well-operationalised framework. This is the aim of the third chapter of this thesis, where I introduce what I call *analytics of mediatization*, an analytical framework which seeks to make sense of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation, and their recontextualizing potential, by paying distinctive attention to the discursive manifestation of mediatic practices (genres) in the techno-semiotic artefacts of political communication (media texts). By foregrounding this analytics, the current thesis seeks to contribute to an understanding of how mediatic performances are (aesthetically-affectively) organised and (socio-historically) ordered at certain moments in time and in certain institutional settings, hence as institutionalised recursive practices rather than single individual acts; it seeks to contribute to an understanding of political communication as potentially rather than possibly ideological.

Case-study based empirical analysis and its contribution to understanding the ideological potential of political communication

Central to an analytical interpretation, as already stressed, is the idea that the investigation of the subject-matter requires context-dependent empirical analysis, something that is also obvious in the research questions I set above; we cannot answer these questions without reference to certain institutional setting(s) and sociohistorical context(s). In this regard, *case-*

study research may be what this project needs to proceed with its empirical actualisation. As is thoroughly justified in chapter four, I have chosen to build a *paradigmatic case study* by taking genres of *political advertising* as exemplars of the mediatic practices-performances of political communication, *major political parties* as exemplars of the institutions where these practices are extensively employed, and *UK and Greece* as two institutional genealogies that exemplarily represent the two models of ideological politics that are mostly encountered in Western democracies. Ultimately, the study of the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication will take the analytical-empirical form of an analysis of election broadcasts produced by the major political parties in the UK (Conservative and Labour) and Greece (New Democracy and SYRIZA) in the run-up to the general elections of May 2015 and January 2015, respectively.

The findings from this analysis are presented in chapters five, six, and seven, organised across the different generic manifestations of the three interrelated performative practices of mediatization. The fifth chapter in particular demonstrates how personalisation is discursively articulated in the *talking head genre* of political advertising as a performance of charismatic leaders who authentically embody variations of a *politics* (recontextualizing dynamic) *of mission*. In the same vein, chapter six demonstrates how conversationalisation is discursively articulated in the *testimonial genre* as a performance of ordinary persons or activities which intimately re-institutionalise variations of a *politics of everyday life*. Finally, chapter seven explores how dramatisation is discursively articulated in the *cinéma-vérité* and *neutral reporter genres* as a spectacular performance, interactive and impersonal respectively, which ritualistically de-and-re-individualises variations of a *politics of belonging*.

Altogether, these performative moments of political advertising offer us a wide-ranging panoptic-global view of and insight into the repertoire of institutional media performativity, which goes beyond the dominant streams of research in political advertising, and political

communication in general. This insight does not tell us *what mediatic practices do to people*, as an acolyte of the 'media effect school' would expect, or *what people do with these practices*, as an anthropologist-ethnographer would be pleased to hear. Rather, it contributes to unpacking the *patterns of thought (ordering) and action (agency) with which people are confronted while engaging in mediatic practices*, not only with an eye to the audience that receives media texts but also to the institutions wherein these texts are produced. More than telling us what mediatized politics does, as if its form was a given and universal structure, or what we do with it, as if its form was what actors project on it each time, it tells us why mediatized politics is as it is in certain institutional settings at certain moments in time; why it takes one form rather than another at certain sociohistorical moments, and what this form reveals about the institutional past and its relevance to the institutional present. To this past-informed understanding of the present the current thesis seeks to contribute through the textual-discursive analysis of the generic formatting and institutional embeddedness of mediatic practices it conducts.

What such an analytical insight can, ultimately, suggest is that ideology does have a place and a role in contemporary political communication. It is not, however, the place and the role that the monolithic theoretical interpretations have reserved for it. Instead of certain theoretically approved action-oriented belief systems or order-sustaining signification systems, we need to look for ideology's place in the recontextualizing potential of the aesthetically variegated performativity (charismatic, ordinary, and spectacular) of mediatic practices and for its role in the spatiotemporal ordering (displacing, temporalizing or eternalising) and emotive-cognitive agency-enacting (partisan/dispositional or cross-partisan/surveillant) dynamics of this performativity. In doing so, as becomes clear in the Conclusion of this thesis, not only do we get a better understanding of how ideology operates in the age of mediatization but also how mediatized politics operates in what could be an (new) ideological age.

To return to professor Jansson's claim, we begin to see how ideological voices re-enter the realm of institutional politics, which is now engulfed not by the dichotomising polemic of grand narratives but by the personalising, conversationalising, and dramatising repertoire of media performativity. How right-and-left-wing identities and conservative-liberal-radical positions (with the different meanings they have been ascribed in contexts with different institutional genealogies, as in the UK and Greece) are renegotiated as symbolic extensions of mediatized charisma, ordinariness, and spectacle. We also begin to see how the repertoire of media performativity, far from being politically neutral/apolitical or biased, enables political parties to deal with institutional challenges and social pathologies and pathogenies in various, and often contradicting, ways. How different forms of institutional agency and ordering are enacted by the recontextualization of symbolic meanings, even in an (present) era distant enough from the one (past) in which these meanings were originally produced. This is, after all, why we should be still concerned with the place and role of ideology in political communication.

1. Conceptualising ideology

From exclusionary and inclusionary paradigms to an integrationist approach to the study of ideology

Talking about ideology involves talking about key notions in political philosophy, such as truth, knowledge, discourse, power, subjectivity and reflexivity, *inter alia*. All of these have their own long and epistemologically intricate conceptual trajectories. Destutt de Tracy, the alleged coiner of ideology as a term, ambitiously claimed for ideology the status of a 'science of ideas' in the service of true liberating knowledge (Lichtheim, 1965), while Marx formidably rejected the enlightening potential of ideas, deploring them as distortive representations of people's real conditions of existence (Marx and Engels, 1970). On the other hand, Mannheim (1954) used ideology to refer to conservative and reactionary systems of knowledge, inadequate for grasping the shifts society undergoes[1], whereas, Althusser (1984) stressed the eternality and inescapability of ideology as any system of representation through which people imaginarily relate to their real conditions of existence and constituted as social subjects.

It does not come as a surprise, after all, that Michael Freeden has given ideology the prominence as an 'archetype of political thinking' (2006, p.21), indicating that the debate around the concept of ideology is, fundamentally, an ontological debate over the different forms political thinking takes in the social world, thereby being communicated to and appropriated by political actors. At the same time, it is also a praxeological debate; a debate over the different ways in which political thinking is related to political praxis, to the organisation and reproduction of the social world. Taking this heuristic template of discussion as my point of departure, in the first part of this chapter I shall provide a brief overview of the different and antithetic disciplinary approaches to the ontology of ideology – ideology as production of political thinking, either in the form of concrete and coherent *belief systems* shared by specific social groups or in the form of holistic *signification systems* spread across

the whole culture of a society. I shall also provide a relevant overview for the praxeology of ideology – in an ideology, political thinking either mobilises certain forms of *action* by means of which subjects, reflexively, pursue their own interests, or it enacts certain forms of *subjectivity* via which actors, pre/non-reflectively, serve the reproduction of the social order.

In their intersection, these ontological and praxeological antinomies leave us with two exclusionary paradigmatic conceptions of ideology, ideology as *action-oriented belief system* and ideology as *order-sustaining signification system*. These two paradigms, as I will argue in the second part of this chapter, not only provide the backcloth against which post-modern ideological nihilism has gained support but also fail to grasp the historical nature and evolution of modern political thought and practice. I subsequently turn my attention to some inclusionary paradigms – ideology as *consensus-building, philosophically grounded meaning-making act* and ideology as *domination-serving, socially situated meaning-making act* – which try to overcome the antinomic fault-lines and binaries in both the ontology and praxeology of ideology. Insightful as they are in relating ideology to meaning-and-power-making, these paradigms suffer from their own 'anchorages' in the way they understand meaning and/or power, thereby raising the need for a truly integrationist approach to the study of ideology.

In such an approach, as I demonstrate in the final part of this chapter, both the ontological and praxeological binaries in the study of ideology are radically transcended. Instead of 'belief' or 'signification' systems, we now talk about *discourse; D*iscourse as the meaning making potential of semiosis in general (signification) and *d*iscourse as a concrete bundle of meaning in particular (belief or idea). Likewise, instead of 'reflexive actions' or 'pre-reflective subjectification' we now talk about *practice*; practice as a conventional institutionally embedded pattern of action that is recognised, and potentially-cumulatively transformed by actors, and practice as a pattern of thought or subjectivity whereby actors are habitually and routinely inculcated with certain institutional sedimentations. Out of this

integrationist approach, ideology emerges *as a discursive practice of recontextualization* of institutional symbolisms from the past which serves the institutional exercise of power in the present*;* it is, ontologically, both about signification and ideas without being about abstract and totalised signification systems or closed and static belief systems; it is, praxeologically, both about reflexivity and subjectification without being about voluntarist subjective action or determinist reproduction of social order.

The rise of the exclusionary paradigms

The ontology of ideology: between belief systems and semiotic systems of signification

Ontologically speaking, ideology has, within political science and social psychology, primarily been conceived as a system of socially shared (less commonly as individually held [see Jost, 2006]) beliefs, that is, a relatively coherent and compact set of ideas shared by specific social groups (Foley, 1994; Humphrey, 2005; Knight, 2006; Sartori, 1979). On the other hand, ideology has primarily been understood, within the critical theory of cultural studies, as a (any) system of making meaning through the production, circulation, and appropriation of various (religious, philosophical, historical, etc.) symbols; a semiotic system of signification accorded to culture as a 'whole way of life' (Althusser, 1984; Geertz, 1964; Hall, 1982).

The belief system approach to the ontology of ideology has epistemological roots in political philosophy's streams of rationalism and idealism. These are philosophical schools which both break with pure empiricism; they do not take empirical reality as a yardstick for assessing the validity of certain ideas but, instead, take the latter as the indispensable conceptual apparatuses via which humans can experience and understand reality. For rationalists, (rational) ideas hold the key to the liberation of human mind from fallacious beliefs, myths and superstitions, and therefore to accessing truth and knowledge (Mullins, 1972; Gouldner, 1976). For idealists, however, ideas are crucially bounded up by the inherent

limitations of human experience and reason, thus, they partially grasp or even distort the genuine truth which lies in a 'transcendental absolute' (Lichtheim, 1965). This is the backdrop against which both Marx's historical materialism (to which the epigones loosely refer as Marxism) and Mannheim's radical historicism have grown, although both would fiercely deny idealism as a label for their philosophical inquiry.

Marxism denounces ideas as distortions of the real, materially determined, conditions of human life, particularly of class divisions (Hawkes, 1996; McLellan, 1995). Ideas of individualism and self-fulfilment, for example, not only do not liberate human mind, but ensnare it in illusion (what is often referred in Marxist jargon as 'false consciousness') by propagating an understanding of labour as the proletariat's means of pursuing their own self-interest while, in fact, labour is the capitalists' asset out of which they make profit. Consequently, such ideas prevent the working class from realising the exploitative nature of the existing capitalist system of production, and therefore from revolting against it and paving the way towards a 'true' society, envisaged as a post-capitalist classless collectivism or communism.

Mannheim's view wants ideas as pieces of the inchoate knowledge of any historical period; all forms of knowledge are inevitably bounded by the limits of the socio-historical context within which they are produced and circulated[2]. There are, however, ideas which even in the wake of major socio-historical transformations fail to incorporate new forms of (still limited but more inclusive) knowledge, ultimately sustaining an outdated status quo (the conservatism of ideology). There are ideas, too, which, building on the new-emerging knowledge, envisage a new as yet unknown and uncharted social reality (the transcendentalism of utopia). It is the clash between these different sorts of ideas, what Mannheim (1954) refers to as the total evaluative conception of ideology, which informs and propels the search for the true knowledge in the form of an ongoing and cumulative dialectical process rather than a one-

off revolution (as Marx would have it). While both historical materialism and radical historicism, as analytical philosophies, try to unpack the falsity (in epistemic and ontological terms, respectively) of the dominant belief systems in any historical period, they also prescribe and universalise an ideal state of life; they amount to revolutionary and dialectic idealisms, respectively (see Eagleton, 1991).

Political science has gradually distanced itself from both crude rationalism and pure idealism in the course of the twentieth century, by associating ideology with any belief system (still coherent and relatively 'closed') irrespective of the rational or irrational, liberating or mystifying, factual or wishful aspects of the ideas it incorporates (Hamilton, 1987; Heywood, 2003; Seliger, 1976). From such a viewpoint, all rationalism-liberalism, Marxism, socialism and communism, as well as fascism and Nazism, and even feminism and anarchism could be attributed the label of ideology (Adams, 2001).

To sum up, ideology qua belief system is not guided by a given, empirically observed and objectively measured reality, but guides, partially explains or distorts our understanding of reality. In any case though, ideology clearly maintains an external relation to reality and its communication by political actors. Ideology may be expressed, transmitted and disseminated through various communicative acts but it certainly exists outside of and independently from them; it is irreducible to political communication (Hantz, 1996; van Dijk, 1998). This means that the latter may be ideologically informed in so far as it meets the (rationalist, idealist or any other) normativity of a certain belief system but it is not ideological per se. Arguably, in the case of absence or eclipse of these belief systems (under conditions of pragmatism/managerialism – see later on in this chapter – and mediatization – see next chapter) political communication is no longer ideological. By this token, the belief system approach to the ontology of ideology leaves the door open to the interpretation of political communication as de facto non-ideological.

In contrast, the signification system approach to the ontology of ideology, profoundly influenced by Wittgensteinean linguistic turn and the tradition of hermeneutics, problematises the external relation of ideology to reality by stressing that, in between ideas and the allegedly self-existing reality, there are symbolic systems by means of which people experience and understand their relation to the real conditions of their existence, and ideas are constituted as meaningful patterns of thought. Social reality therefore ceases to be a set of external, material or historical, conditions that are rectified or concealed by ideology and becomes a 'lived' imaginary of social relations construed *in* ideology (Althusser, 1984; Geertz, 1964; Hall, 1982).

For structuralists (primarily those influenced by Saussurean linguistics), the lived experience of reality is shaped by the structural differences that are inherent in the semiotic system of signification – primarily language (see Levi-Strauss, 1969; Veron, 1971). For post-structuralists, it is shaped by the social-institutional logics and differentials as they are reproduced and strengthened or weakened and eventually replaced through the various signification systems (see Foucault, 1980; Bourdieu, 1989). Nevertheless, ideology qua signification system has an internal relation to social reality, that is, ideology seeks neither to improve/liberate the reality we live by removing pre-modern fallacies (Destutt de Tracy) nor to mystify and distort it by reproducing the creeds of the dominant classes (Marx) or the obsolete knowledge of an outgoing historical era (Mannheim). Instead, ideology constructs social reality in the first place – the 'real' is what we experience through the systems of symbolic representation and communication that are embedded in the culture of a society – and therefore constitutes an ineradicable element of all communicative acts. By this token, the signification system approach to the ontology of ideology strongly advocates the interpretation of political communication as a priori ideological.

I shall return to the ontological problematic in the study of ideology later on while discussing some inclusionary approaches that try to overcome the dichotomy: belief system

versus signification system. Now, however, I would like to turn to the praxeological problematic and discuss the two fundamental templates of praxis to which ideology is often related: reflexive action and pre-reflective subjectification.

The praxeology of ideology: between reflexive action and pre-reflective subjectification

The debate around the praxeology of political ideology owes, undoubtedly, much to the development of theories of reflexivity in the study of social action. Influenced by the advancements of cognitive psychology in the 1950s and 1960s, and the rise of new institutionalism in the 1970s and 1980s, several political scientists and sociologists took the study of political/social action a step further than the behaviourism and rationalism of the early twentieth century, without necessarily and completely breaking with them (for an overview see March and Olsen, 1984). In short, social action is no longer the 'black box' of a purely intuitive or perfectly rational response; it is *reflexive* in the sense that the various external forces that play a role in its shaping, such as the availability of relevant information, popular perceptions of efficacy, structural limitations, etc., can be traced and evaluated by the actor who may subsequently readapt her goals and pursuits in the light of this evaluation (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1990). From this point of view, ideology can be said to provide individuals and groups with several incentives and causes for acting (often rationally) but not to causally determine behavioural or rational action, or as Mullins has put it 'the significance of ideology in mobilization is not that it "causes one to do" but that it "gives one cause for doing"' (1972, p.509). In a nutshell, ideology informs *agency*; it triggers, encourages or incentivises a variety of actions, the course and actualisation of which cannot be determined in advance by ideology itself as it is subject to actors' reflective monitoring of actions.

While for some political scientists and sociologists reflexivity may open new avenues in the study of political and social action, for many critical thinkers, especially from the Marxist and neo-Marxist traditions in social theory and cultural studies (see Hall, 1997), it

misrecognises the pre-reflective process of subjectification which produces actors and therefore actions in the first place. For them action cannot be, in any ideal situation, a supremely reflexive phenomenon because it is not always informed by actors' identifiable-measurable choices, and the reflection upon these choices, but by long-lasting and often unnoticed and covert – taken-for-granted – habits, routines, and 'ways of doing things'.

For 'core-structuralist' Marxists[3], these *sedimentations* carry with them the dominant values of a society, which function as a 'social cement' whereby people routinely and habitually adhere to the existing social order (Althusser, 1984; Poulantzas, 1975). By reconstructing and spreading a set of widely shared social values (i.e. individual freedom, family, national sovereignty, etc.) ideology serves to mystify (class, gender, racial, etc.) differentials, asymmetries, and inequalities in a society, and therefore to unify social actors in one and indivisible imagined body. For 'differentiated-structuralist' neo-Marxists[4], on the other hand, sedimentations are by no means value-universalities, but differ across institutional settings (e.g. different political parties), and among factions within the same institution (e.g. the fundamentalist-traditionalist and revisionist factions within the British Labour Party). They are institutionally embedded rather than socially diffused sedimentations, or simply *institutional sedimentations* as I shall refer to them; constellations of contradicting political dispositions and discourses which are irreducible to a fabric of socially shared-dominant values (Bourdieu, 1977; Foucault, 1980).

These contradicting discourses, however, necessarily undergo calibration, compromises, and concessions in their effort to make a legitimate claim to common sense, or what Gramsci (1971) has called 'hegemonic struggle', allowing certain social groups (the dominants) to elicit the consent of the others (the dominated). Ideology now serves to sustain and reproduce a social order, not by unifying actors into an imagined single body, but by subtly normalising, through the struggle for hegemony, the inevitable antagonisms and antitheses

among different actors. Hence, for both 'core' and 'differentiated' structuralism, the ideological praxis entails, in the end, the consensual social effect of subjectification whereby the existing social order is sustained and reproduced. Ideology either reflects a social consensus that is built upon some dominant common values, producing a 'core' subjectivity on the basis of which different antagonistic groups are unified, or it manufactures social consent by producing 'differentiated' subjectivities which, in their hegemonic struggle, normalise social dissent and fragmentation.

So far in this chapter, I have tried to sketch out a 'map' of the archetypal forms of the ontology and praxeology of ideology, stressing that the study of ideology has been traversed by some epistemological fault-lines/binaries: belief system vs signification system and reflexive action vs pre-reflective subjectification. In their intersection, these fault-lines give rise to two exclusionary paradigmatic conceptions of ideology: ideology as a set of beliefs oriented at the mobilisation of (reflexive) action, defended by rationalist and anti-Marxist Anglo-American political science, and ideology as a set of representations oriented at the reproduction of the social order through (pre-reflective) subjectification, defended by the interpretivist Marxist and neo-Marxist strands of continental cultural studies. These two exclusionary paradigms have been for decades now in a relentless and unresolved war which has nothing to offer to the study of ideology anymore. It has rather encouraged and amplified, as I am going to show in what follows, the eschatologic end-of-ideology views, spearheaded by post-modernists in both political science and cultural studies, instead of illuminating our understanding of the organic but nuanced and multifarious relation of ideology to political meaning and power.

The fall of the exclusionary paradigms: postmodernism and pragmatism

Post-modern theories have made the case, in a formidable critique of the 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm, that in contemporary politics there is no space for hermetically sealed antagonistic systems of ideas[5]. Grand political narratives had been already traumatised by the alleged post-war consensual politics of mixed economies and welfare states, losing much of their political grip (see Bell, 1960), but the final straw came with the collapse of the former communist regimes which is also purported to have signalled the triumph of liberal democracy worldwide (see Fukuyama, 1992). Politics is argued to have entered a phase of disenchanted and hard-headed pragmatism and managerialism, where the major concern is what to achieve not in terms of holistic worldviews and value systems (as all but capitalist liberal democracy is unachievable) but in terms of particular issue-oriented policies.

At the same time, turning their arrows against critical cultural theory, in a devastating critique of the 'order-sustaining signification system' paradigm, post-modernists have argued that the paramount binary oppositions of modernity, such as truth-falsity, dominant-dominated, power-resistance, etc., on which the signifying (mystifying or normalising) power of language is predicated, have collapsed (Harvey, 1990; Lyotard, 1984). The post-modern society is too fluid and complex to sustain some dominant cultural values upon which a unifying social subjectivity could be formed and, likewise, the antagonistic forces that do exist within different institutional milieus are too many and incongruent to lead to a consent-based hegemony (Lash, 2007). Overall, there are no structurally orchestrated signification *systems* whereby a single, consensual, social order could be established and reproduced but only a constellation of arbitrary and relativist signifying *acts* which *impromptu* generate, manage and terminate sphericules of social interaction (Castells, 2009; Gitlin, 1998).

Under the influence of this anti-ideological crusade of post-modernism, political projects embraced by the major right-and-left-centre parties across the West in the late

twentieth and early twenty-first century, such as so-called 'neoliberalism' and 'Third Way', have been insistently denied being either dogmatic belief systems or domination-serving signification systems (see Giddens, 1998). They are presented not as ideologies, but as realistic, pragmatic, effective, and workable responses to the severely complex and volatile socio-economic conditions of the current global era. As Tony Blair put it, 'the 21st century will not be a battle around ideology. But it will be a struggle for progress. Guided not by dogmatic ideology but by pragmatic ideals' (in Lees-Marshment and Lilleker, 2001, p.214). But where do these 'pragmatic ideals' come from? How are they organised and ordered in a meaningful way and how do they inform political action?

Such political projects are not coherent and closed belief systems in the strict sense, neither are they ahistorical *ex nihilo* constructions, completely disassociated from the rich and vast reservoir of ideas that shaped political conduct prior to their advent. They do not comprise dominant value systems and hegemonic coagulations of interests, but they cannot be reduced either to a set of socially presuppositionless acts and policies, isolated from the institutional interests and asymmetries of the sociohistorical context in which they emerged and unfolded. For instance, in Blairite Third Way politics, more commonly referred as the 'New Labour project', certain ideas draw on different pathways in the history of the Labour party: the idea of central planning coming from the democratic collectivist tradition; devolutionism and communitarianism from the democratic republican tradition (see Marquand, 2008 and chapter four of this thesis for more about these 'traditions'); equality and justice from ethical socialism; and individual-market freedom from classic liberalism (Atkins, 2011; Freeden, 1999). These strands have been spliced together, creating a controversial 'hybrid' or 'heteroglot' (Terdiman, 1985) rather than a coherent and compact system of beliefs or signification structures. *The organic link with the past, however, is clear*.

The New Labour hybrid has played a crucial role in the consolidation of several neoliberal transformations in the British state and society: by not challenging, for example, the privatisations carried out by previous administrations and by encouraging private business initiatives in the health sector and education (free market economy), thereby serving elite interests and reproducing economic inequalities (Couldry, 2010; Fairclough, 2000; Hall, 2011). At the same time, however, it was this very same project that initiated several significant ruptures with Thatcherite neoliberal economic doctrine and the neo-conservative approach to nation and society, by underpinning the introduction of the minimum wage and the increase in spending on health and education (ethical socialism), for instance, as well as the devolution of powers to the local authorities of Scotland and Wales and closer integration with Europe (devolution and communitarianism) (Leach, 2009). Consequently, it would be unduly simplistic to say that the New Labour project has merely sought to mystify or normalise social differentials so as to serve the reproduction of a single dominant (neoliberal) order, without this preventing us, however, from critically interrogating *the organic link between this ideological hotchpotch and the various institutional power dynamics with which it is enmeshed.*

If we are to understand this organic link of current political thought with history and of current political praxis with power, we need to turn our attention away from exclusionary and towards more inclusionary paradigms in the study of ideology. Such are those laid out by political theorists Bernard Brock, Mark Huglen, James Klumpp and Sharon Howell (Brock et al, henceforth) – *ideology as consensus-building, philosophically grounded meaning-making act* – and sociologist John Thompson – *ideology as domination-serving socially situated meaning-making act.* These accounts, as I will show, attempt a succinct and acute, albeit not entirely successful, disentanglement of ideology from the ontological and praxeological fault-lines discussed earlier on, by acknowledging, on the one hand, both the meaning-making dynamic of ideology qua signifying act and the organised-systematised character of ideologies

qua set of ideas and, on the other, the role of ideology in both mobilising concrete social actions and serving broader social relations of power.

The rise of inclusionary paradigms

Ideology and the philosophically grounded, consensus-building making of meaning

Brock et al. have done thorough and promising work on relocating ideology in contemporary political communication. Like most of their fellow scholars in political science, they acknowledge the importance of ideas in granting legitimacy to the motives, decisions, and actions of political institutions. Unlike them, however, Brock et al. are not willing, at least in principle, to reduce ideology to the 'grand narratives' of certain philosophical traditions per se (such as the liberal, conservative, radical and reactionary ones they discuss with reference to American politics). They rather take the latter as 'the texture of history, the past rationalizations and motivations for public action' (2005, p. 47), that is, a repository of ideas and beliefs which need to be rhetorically retrieved and reactivated by political institutions so as to constitute meaningful and consequential frames for current political practice.

History in the form of vernacular philosophies is inserted into present political practice, and current political motives and frames are grounded in history, not in an abstract and mystical way but through concrete and retractable forms of signification as they are deployed in certain institutional contexts. As Brock et al. succinctly put it, '[r]eal ideological work is rhetorical: it is performed in society within the communicative acts that constitutes orientation, justification, and legitimation and thus become the substance of political action' (2005, p.40). This is not to argue, however, that ideology may be identified with any meaning-making act. Indeed, as Brock et al. admit to their chagrin, the way politics is framed in contemporary political communication, through the commercial logic of media and the marketing techniques of political parties, is far from being ideological. What contemporary political communication

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does, at best, is to fragmentarily and opportunistically steal symbolisms, clichés, slogans and sound-bites from different traditions and schools of thought (what I call recontextualization) aiming for short-term popularity and winning of votes. Ideology, on the contrary, as Brock et al. understand it, is not about such symbolic manipulation or the production of easily digestible meanings, but about the making of coherent political meaning; it is about the coherent and consistent integration of the micro-discourses of everyday political practice with the mega-traditions of political history and philosophy by virtue of which long-term and strong majorities and political coalitions (a sort of socio-political consensus) can be established and reproduced, thereby assisting the effective exercise of power.

Undoubtedly, Brock et al. have made an invaluable attempt to reinvigorate interest in the place and role of ideology in political communication by critically revisiting the 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm which dominates their discipline, and which I have classified as one of the two exclusionary conceptions of ideology. Borrowing elements from the cultural and linguistic insights into the study of ideology, these political scientists have tried to mitigate the static view of (the ontology of) ideology as belief system, by arguing that the real ideological work is conducted in the various meaning-making acts of political communication; it is the latter that reconstitute the 'mammoth' beliefs of the past as meaningful and practical ideas for the present. They have also tried to mitigate the relativity and voluntarism that lurk in the view of (the praxeology of) ideology as mobiliser of reflexive action, by arguing that the real ideological work is not for language to arbitrarily grant legitimacy to any kind of institutional action that its holders may consider popular and electorally beneficial, but to coherently and consistently enable these actions that serve the building of socio-political consensus. It is, however, this obsession with coherence-consistency and consensus-building that has not allowed Brock et al. to avoid the *consensualism* of the other exclusionary paradigm – ideology qua 'order-sustaining signification system' – in the study of ideology, re-emerging

here as a *rational-liberal consensualism*; ideology may not be about the reproduction of a dominant order, it is, however, about the building of a socio-political consensus.

It seems, after all, that the bond between ideology and the meaning-and-power-making capacity of language-semiosis is not as deep and substantive as Brock et al. want us to believe. Meaning-making communicative acts provide orientation and justification for the current frames and motives of a political party *only insofar as* they realign the past with the present in a consistent and coherent manner, that is, by producing a tradition/philosophy-entrenched single narrative which enables the building of socio-political consensus. The coherence and consistency, however, which Brock et al. enshrine as the quintessential quality of ideological discourse is generally absent – not only from recent pragmatist and managerialist political hermaphrodites that allegedly rely on frivolous political marketing strategies, such as the New Labour project to which I referred earlier on. Coherence and consistency are hard to find even in the 'classic titans' of modern political thought, such as liberalism and conservatism (see Freeden, 2003; Leach, 2009), which Brock et al. recall as the philosophic traditions on which the communicative building of socio-political consensus relies. In general, as several scholars from a variety of different disciplinary backgrounds have argued, political projects of any era are characterised, more or less, by some kind of hybridity and incoherence, since all the political concepts with which they grapple are inherently contestable and indeterminate (Freeden, 2003; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Thompson, 1984). Political concepts are not imbued with a fixed and everlasting meaning but are ascribed different 'regimes of meaning' (Chouliaraki, 2006) in different sociohistorical contexts, that is, they are temporarily constituted as concrete action-oriented ideas through an otherwise ongoing and open-ended socially situated process of meaning-making.

Ideology and the socially situated, domination-serving making of meaning

It is exactly this ongoing and open-ended but socially situated process of meaning-making that Thompson locates at the heart of what he calls a critical conception of ideology. Inspired by the works of Austin and Giddens, he has argued that individuals and groups by producing, circulating, and appropriating symbolic forms (a broad range of artefacts, from utterances and gestures to texts, images, and videos) in their own life-contexts, do not merely reproduce the structural arrangements of a specific semiotic or social system (1990). Rather, they perform a social act, and become actors themselves, since to ascribe meaning to a subject-matter, that is to signify, is to construct this subject-matter in a specific meaningful way, thereby making an impact on the structure and organisation of the social and semantic context wherein this signifying act takes place.

This impact, however, cannot be reduced to a single mega-impact, such as the reproduction of social order, since, to put it bluntly, there is not a single and homogenous social order to be reproduced. As Thompson has written, 'social theory can relinquish the need to find a conductor for the concert of social reproduction, not so much because this concert is performed without a conductor […] but because social reproduction is less a concert than a cacophony of discordant and divergent notes' (1984, p.62). By this token, actors use symbolic forms in various ways, according to their own interests and goals, which may have a variety of unsorted and unpredictable social consequences. At the same time, however, the access to the resources (material and symbolic) necessary for the effective use of symbolic forms – on which the impact of signifying acts, whatever that is, depends each time – is not equal for all actors and cannot be fully controlled by them. On the contrary, symbolic accessibility is subject to systematic social asymmetries that often result in the establishment of numerous (not one and single) relations of domination, ranging from class-and-gender based to nation-and-ethnicity based, and varying in strength and durability.

Signifying acts are not only conditioned by but also conditioning of the structural arrangements of the context wherein they are situated. On the one hand, the capacity of actors to effectively use symbolic forms is ordered by the contextual-institutional asymmetries and relations of domination and, on the other, the making of meaning as a social act itself comes to reorder these relations of domination; it may establish and sustain or challenge and disrupt them. Thompson influentially states that insofar as 'meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination' (1990, p. 56) a signifying act is ideological. From this point of view, signifying acts are not ideological per se, as they are, for instance, in the 'order-sustaining signification system' paradigm, but they become ideological '[…] in so far as they serve, in particular circumstances, to maintain relations of domination' (Thompson, 1990, p.56).

Thompson has, beyond any doubt, produced a concise critical account of what ideology is and how it matters in modern societies. He has tried, sometimes more successfully than others, to avoid the monolithic fault-lines in the ontology and praxeology of ideology. There are still, however, three problematic assumptions in this account to which I would like to turn my attention now and which, in my view, do not allow us to move freely towards an integrationist conception of ideology.

The first problematic assumption is concerned with a relativistic approach to the ontology of ideology. In his effort to avoid the static (belief system) and determinist/totalising (signification system) conceptions of ideology, Thompson seems to have fallen into a relativist one, particularly in implying that any meaning-making act, regardless of the nature and origin of the symbolic forms it involves, may be ideological insofar as it serves the establishment and sustainment of relations of domination. Such an assumption, as I wish to argue, does not pay enough attention to the historicity of (ideological) political discourse. As I have already pointed out earlier in this chapter, political discourse may not be characterised by a coherent and systematic integration of history in the form of a belief system or philosophical tradition. It

does rearticulate, however, even fragmentarily and contradictorily, ideas and symbolisms from the past. After all, what Thompson calls 'symbolic forms' are 'symbolic for a social group primarily because their (socio-historically contingent) meaning points, by abstraction and convention, to practices, ideas, events, personalities, etc. that hold a prominent place in the group's history (van Leeuwen, 2001, see also chapter three of this thesis for more about symbolic meaning). As I will argue in the next part of this chapter, ideology is about meaning-making but specifically about the making of meaning through the recontextualization of symbolisms from the past of the institutional setting wherein the meaning-making process is situated.

The second and the third problematic assumptions in Thompson's work which I want to raise here are concerned with the praxeology of ideology, particularly with the way ideology is purported to serve the exercise of power. Thompson has made the case, largely influenced by Giddens' structuration theory, that individuals and groups seek, through their actions, to pursue their own interests but they have to do so within the limits set by the structural asymmetries of the context in which they act; hence, actions may serve, in the end, to reproduce relations of domination. Although this *contextualism* might suggest a nuanced approach to the sociological problematic of agency-structure, it only considers the case that actors are, or may potentially be, aware of the purpose and the limitations of their actions – it only considers reflexive actions. The ways people act, however, are rarely under their full reflexive monitoring, not because people 'do not know what they do or why they do what they do', but because they cannot be always aware of 'what what they do does', as Foucault has suggested (in Krips, 1990, p.173).

Political actions, in other words, do not constitute individual peculiarities adapted to structural conditions/limitations, but manifestations of ways or patterns of acting that are often too deeply rooted and embedded in actors' micro-cultures to be noticed and scrutinised.

Consequently, actors do not always recognise, or indeed they misrecognise as Bourdieu (1977) contends, that they act while drawing on some conventional institutionally embedded patterns of action (practices). They misrecognise that instead of performers of an ideology, they are performed (constituted as concrete social subjects) by ideology (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). By this token, ideology is better conceived as an institutional practice, a conventional pattern of meaning-making and acting shaped by institutional sedimentations, than a subjective action, a single individual meaning-making act demarcated by the contextual opportunities and constraints that actors are confronted with.

The third, and last, problematic assumption in Thompson's understanding of the praxeology of ideology is partly a derivative of the second. Taking into account only the reflexivity of action-actor, Thompson suggests that a more or less clear distinction can be made between *domination-sustaining* and *domination-challenging* meaning-making acts, where the formers are the ideological and the latter rather signal an 'incipient form of the critique of ideology' (1990, p.64). If, however, as I pointed out above, meaning-making acts are not supremely reflexive, the sustainment of domination cannot be just taken to confirm the actors' success, due to structural-contextual opportunities, in acting according to their domination-sustaining intentions or their failure, due to structural-contextual limitations, in acting according to their domination-challenging ones. More than a success or failure of subjective action, the sustainment and/or disruption of relations of domination is, as I will further explain in the next part of this chapter, an ordering effect of institutional practices: the discursive capacity of practices not to raise opportunities and constraints for actors[6] but to *make* them the actors they are in the first place[7].

To sum up, the concept of ideology needs to overcome, ontologically, the historical determinism that considers ideological only meaning-making acts that are consistently-coherently grounded in philosophical traditions. It must do so, however, without falling into a

historical relativism that takes as ideological any meaning-making act insofar as it serves to establish and sustain relations of domination. It also needs to overcome, praxeologically, the rational-liberal consensualism which relates ideology to actions that are oriented at the building of socio-political consensus, without falling into a critical-reflexive contextualism and relating ideology to actions structurally enabled to sustain or disabled from challenging relations of domination. For this to be accomplished, as I argue in what follows, we need to move towards an integrationist approach to the study of ideology which employs the concept of *discourse* (as practice) to understand the ontology of ideology and the concept of *practice* (as discourse) to understand the praxeology of ideology; overall, we need to move towards the (re)conceptualisation of ideology as a discursive practice.

Towards an integrationist approach: ideology as discursive practice of recontextualization

Some preliminary notes on practice and discourse

Understanding ideology as discursive practice does not merely require a terminological but, importantly, a paradigmatic shift, presupposing familiarisation with a distinctive corpus of social theory, namely, practice and discourse theory. In fact, there is not a unitary theory of practice and discourse but different theoretical attempts to establish a practice-and-discourse based paradigm of social inquiry, from Foucault (1977) and Bourdieu (1977) to Schatzki (1999) and Swidler (2001), which would transcend the intransigent and pernicious binary oppositions of classical sociology, i.e. structure vs agency, reproduction vs change, domination vs resistance, etc. My aim here is not to deal with the different epistemologies that underlie practice-discourse theory but to illustrate how some overarching principles, shared by different and potentially divergent theoretical accounts, can inform an integrationist approach to ideology as discursive practice.

To begin with, theories of practice take as their point of departure, in line with theories of rational action and reflexivity, the principle that every human action has a distinctive character, irreducible to abstract social structurality. Unlike most theories of rationality and reflexivity, however, theories of practice suggest that social actions, distinctive as they are, also follow some conventional patterns of conduct and operation which substantially shape their form and evolution (Schatzki, 1999). For example, going to a supermarket and buying product 'a' instead of 'b' is clearly my decision, but grocery shopping itself, as an activity in which we all engage to some extent, is underlain by some recurrent patterns, such as grabbing a basket, following the route in the corridors of the store, asking the staff for assistance when I cannot find a product, waiting in the queue for an available till, etc. These are activity patterns which exist independently from my own instrumentalities; they have a life of their own. Practice as a concept refers exactly to this self-existing, regular and conventional *patterned form of action*, reminding us that social acts do not take place randomly and arbitrarily but in relatively structured and organised forms (Couldry, 2012).

The conventional and recursive patterns that define social practice are primarily attributable to the particular (institutional) context within which practice is situated – patterns of shopping in a supermarket, for instance, are somehow different from patterns of shopping in a clothes shop and quite different from patterns of shopping in an app store online. They constitute contextual-institutional sedimentations (rather than opportunities and constraints) almost automatically and unconsciously applied to human action (Swidler, 2001). Arguably, we are not taught what a social practice is, in the sense that we are not technically trained in practising practices; we rather come to 'feel' and 'embody' them as a result of repetition, habituation and routinisation (Butler, 1990). Practice is therefore a socially situated conventional-habitual pattern of action. However, the conventional aspect of practice does not

preclude social discontinuities and change, nor does its patterned and ordering aspect eliminate social inconsistency or fluidity.

On the one hand, practices organise and order social action not in a single monological manner but in various, sometimes harmonic, sometimes contradicting and conflicting manners, as the institutional sedimentations out of which practices emerge are not like homogenous totalities as much as heterogeneous partialities. Indeed, within social sites of interactions, as the 'differentiated-structuralist' approach to the praxeology of ideology has highlighted (see earlier in this chapter), there are different sets of potentially contradicting and incongruous dispositions and trends which galvanise different forms of subjectivity (e.g. intra-party factions). To put it in a post-Bourdieusian frame of analysis, within social fields there is not one concerting and homogenising habitus but different and discordant 'habituses' (Reay et al., 2001).

On the other hand, the conventionality and repetitiveness of social practice does not mean that concrete actions, shaped as they are by certain practices, necessarily and infinitely reproduce practices. Social practices may be modified and potentially decay as a result of the '[…] cumulative consequences of collective action, a possibility which underlies the essentially creative and transformative character of action' (Thompson, 1984, p.129). Consequently, a theory of practice would seek to explain the relative stability and endurance of some patterns of action in specific institutional settings without reducing them to impermeable and intransigent structures. It would seek to highlight the pre-reflective embodiment of practices without reducing it to a domination-serving subjectification, as it would also seek to do justice to the cumulative reconfiguration or transformation of practices without reducing it to the voluntarism of subjective action. To this end, practice theory enjoys a far-reaching co-articulation with discourse theory.

As Chouliaraki and Fairclough have stressed, 'all practices have an irreducible discursive aspect, not only in the sense that all practices involve use of language to some degree, but also in the sense that discursive constructions of practices are themselves parts of practices' (1999, p.26). First of all, discourse 'behaves' as practice rather than as a coherent system (of belief or signification) or a random act of enunciation. Discourse is, in Swidler's words, 'not what anyone says, but the system of meanings that allows them to say anything at all' (2001, p.75). The choice of the word 'system' is probably an unfortunate one to refer to discourse as practice, but what Swidler seeks to demonstrate is that discourse is about the production of meaning through certain patterns of signification neither structurally imposed nor subjectively intended. It is about patterns of meaning-making, routinely and habitually embedded in certain institutional settings, which function as conventions – institutional sedimentations – rendering single individual communicative acts possible. As Susen illustrates, synthesising Bourdieu's and Boltanski's insights into the historicity of practices, 'every foreground performative act is situated within a *background horizon*, from which it draws the symbolic and material resources that allow for its coming-into-being in the first place' (2014, p.105, emphasis added).

This 'background horizon' cannot be adequately understood in terms of a macrosocial dimension, such as history in the form of a shared tradition/culture of the whole society, or a microsocial dimension, such as history in the form of biography of the individual actor. It must be understood, instead, in terms of an *institutional* dimension (hence my persistent reference to 'institutional settings' and 'institutional sedimentations') since, as Chouliaraki and Fairclough argue, 'the institutional dimension of practice is important in critical social science because institutions have internal logics that can be reduced neither to abstract structures nor to cluster of events' (1999, p.22). Internal institutional logics or sedimentations primarily reflect the cumulative consequences of collective action, that is, the ongoing and open-ended

discursive struggle among different groups and factions for authority and power. From this viewpoint, not only does discourse behave as practice, but practice behaves as *discursive institutionalisation,* 'the process by which institutions are produced and reproduced' (Phillips et al., 2004, p. 638).

Problematically, most institutional theories in political science and sociology do not tell us much about this process. They tells us, for example, how an institution as a set of 'rules and resources' provides opportunities and constraints for subjective action (see Cook, 1998; Giddens, 1984; Sparrow, 1999), but not how these rules and resources have come into being in the first place, shaping what, *a posteriori*, is recognised as an institution. As I wish to argue, echoing some voices from within the 'new institutionalism' branch, we need to turn our analytical attention to discourse[8] if we are to understand institutionalisation, as it is discourse that allows for certain rules and resources to be meaningfully circulated and reproduced among actors and, therefore, to acquire a relatively fixed and enduring form. It is discourse that 'brings into existence in an instituted, constituted form (…) what existed up until then only as a collection of […] purely additive series of merely juxtaposed individuals' (Bourdieu, 1989, p.23). In other words, discourse constitutes institutional practices as what they are: meaningfully organised and ordered patterns of actions that social actors can recognise and trace in the course of history, thereby heightening and elevating certain practices, as elements of an institutional tradition and identity, while downplaying and silencing others (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Consequently, instead of driving us away from institutional reflexivity, the concept of discourse re-dissects reflexivity as a dimension of practice – not of the single individual action or actor.

By this token, institutionalisation refers to the discursive process that cumulatively turns a matrix of past actions into a present convention and sedimentation, into the 'background horizon' or 'internal logic' that provides the point of reference for current and future social

acts[9] (Price, 2007). Arguably, seen through a synchronic prism, practices are always-already institutionalised practices, that is, discursive sedimentations that pre-exist actors ordering their actions. At the same time, seen through a diachronic prism, discursive sedimentations do not exist on their own as self-referential constructs; discourse exists only and always in conjunction with other economic, political, cultural and, generally, social activities, allowing them to be constituted as meaningful/recognisable-traceable practices (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Hence, all practices are discursive practices but not only discursive. Having sketched out the major principles of a practice-discourse based paradigm of social inquiry, it is now time to move to the next, and final, step of distilling all this insightful commentary into a consistent conceptual framework of ideology.

Ideology as discursive practice of recontextualization

Talking about ideology in terms of discursive practice is, unsurprisingly, conceiving ideology as a socially-institutionally situated conventional activity of making political meaning (what Fairclough [2003] calls *Di*scourse); an activity of de-contestation of the inherent contestability and indeterminacy of political concepts which allows the production and configuration of meaningful political ideas and beliefs (Freeden, 2013). It is also conceiving ideology as the product of this activity, the concrete bundles of meaning themselves (what Fairclough [2003] calls *di*scourse[10]) that political actors can recognise as such and make use of them (reflexivity of practice) in ways that are, at the same time, pre-shaped by certain institutional sedimentations (the subjectifying dynamic of practice). In the final analysis, ideology as discursive practice is about making sense of the *historicity* of political discourse and the inextricable link between political discourse and the *exercise of power*. Allow me to focus at greater length on these two aspects in the study of ideology as discursive practice.

As Freeden has argued, 'to conceive of an ideology as a practice is both to embed it in an historical setting, and to internalize history as a necessary dimension of ideology' (2000,

p.306). The historically embedded character of ideology rests with the institutional situatedness of discourse as practice; if there is something that the inclusionary paradigms, and even before them the differentiated-structuralist approach to the praxeology of ideology, have helped us realise so far, it is that discursive practices carry with them not the dominant value-systems of society as a whole (which hardly exist), but the historical conventions and sedimentations of the specific institutions wherein they are situated. By this token, from a discourse-practice perspective, we cannot talk about ideologies as abstract and universal systems of thought which exist independently from and irrespective of institutions. Robert Leach, for example, more of an 'action-oriented belief system' thinker, notes in his discussion of British conservatism that '[…] conservative ideas sometimes have to be inferred from the practice of the Conservative Party and individual Conservative politicians' (2009, p.54). Relatedly, Freeden (2003) prefers to refer to liberalism*s,* socialism*s,* feminism*s,* etc. stressing that ideologies are, to some extent, the products of the logically and culturally shaped (historical) practices of meaning-making.

Not only historically embedded, ideology as discursive practice is also *historicising,* in the sense that discourse by carrying historical conventions and sedimentations does not merely reproduce them; it actively engages in a process of reworking historical symbolisms – emblems, ideas, concepts, even entire discourses that hold a symbolic meaning for a certain institutional context – bearing several socio-political consequences. 'Discursive practice, therefore, is always "reproductive and transformative", because the particular configuration of discourses produces a "new, changed, transformed arrangement"' (Kress and van Leeuwen, in Price, 2007, p.193). The reworking of historical symbolisms is effectively a 'politics of signification' (Hall, 1982), a discursive practice that involves the disarticulation of symbols from the meaning they were initially attached in a specific context (social and semantic) and their re-articulation with new chains of meaning in a different context; hence, it is a discursive practice of *recontextualization* (see Berstein, 1990; Chouliaraki, 2000; Chouliaraki and

Fairclough, 1999; Krzyzanowski, 2016; Wodak, 2000; Wodak and Fairclough, 2010). By providing us with a conceptual (and, as I argue in chapter three, analytical) device that grasps the institutionally situated historicality and the historically embedded institutionality, that is, the historicity of political discourse, recontextualization needs to be posited in the heart of the integrationist conception of ideology as discursive practice (Kissas, 2017a). In fact, several accounts, from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, have placed it there explicitly or, more often, implicitly.

The most explicit reference comes from Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) who stress that:

> an ideological practice recontextualizes the social practices it draws upon: that is, it delocates them from their original contexts and inevitably in so doing dislocates them, ''breaks off'' certain aspects of them from the rest; and it relocates them, bringing different social practices into a new relation which is dictated by the internal logics of the ideological practice itself […] (p.31)

Recontextualization in this sense can also be said to be boldly implied in Freeden's (2003) view of ideology as a practice of de-contestation of political meaning. Freeden argues that in an ideology, a variety of inherently contestable and indeterminate concepts with conterminous or incommensurate genealogies are drawn and spliced together, thereby being relationally redefined – ascribed new meanings because of their (logically-culturally constrained) coexistence and interplay in a new semantic context. In the classic Anglo-American liberalism of eighteenth century, for instance, the concept of freedom, closely related to the ideas and values of the Enlightenment, was conceived as freedom from the divinely-ordained power of the monarch, while in the Anglo-American (neo)liberalism of the twentieth century, freedom was redefined, in the light of the resurrection and radicalisation of Smithean philosophy and increasing hostility to state interventionism, as market freedom. Consequently, although meaning is *in principle* inherently contestable, *in practice* it appears relatively de-contested and fixed thanks to the ordering and organising effect of recontextualization.

Illustrative too, and of critical value, is Thompson's (1990) hint to recontextualization in his analysis of the 'modes of operation of ideology', such as legitimation and dissimulation of social asymmetries. Legitimation may be attained, among others, as Thompson demonstrates, through the recounting of past symbols in a narrative that seeks to construe the present as an integral part of a timeless tradition (narrativization). Likewise, dissimulation may be effected through the transferring of the positive or negative connotations of historically salient symbolisms to objects or subjects that are relatively unknown to the public, to create from them a likable/attractive or vicious/appalling, recognisable pubic image (displacement). In both cases, as it is obvious, a process of disarticulation and re-articulation – recontextualization – of symbolisms is underway.

The centrality of recontextualization in ideology, however, can be traced as back as in the work of Mannheim and even in that of Marx. As I have already noted earlier in this chapter, the Mannheimean transition from the 'non-evaluative particular' concept of ideology – in which ideology emerges as the inevitably limited/distorted knowledge of any historical era – to the 'evaluative total' concept of ideology – in which ideology remerges as this evidently outdated form of knowledge of an outgoing era that needs to be replaced by a new, more inclusive one – is not a process of abrupt breach with the ideas and forms of knowledge of the past. It is rather a cumulative and dialectical process, a process which retains from the past what deserves to be saved while adapting it to the new-emerging conditions of the present; it is a recontextualizing process.

Finally, in 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', Marx holds the view that the tumultuous events of 1848-1851 in France led to the coup d'état by Louis Bonaparte (rather than to a mass revolution) because of Bonaparte's capacity, by recalling the heroic figure of Napoleon, to ensnare the French peasantry in myths and traditions of the past (Thompson, 1990). As Thompson has succinctly commented on Marx's analysis, 'the *coup d'état* can be

explained, not by showing that the key classes acted in accordance with their alleged interests […] but rather by claiming that they acted in accordance with a tradition which was re-activated by the words and images of an impostor' (1990, p.43); that is, in accordance with a recontextualized tradition.

All these accounts not only point to the recontextualizing dynamic of political discourse as a fundamental feature of (the ontology of) ideology but also to the pivotal role ideology, as discursive practice of recontextualization, plays in the institutional exercise of power (the praxeology of ideology). For Marx, recontextualization (of traditional myths) has a mystifying effect, as it prevents the peasantry form realising that its real interests are not those allegedly represented by Bonaparte, thereby serving the restoration of an oppressive regime. For Mannheim, recontextualization (of knowledge) may contribute either to the sustainment of an outdated social order – when it fails to significantly change and revolutionise the meaning of the ideas from the past (ideology) – or to the genesis of a new one – when it enables the re-articulation of past ideas with radical and transcendental meaning (utopia). For Freeden, recontextualization (of concepts) gives rise to polymorphous discursive formations which may accommodate a variety of competing interests and goals, thereby facilitating the mobilisation of a broad range of institutional actions and the justification of ambiguous, and for some groups potentially unpleasant, policies and decisions. For Chouliaraki and Fairclough, recontextualization (of discourses) results in moments of temporary closure or mystification of this hybridity (see below about ontological mystification): the establishment of regimes of meaning which construe social relations as *given* and *taken for granted* at the very moment that they order and organise them in accordance with a certain hegemonic cluster of (class, gendered, racial, etc.) interests.

As I have already contended, however, some of the aforementioned views are built on unidimensional interpretations of the convoluted phenomenon of power in late modernity.

Particularly problematic, in this regard, are the consensual and determinist approaches, according to which exercising power over society means being able to reproduce a single dominant social order, either by distorting its class-ridden nature (the Marxist legacy) or by binding people to a set of shared values (the core consensual assumption of mystification-unification). On the contrary, echoing Foucault, I believe that in our modern conceptualisations of power 'we need to cut off the King's head' (in Neal, 2004, p.373). Power is not concentrated in a handful of independent and impervious centres but is diffused in myriads of interdependent, elastic, and permeable networks requiring therefore that we shift our attention from the *reproduction of centres within systems* to the *production of nodes within networks* (Castells, 2009; Lash, 2007). It is this chronic, multivalent, and unpredictable production of the social as it is conducted through institutional practices, and the inherent in practices meaning-making dynamics of discourse, which lies at the heart of modern power (Butler, 1993; Foucault, 1980; Lacalu and Mouffe, 1985). Such a pluralisation and ontologisation of power, however, should by no means drive us away from 'traditional' views of power, both as mobilisation of action to achieve certain ends (influence) and as systematic exclusion from certain economic, cultural, and symbolic resources (domination) (see Lukes, 2005).

By postulating that practices produce the social, I do not endorse post-modern (post-symbolic/neo-material) relativism and nihilism, according to which practices unconditionally and arbitrarily *generate* the social (see Lash, 2007). Instead, I align with post-structuralist relationalism and critical realism in contending that practices rather *construct* the social through some 'taxonomic classifications', as Couldry (2012) puts it using a Durkheimian analogy, which draw their origin in institutionally embedded and historically-discursively materialised sedimentations. These taxonomic classifications always involve some sort of mystification. By claiming, for instance, that the Labour party is a social-democratic or left-wing or socialist or pro-market party, I inevitably mystify the sociohistorical contingency of

all these classifications. I misrecognise that under different social-historical conditions and circumstances the Labour party might have adopted different identities, and that under the same social-historical conditions and circumstances it might have practised more than one identity. This is, however, a form of *ontological* rather than *epistemological* (Marxist) *mystification*, in the sense that what is misrecognised here is not the possibility of an 'absolute truth' opposed to the 'ideological truth' (e.g. the classification 'socialist' for the Labour party conceals the 'truth' that the party is entrenched in liberalism-capitalism), but rather 'the precarious character of any positivity, the impossibility of any ultimate structure' (Laclau 1990, 92). The classificatory function of recontextualization has a mystifying effect in that it imposes a closure (a regime of meaning) on the otherwise open-ended construction of the social (meaning-making process).

Inevitable and intrinsic to discursive practices as it is, this mystifying effect is neither equally beneficial for/detrimental to different social groups (as liberal-pluralist functionalism would want it – see Curran, 2002) nor exclusively beneficial for a certain hegemonic group and detrimental to all the others (as neo-Marxist/radical functionalism would want it, instead – ibid). By being both reproductive and transformative, as stated above, recontextualization may serve to strengthen and reproduce several interests and asymmetries at the expense of others, as it may serve to challenge and undermine some interests and asymmetries while serving some others. By this token, ideology qua recontextualization is not about securing, by means of epistemological mystification, an already established dominant order or establishing, by means of ontological mystification, a hegemonic one, but about serving the ongoing and precarious *ordering* of the social (Couldry, 2012). From this point of view, the (ontological) mystification of the sociohistorical contingency of discursive constructions does not cease to matter in the *modus operandi* of ideology qua recontextualization (see Thompson, 1990); from an end in

itself in the ideological hegemonisation of the social, it re-emerges as one of the means for the ideological ordering of the social.

To get, however, a complete picture of how ideology serves the institutional exercise of power, we need to carefully explore (through an analytical framework that I delineate in chapter three) the dialectic between the *agency-enacting* and *ordering* capacity of discourse, or, as Freeden stresses, 'unintentional thought-practices deserve to be treated as seriously as purposive ones' (2000, p.307). Crucially, for certain interests and goals to be promoted someone has to purposefully act or, to put it better, someone has to be mobilised to act in certain ways and demobilised from acting in others. In any case, actors must *recognise ideologies* in the form of institutionally shared ideas and beliefs (discourse) to be able to invoke them as justificatory backgrounds of their actions or inactions. At the same time, however, nobody can act or be mobilised to act unless she has been already discursively constituted – 'interpellated or hailed', to use the Althusserean metaphor (Althusser, 1984) – as an institutional actor. *Ideology* as the recontextualizing practice through which political subjectivities are enacted (Discourse) is *misrecognised*, in the sense that individuals and groups become the institutional actors they are, not by being explicitly and officially trained and taught to do so, but by being, unintentionally, habitually and routinely subjected to and inculcated with certain institutional sedimentations. Consequently, there is no ideological agency/action without ideological ordering/subjectivity or as Butler has put it:

> the paradox of subjectivation is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms [sedimentations] is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms. Although this constitutive constraint does not foreclose the possibility of agency, it does locate agency as a reiterative or rearticulating practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power (1993, p.15).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced an integrationist (re)conceptualisation of ideology in an attempt to overcome the monolithic fault-lines (belief system vs signification system and reflexive action vs pre-reflective subjectification) in the study of ideology, and along with them some exclusionary paradigms (ideology as action-oriented belief system and ideology as order-sustaining signification system) that have little to say about the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. Such a (re)conceptualisation of ideology has been begged, and significantly fostered, by some inclusionary paradigms, on which I have extensively elaborated in this chapter (ideology as consensus-building, philosophically grounded meaning-making act and ideology as domination-sustaining, socially situated meaning-making act), but it only fulfils its true integrationist potential within a practice-and-discourse based paradigm. Building on this paradigmatic backdrop, I have suggested we understand ideology as a discursive practice of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past which serves, through enacting certain forms of ordering and agency, the institutional exercise of power in the present.

The concept of recontextualization helps us release the historicity of political discourse from the 'cages' of coherence and closeness (as belief system or philosophically grounded meaning-making), structural totality (as signification system) and relativist openness (as any socially situated meaning-making act), without preventing us from, simultaneously, studying (the ontology of) ideology both as signification, that is, discursive/meaning-making practice, and ideas, that is, discourse/clusters of meaning. Recontextualization also helps us disentangle the power dynamic of political discourse from the voluntarism of reflexive action (as any belief-informed or domination-sustaining action) and the consensualism of pre/non-reflective subjectification (as reproduction of social order or building of socio-political consensus). It does so without preventing us, at the same time, from studying (the praxeology of) ideology

both in terms of reflexivity, as discursive enactment of agency that allows actors to act in certain ways, and subjectification, as discursive ordering that does not allow actors to realise how their actions may serve to sustain or challenge social asymmetries/relations of domination.

The purpose of this thesis, as I have explained in the Introduction, is not to produce a treatise on ideology but to understand the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. To this end, the theoretical reconceptualisation of ideology is not enough and this is because the problematic of this study requires that we know not only *what* to look for, when we look for ideology in political communication (recontextualization of symbolisms), but also *where* to look for it, especially in an age political communication is shaped by mediatic practices entailing the transformation of political discourse – the age of *mediatization*. If the theoretical debates in the study of ideology, and particularly the integrationist perspective I have eventually employed, help us navigate the *what*, the theoretical debates in the study of mediatized politics, and particularly the discursive institutionalist approach to mediatization I advocate in the next chapter, will help us navigate the *where*. I shall, therefore, now turn my attention to these debates.

2. Conceptualising mediatization
Evolutionist, intended, or imagined transformation of political discourse?

The claim that contemporary politics is *mediatized politics*, albeit provocative and controversial, especially for old-school political scientists and political sociologists but even for some media scholars, has gained salience in the study of political communication (Kepplinger, 2002; Mazzoleni and Schulz, 1999; Strömbäck, 2008; Strömbäck and Esser, 2014). Both its contestability and popularity are owed to the theoretical and conceptual holism of mediatization as notion, often praised for the explanatory advancement it brings against the school of 'media effect research' which focuses disproportionally on the influence of media messages/content on the wider public, disregarding influence on political actors and institutions or at best reducing it to quantitatively measurable micro-effects (Couldry and Hepp, 2017).

The theory of mediatization has come to stress that media, less in terms of content than in terms of technologies and institutions, have a more profound-constitutive and therefore less observable-measurable impact on the political process. In doing so, it shares with 'mediation' – more familiar as a concept and less provocative as an approach – the same problematic: how politics is constituted, 'lived' and 'practised' as a result of media's technological and institutional social embeddedness. However, while mediation has usually been employed to grasp the *dialectical* construction of politics through its various technologised and institutionalised (media) representations in the course of modernity (Silverstone, 2005; Thompson, 1995), mediatization is specifically targeted at elucidating the distinctive ontological *transformations* politics has undergone following the unprecedented institutional independence and technological advancement of communication media in the last couple of decades (Couldry and Hepp, 2017; Hjarvard, 2008). As Meyer has put it, 'the logic of the media system does not simply restructure the way the political is portrayed or its relations to other

systems; it affects the political process at the "production" level, i.e., where the political sphere emerges as a unique form of life' (2002, p. 57). Hence, mediatization entails a transformation not only of the way we assess and process political information, what is known as 'agenda-setting' and 'framing' media power (see Graber, 2007; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007), but of the way we perceive what is political in the first place. It is a transformation of the making of political meaning.

The making of meaning is, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, an existentially significant precondition of all social practices; the discursive condition that brings practices as meaningfully ordered and organised patterns of thought and action into existence. By this token, if mediatization entails a transformation of the making of political meaning, it first and foremost entails a transformation of political discourse, raising implications for the study of ideology as, according to the integrationist approach I employed in the previous chapter, ideology constitutes a discursive practice of politics *par excellence*; the discursive practice of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past that serves the institutional exercise of power in the present.

In this chapter, therefore, I shall examine from a theoretical standpoint the nature, causes, and extent of mediatization as transformation of political discourse, in an attempt to understand what this transformation tells us about the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. As I pointed out in the Introduction, although mediatization is more or less consensually understood to transform the nature of political discourse by fuelling the mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation, it has not attracted anything close to a consensus regarding the causes, extent, and consequences of this transformation. Where do these practices have their origin? Why and how much have they pervaded and dominated contemporary politics? What are the consequences-implications, of this transformation, if any, for the historicity and power

dynamic of political discourse, and by extension for the place and role of ideology in political communication? Answers to these questions vary significantly across different epistemological approaches, theoretical paradigms, and research traditions; they could be adequately and concisely summarised, however, especially for the sake of analytical purposes, into three different theses on mediatisation which I shall refer to as the *evolutionist*, *intended*, and *imagined* transformation of politics.

In what follows, I will first discuss several accounts which have fostered the most categorical and controversial understanding of mediatization: mediatization as a macrosocial process, a product of the structural differentiations in late modernity, which amounts to the colonisation of politics by media logic. This is a thesis of *evolutionist transformation* which, as I argue in the first part of this chapter, has encouraged the two monolithic macro-theoretical interpretations of the ideological status of contemporary political communication, the 'de facto non-ideological' and 'a priori ideological' political communication. These are interpretations epistemologically underpinned by the two exclusionary – ideology as 'action-oriented belief system' and 'order-sustaining signification system' – and one partly inclusionary – philosophically grounded meaning-making act' – paradigms[1] in the study of ideology.

I will then examine another set of accounts which appear to be less provocative in their understanding of the transformative impact of mediatization. These present mediatization as a microsocial intended act of adaptation to, rather than colonization by, media logic; political actors strategically adapt to what they perceive each time to be the prevailing media logic in their own institutional context. This is a thesis of *intended transformation* which, as I argue in the second part of this chapter, puts forward an analytical interpretation of the ideological status of contemporary political communication as *possibly ideological*, inspired by the more inclusive conception of ideology as 'domination-serving, socially situated meaning-making act'. Ideology is a possibility of political communication in the sense that actions-adaptations

to media logic, as reflexive discursive acts, may serve under specific instrumental and/or structural circumstances to establish and sustain relations of domination.

Finally, I will propose a thesis which reduces mediatization neither to the level of abstract structurality of a universal media logic nor to that of particularistic rationality in contextual media logics, but rather comes to renew interest in the self-subjectifying institutionality and historicality of imagined media effects. According to this thesis, we need to stop thinking in (dualistic) terms of media and political logics which are either in an antinomic or in a synergetic relationship with each other. We need to start thinking, instead, in (integrationist) terms of institutional logics of media performativity to which political actors subject themselves pre-emptively, in anticipation of imagined media effects, thereby performing a fusion of private (idiosyncratic features of individual personalities and/or intimate moments) with public (widely shared qualities of national appeal and/or everydayness) aspects of political life. This is a thesis of *imagined transformation* which, like the 'intended' thesis, calls for an analytical interpretation of the ideological status of political communication. However, instead of confining analytical attention to the instrumentalities and structuralities of subjective acts of adaptation, redirects it to the conventionalities and sedimentations of performative practices of self-subjection, particularly to the generic modalities whereby the *private-public fusion* is performed. Political communication now becomes *potentially ideological,* or ideology, in line with the integrationist conception, emerges as a potentiality of the self-subjectifying/premediating performances of political communication; the potentiality of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past in the service of the institutional exercise of power in the present. Allow me now to discuss, in more detail, these three theses on mediatization and the different interpretations of the ideological status of political communication that are associated with them.

Evolutionist transformation of politics

Mediatization as colonisation of politics by media logic

The notion of colonisation was first introduced into the study of media politics by political scientist Thomas Meyer (2002), as an analogy from Habermas' work, to exemplify the transformation politics has undergone in the age of media saturation. It reflects an understanding of mediatization, also shared by several other media scholars, as a process of social transformation determined by some structural differentiations that have taken place in the historical course of modern societies and, therefore, as an (macrosocial) evolutionist process that lies far beyond the control and will of the social actor (Hjavard, 2008; Strömbäck, 2008). The structural differentiations implied here partly overlap with those Habermas himself has described in his quite famous works on the public sphere and communicative action[2], but they are primarily seen in so-called 'late modern societies' of the last quarter of the twentieth century. To broadly summarise the argument, this period is extensively marked by the erosion of central pillars of modern institutional politics and media market economy in Western democracies: class-cleavages, and the compact basis of popular support they used to provide for political parties, and state regulation, or in some cases state ownership, of media corporations (e.g. the national broadcasters in most Western democracies), respectively.

As a consequence, political parties are in the precarious position of having to appeal to a vast nonpartisan electorate without, however, having at their disposal the means – the technologies of mass communication – to do so (see Blumler and Gurevitch, 2005; Swanson and Mancini, 1996). This is because extensive deregulation of the media market, combined with the technological advancements in the 1980s and 1990s, has given rise to an unprecedented plethora of communication platforms (from cable and satellite TV to digital micro-media), the operational logic of which is no longer determined by the state and its political institutions but by media organizations themselves (Mazzoleni and Schulz, 1999).

Political parties are therefore left with no other choice but to seek access to the communication platforms offered by the media, forced to adopt the latter's logic; what Altheide and Snow have described as a 'framework or a perspective that is used to present as well as interpret phenomena' (1979, p.10). For the theologians of *media logic*, it is this 'interpretative framework' to which personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation owe their existence as prevalent features of political discourse. But to what does this framework, the notorious media logic, owe its own existence?

What else if not to the three major determinants of the *modus operandi* of media as independent institutions and technologies of communication: professional norms of journalism, commercial imperatives of the market, and affordances of technology. For example, the professional norm of objectivity urges journalists – especially when fact-checking is too time-consuming or intricate to meet the media's demand for 24/7 news output – to rely heavily on the 'authenticating' authority of their sources (Manning, 2001). This motivates the chase for prestigious, appealing, and respected personalities that people can trust and empathise with – it propels personalisation. However, personalisation has also been said to be the inevitable consequence of the technological 'grammar' of media, particularly the visual character of television (Gurevitch et al, 2009). At the same time, television and the other electronic media, which are heavily dependent on moving images, have at their disposal means of editing that can create 'special effects', thereby investing the representation of events with a dramaticity that still images and/or speech alone cannot achieve (Zettl, 2015) – they bring about dramatisation. Dramatisation has also been claimed, though, to serve the need of media corporations to attract audiences and, therewith, larger advertising revenue (Mazzoleni and Schulz, 1999). In its own turn, this commercial imperative plays the driving force behind the production of unsophisticated and uncomplicated media content – it generates

conversationalisation – as its simplicity in meaning is better able to get the attention of the hectic audience (Iyengar, 1991)

Summing up, mediatization qua evolutionist transformation of politics appertains to a process of structural differentiation which effectively leads to the submission of the meaning-making acts of politics to a seemingly single and universal media *modus operandi*, or the colonisation of political logic by media logic. In this regard, mediatization is introduced in the study of political communication as a 'descriptive' concept, that is, a concept which seeks to make sense of the structural long-term transformations incurred by the institutional independence and technological advancement of media in late modernity, without evaluating these transformations against any epistemologies and normativities (see Hjarvard, 2008; Schulz, 2004). Mediatization, however, has rarely been kept completely outside the sphere of normative critique; after all, like any concept, it re-dissects its subject-matter from a particular vantage point at the very moment that it claims to simply describe it. Indeed, mediatization qua colonisation can be often found embroiled in critiques stemming from two radically different epistemologies of political discourse, which I shall refer to as *liberal political normativity* and *revisionist political culturalism*. These have crucial implications for the interpretation of the ideological status of political communication which I address in what follows.

Colonisation and de facto non-ideological or a priori ideological political communication

The Habermasian analogy of colonisation carries with it a neo-Enlightenment normative assumption of 'proper political discourse' as substantive and rational (Scammell and Langer, 2006). Political discourse is envisaged as *substantive* in the sense that it is grounded in concrete, rigid universal belief systems and philosophical traditions, and as *rational* in the sense that it mobilises actions informed and guided by these beliefs ('value-rational' actions in Weberian philosophy) rather than by purely utilitarian calculations ('instrumental-rational actions' in Weberian philosophy) (see Gouldner, 1973; Habermas, 1984). In a nutshell, political discourse

is normatively ideological, if ideology is to be conceived as 'action-oriented belief system' (what in the previous chapter I described as an exclusionary paradigmatic conception of ideology) or 'philosophically grounded discourse that serves consensus-building' (what in the previous chapter I described as one of the inclusionary conceptions of ideology).

To the chagrin of the acolytes of the normative political ideal, media logic, as an ensemble of professional norms, commercial imperatives and technological affordances, does not prioritise substance (belief systems) and rationality (value-rational actions) as meaning-making principles in political discourse. Rather, it prioritises *aesthetic superficialities* (incoherent and inconsistent as they are), such as stylistic differences or personal and dramatic appeals, and *emotive impulses* (irrational and sensational as they are believed to be), such as empathy with a personality or the affective power of sound-image bites and dramatic motifs (see Franklin, 1994; Brock et al, 2005; Postman, 1985; Qualter, 1991). Consequently, according to liberal political normativity, mediatized discourse is a de-politicised and de-ideologised discourse, and therefore political communication *de facto non-ideological*.

Liberal political normativity, however, is often recalled – not without cause – as an idealisation of a caricature of political discourse that never existed. As Jamieson has pointed out, comparing modern American political advertising to speeches by historical figures, such as Lincoln, Jefferson and Jackson – often held up as exemplars of erstwhile substance and rationality in political discourse – '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, p.12). In a similar vein, Gitlin has reached the conclusion that 'American politics has been raucous, deceptive, giddy, shallow, sloganeering and demagogic for most of its history' (1991, p.129).

Within post-Enlightenment revisionist political culturalism, Jamieson's and Gitlin's commentary should not be taken to simply highlight the pertinence of aesthetic and emotive

idiosyncrasies in political rhetoric, but to indicate a more intimate relation of aesthetics and affect to the making of political meaning. The charismatic immediacy of the political persona, for example, and the empathy or sympathy it begs, as well as the simplifying effect of the sound-bite and the unifying power of the affective dramaturgy in political spectacle, rather than being signs of a political discourse in decline, constitute symbolic platforms that serve to familiarise the public with the otherwise abstract and complex institutional procedures of politics and to mobilise political support for certain institutional causes (Corner, 2000; Corner and Pels, 2003; MacKenzie and Porter, 2011; Street, 1997; van Zoonen, 2004). Overall, the aesthetic and affective aspects of signification embody symbolic qualities of a certain 'way of life', of the popular culture in a society and what people treat as common sense. They therefore play, from a critical viewpoint, a substantial role in legitimising policies/decisions and manufacturing the social consent that is necessary for the exercise of political power; what according to the exclusionary paradigmatic conception of 'ideology as order-sustaining signification system' is the epicentre of ideological politics.

Once, when political parties were still the primary hubs of political socialisation and enjoyed the unconditional loyalty of a large part of the public, it was party rallies and canvassing events that offered aesthetic and affective pleasures. Now that political parties have lost their grip on the public and independent media institutions have taken over as socialising cultural agents, such pleasures, arguably, do not derive from party-related activities but from media infotainment and politainment (Slater, 2001; Street, 2001; Curran and Sparks, 1991). Consequently, political parties have to seek for the ideological (legitimising and consent-securing) function of aesthetics and affect – which is necessary for gaining public support – where it is in abundance, that is, in the media logic. They are thereby forced to adopt this logic and, as a consequence, are colonised by it. Instead of effecting de-ideologisation, however,

colonisation now reaffirms the immanence of ideology to the aestheticity and affectivity of mediatized discourse and, therefore, the *a priori ideological* nature of political communication.

Problematic and monolithic as they are for their understanding of the historicity (static or totalising) and power dynamic (voluntarist or consensualist) of political discourse (see chapter one), the two exclusionary (and the one inclusionary) paradigms in the study of ideology provide the *only* backdrop against which the ideological parameter of mediatization qua evolutionist transformation could be interpreted. Arguably, both the inclusionary paradigm (as Thompson advocates), which sees ideology as socially situated meaning-making act, and the integrationist one (as I have suggested), which presents ideology as discursive practice of recontextualization, originate in epistemologies that are incongruent with the thesis of evolutionist transformation, which understands mediatization as macrosocial process: *reflexivity of action* (in the inclusionary paradigm of ideology) and *reflexivity of practice* (in the integrationist paradigm of ideology), on the one hand; *determinism of structures* (in the evolutionist thesis on mediatization), on the other.

Therefore, although the reconceptualisation of ideology is a necessary step towards an analytical interpretation of the ideological status of political communication, it is not sufficient insofar as we retain the understanding of mediatization as evolutionist transformation. Such an understanding can only afford macro-theoretical interpretations of political communication (as de facto non-ideological and a priori ideological), since it can only be epistemologically juxtaposed with the exclusionary, and party inclusionary, paradigmatic conceptions of ideology (as 'action-oriented belief system'/'philosophically-grounded discourse' and 'order-sustaining signification system'). Is, however, the thesis of evolutionist transformation the only prism via which we can see the mediatization of politics? As I have already pointed out in the introduction of this chapter, it is not. I shall now proceed with examining a different understanding of mediatization which disqualifies the structuralism and determinism of the thesis of evolutionist

transformation, proposing a more nuanced, microsocial/context-sensitive and actor-oriented approach: the thesis of the *intended transformation of politics*.

Intended transformation of politics

Mediatization as adaptation of politics to perceived media logics

The understanding of mediatization as a microsocial process of intended transformation of politics is quite popular among political communication scholars, especially those who study political marketing and strategic communication from an institutional perspective (Lees-Marshment and Lilleker, 2001; Negrine, 2008; Norris et al, 1999; Scammell, 1995). What these scholars share is their discontent with what Negrine (2008) calls an 'apocalyptic' view of mediatized politics, that is, the view of politics as surrendered to media logic, radically and irreversibly transformed by the technological affordances, commercial imperatives, and professional norms of media. Arguably, the rejection of this view is tantamount to a critique of the thesis of evolutionist transformation, particularly to two interrelated critiques of the macro-structuralism/determinism of this thesis. The first critique concerns the universality and linearity of the structural differentiations that have allegedly led to the colonisation of politics by media logic. The second concerns the singularity and homogeneity of that media logic and, therewith, of the representational-performative patterns of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation. I will now examine these critiques at greater length.

As several students of comparative media politics have argued, although Western political and media systems have faced common challenges in the post-war years (e.g. the gradual erosion of parties' traditional base of support and the increasing institutional autonomy of media from party politics), their development across Western democracies has not taken a single unidirectional form (Blumler and Gurevitch, 2001; Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Plasser and Plasser, 2002). For example, in the countries of Southern Europe, it has been noticed that,

primarily because of the strong statist and clientalist tradition of political culture, parties have permeated into many spheres of social life, including the media, and party politics is therefore still inextricably intertwined with media politics (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). In Scandinavian countries, parties are also argued to have maintained a powerful presence in society, primarily thanks to the strong corporatist state tradition, thus it is not surprising that partisan press has survived and even flourished there (Plasser and Plasser, 2002). Finally, in the United States, partly because of the majoritarian electoral system and the federalist state tradition, which encourage candidate-centred rather than party-centred campaigning, parties have not developed stable and enduring hierarchical structures that would allow them to 'exist' as strong political enclaves beyond electioneering, and this is one of the reasons that American media rarely have consistent political orientations (Anstead and Chadwick, 2009).

Arguably, if the development of media into independent institutions has taken different paths in different socio-political contexts, the notion of a unitary media logic is automatically rendered problematic. It becomes even more problematic, according to its critics, in the age of 'new media ecology' (Gurevitch et al., 2009), where a variety of different communicative platforms – print, electronic and digital, mass and interpersonal, monological and interactive – are spliced together giving rise to an unprecedentedly heterogeneous and polymorphous mediality. For instance, the conversational discourse of televisual sound-bites is now amalgamated with the conversational discourse of digital emoji and hashtags, reanimating a form of, what Ong (2002) once termed, 'secondary orality' that political actors are called to navigate and manage (Jeffares, 2014; Haßler et al., 2014).

As much revolutionary as this mediality may seem to be, however, we should always bear in mind, as Raymond Williams (1974) stressed long time ago, that all the mediatic practices via which we make sense of politics and society are not products of technology and technological shifts per se. To the extent they are related to a technology of communication,

practices evolve out of the use we make of that technology, and this use is never presuppositionless; it has its own socio-cultural conditionality, and therefore differs from context to context. The same can be said for the commercial imperatives and professional norms that, along with technological affordances, allegedly shape media logic (see previous section). The professional norm of objectivity, for instance, and the commercial imperative of profit-making, rather than comprising a single and unitary interpretive framework, are themselves subject to different interpretations across journalistic cultures (Schudson, 2005). In polarised cultures, for instance, in which 'clash' and 'below the belt hits' are quite common elements of political communication, journalists are likely to adopt an adversarial style of political coverage, claiming an active political role for themselves (Papathanassopoulos, 2007). In consensual cultures, especially those with a strong tradition of public service broadcasting, this is rare, as journalists tend to be more cautious and neutral in the coverage of politics (Hallin and Mancini, 2004).

Consequently, there are not unequivocal universal rules and codes of what is technologically effective, commercially successful, and professionally deontological. Technological affordances, commercial imperatives and professional norms are instead differentially shaped through the adaptation of journalists, and media actors in general, to the socio-cultural dynamics of the context wherein they are situated. To put it in another way, political parties and media organizations, as relatively autonomous and enduring social sites of interaction (institutions), are structured by and organized around their own micro-logics and norms, perceived by actors as opportunities or constraints to which they must adapt if they are to effectively pursue their goals.

Meyen et al. (2014) have explained this institutional adaptation with reference to a functionalist 'agent-structure' approach which takes journalists as actors who develop their

discursive strategies of political coverage (e.g. emphasis on the party leader) based on their 'fictions' (perceptions) of how the political system works (e.g. a party-centred system); fictions that are shaped, however, by the needs and corresponding functions of the media system (e.g. the need for high ratings enables the function of personalisation). From their own side, politicians and their consultants, as actors, develop their own (discursive) strategies of self-representation (e.g. emphasis on negative-dramatic appeals), based on their fictions of how the media system works (e.g. adversarial, cynical journalism), fictions which are now shaped by the needs and functions of the political system (e.g. the need for de-legitimising the opponent enables the function of dramatisation).

In a similar vein, Asp (2014b), drawing on March and Olsen's 'new institutionalism', argues that actors' perception of political reality is a synthetic product made up of institutional standards of efficacy and institutional norms. From this standpoint, actors deal with their daily agendas by employing proven-to-be-effective strategies of maximisation of profit (for journalists) or electoral support (for politicians). They do so, however, in a way that is constrained by the widely shared and deeply rooted in their institutional milieus norms (e.g. norms of independence and objectivity for journalists and party-ideological norms for politicians).

To sum up, mediatization refers here to an intended transformation of politics resulting from the strategic adaptation of political actors to what they perceive each time to be, in their own institutional contexts, the functions, routines, and rules of the media system – the context-specific media logic. Strategic adaptation is a dialectic in the sense that political actors need to articulate their discursive acts in the personalist, conversationalist, and dramatist mode that 'flies' well in the media, at the very moment they need to rearticulate the personalising, conversationalising, and dramatising patterns of media representation with patterns of institutional utility and normativity. As Hughes and Wintour have put it, contemplating Labour

communication gurus' marketing techniques, 'they welded policy, politics and image-creation into one weapon' (1990, p.183). They did so, not only by adapting the party's policies to the popular demands of the era, such as the dynamic market economy and toughness on crime, but also by symbolically readapting the latter to the party's historical values, such as social justice and a communitarian ethos (Lee-Marshment and Lilleker, 2001; Scammell, 1999). By this token, Labour's strategic adaptation involved what Thompson (1990) calls socially situated or contextualised use of (historically salient) symbolic forms. If this inclusionary paradigm in the study of ideology – ideology as domination-serving, socially situated meaning-making act – provides the only backdrop against which the thesis of intended transformation could be ideologically interpreted, then what are the implications for the place and role of ideology in political communication?

Strategic adaptation and possibly ideological political communication

The two exclusionary paradigmatic conceptions of ideology have no place in the thesis of mediatization as intended transformation of politics, for the same reason (epistemological incompatibility) that the inclusionary and integrationist conceptions had no place in the thesis of evolutionist transformation. As was illustrated in the previous chapter, the 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm (and the conception of ideology as philosophically grounded meaning-making act) considers only actions that are informed by beliefs and philosophic traditions of politics. If this 'family' of value-rational actions can embrace what the thesis of intended transformation understands as actions-adaptions to media logic *constrained by institutional norms*, it definitely cannot embrace the acts of adaptation which are argued to be incentivised by the *instrumental rationality of utilitarian strategies*. Even when these strategies need to be calibrated in the light of institutional normativity (e.g. party discipline and constitution), such a calibration by no means produces discourses entrenched into a single belief system or political tradition (see the 'New Labour' example); thus, strategic adaptation enables discursive

hybridity rather than the discursive coherence that Brock et al., for instance (2005), and the defenders of the 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm would want.

The 'order-sustaining signification system' paradigm, on the other hand, cannot be taken as an interpretative framework for mediatization qua intended transformation, not because it is premised on a different view of rationality than the one(s) we find in the thesis of intended transformation, but because it is grounded on a profoundly anti-rationalist understanding of action. As was stressed in the previous chapter, this paradigm understands ideological action as the result of actors' pre-reflective subjectification: political actors act in certain ways not because they have carefully calculated the possible outcomes of the different options that are available to them, and/or because they are constrained/enabled by some institutional rules and norms, but as a result of their habituated and routinised subjection to dominant (mystified) or antagonistic (normalised) value systems. In this regard, it is not the actor that produces discourse by adapting to what she perceives to be media logic(s), but discourse that produces the actor by inculcating her with the dominant social or institutional logic(s).

It is therefore only Thompson's inclusionary paradigm that offers the fertile ground on which the thesis of intended transformation could be ideologically interpreted. Thompson has himself discussed ideology in the context of mediatization, arguing that 'in the era of electronically mediated mass communication, the study of ideology must take account of the new strategies of symbolic construction, and of the symbolic organization of self-presentation, which are constitutive features of the managed visibility of political leaders' (1990, p.270). In other words, Thompson suggests that the study of ideology needs to consider political actors' strategic adaptation to media logic, as it is these socially situated acts of adaptation that, by involving the production, circulation, and appropriation of symbolic forms, constitute meaning-making/discursive acts which may serve, under particular circumstances, the

establishment and sustainment of relations of domination. Ideology emerges, here, as a *possibility* of political communication: the possibility of actors' strategic adaptation to perceived media logics to serve to establish and sustain relations of domination.

Arguably, the interpretation of political communication as possibly ideological provides a third (analytical) way beyond the 'de facto non-ideological' and 'a priori ideological' macro-theoretical interpretations. It is an interpretation that does not take ideology to be, under an evolutionist transformation which leads up to the colonisation of politics by the media logic, absolutely absent (as action-oriented belief system) from or always present (as order-sustaining signification system) in political communication. Being more sensitive to the intended transformations, those incurred by actors' strategic acts of adaptation to perceived media logics, the interpretation of political communication as 'possibly ideological' urges us to (empirically) explore the conditions under which ideology may be either present in or absent from political communication; the conditions under which strategic acts of adaptation serve to establish and sustain or challenge and disrupt relations of domination.

Arguably, these conditions of possibility of ideology allude the reflexive character of adaptation, that is, to an analytical understanding of meaning-making discursive acts that pays attention (only) to the instrumentalities of actors (whether, by adapting to media logic, actors seek to sustain relations of domination) and structuralities of the context (what opportunities and constraints are raised that could enable and disable, respectively, domination-serving acts of adaptation). Discursive action, however, as pointed out in the previous chapter, is not only reflexive, and to the extent it is, reflexivity does not constitute an attribute of the actor's single individual act but of the conventional institutionally embedded pattern of action: the institutional practice. It is practices that bring, discursively, into existence single acts as meaningful, thus, recognisable and traceable forms of social action.

As I shall argue in what follows, we need a 'deeper' institutional approach to mediatization that considers, more than discursive *acts,* and the instrumentalities and contextual limitations that inform them, discursive *practices,* and the institutional conventionalities and sedimentations that shape them. From the standpoint of this discursive institutionalism, which I have already introduced in the previous chapter, ideology will emerge, not as a possibility of actors' discursive acts of adaptation (to perceived media logic), but as a *potentiality* of actors' discursive practices of self-subjection (to institutional media performativity).

Imagined transformation of politics

Mediatization as practice of self-subjection to institutional media performativity

Moving towards an understanding of mediatization as imagined transformation of politics is not turning away from but delving deeper into the reflexive institutionality of mediatic practices. Arguably, the institutional approach to mediatization is peculiar neither to the evolutionist thesis nor to that of intended transformation of politics. Both Hjavard (2008), one of the initiators of the former, and Asp (2014b), an acolyte of the latter thesis, have advocated their own institutional approaches to mediatization, as I have observed in the previous parts of this chapter. Posed against them, my call for an institutional approach does not aspire to 're-discover the wheel'; rather, it is a call to reconsider the institutional dimension of mediatization beyond the anchorages of both the colonisation and adaptation perspectives – beyond treating an institution as by-product of macrostructures or constellation of subjective actions, respectively.

I have already attempted such an institutional revisionism in the previous chapter, by suggesting that we need to pay distinctive attention to the discursive practices by which certain phenomenologically unrelated social activities, *given* as structures or *made* as actions, are

reconstituted as systematic and durable dispositions with a life of their own, that is, a process of (discursive) institutionalisation. It is these discursive practices that turn 'structures' and 'actions' into 'structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.53); what we would call following Bourdieu institutional 'habitus' or following Davis (2007) institutional 'micro-culture' – 'institutional sedimentations', in my conceptual vocabulary. Institutional sedimentations cannot be said to be the creation of a specific person or group, as they antedate the election and appointment of particular persons and have a life after the retirement or demise of these persons (see also Phillips et al., 2004). A couple of political figures, for example, have periodically linked their names to the revisionist or modernising faction (micro-culture) within the Labour party, so that in late 1950s we talked about Gaitskellites and in the late 1990s about Blairites, but none of them can claim authorship of the revisionist culture per se. The latter has a life of its own. It exists independently from its individual manifestations in persons and doctrines, and has a *constitutive* effect on them (not the constraining or enabling effect that rationalists would attribute to institutional norms), nurturing and galvanising, ultimately, making them the political actors they are.

At the same time, seen through a diachronic prism, institutional sedimentations are nothing else than chronic and cumulative crystallisations of actors' ongoing interaction within certain social sites; it is this interaction that gives us the 'interpretative frameworks' (discursive practices) which are retrospectively perceived as ever-existing and everlasting, as the 'background horizon' for current and future intra-institutional interactions (Susen, 2014). This, however, does not mean that institutional sedimentations are the product of interacting forces strictly and exclusively indigenous to an institutional setting. Within political parties, for example, we may encounter not only politicians – actors who run for office – but also actors from different backgrounds and with different goals, often political consultants, journalists, and other 'media-savvy' professionals. All these interact with each other not periodically and

symptomatically but systematically and intensely, in institutionalised relations of cohabitation and symbiosis (Davis, 2009). Consequently, the historical sedimentations of a political institution cannot be taken to reflect the pure distillations of political actors' exclusive interaction with each other (an allegedly distinct political logic). They constitute, instead, the 'subjectively objectified' (produced by actors while in the long-term producing them), as Bourdieu (1977) would put it, cumulative and collective output of the ongoing interaction and interplay among all inhabitants, from all the different backgrounds, of an institution.

It is this cumulative and collective output that regulates the use of several communicative platforms and technologies within the microcosms of institutions (Hepp, 2012). Instead of a universal media logic, we may better talk about an *institutional media performativity*, as a both descriptive and prescriptive concept (Foellmer et al., 2018). It is descriptive in the sense that it gives us an insight into the concrete dynamics of actors' interaction at a particular time and space, and of their competences in using the communication technologies/platforms in particular occasions (ibid). It is prescriptive in the sense that it provides us with an 'archive', a repertoire of conventional institutionally embedded patterns of interactivity and media use (performativity) that pre-exist, and therefore pre-empt and regulate, instant moments of interaction and media use (performances), or as Butler has argued 'norms which precede, constrain and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's "will" or "choice"' (1993, p.234). Hence, while 'performing', 'actors are […] ''*performed*'' by cultures, cognitions, relations and practices that develop exclusively within the spaces they temporarily inhabit' (Davis, 2007, p. 77, emphasis added).

By this token, the mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation are to be treated as single individual performances which are, at the same time, reiterative, institutionally embedded, patterns of performativity. As Campus (2010) has shown, for example, the populist and celebrity-style charisma of Berlusconi and the charismatic

decisiveness and robustness of Sarkozy, more than two distinct and exceptional charismatic performances, draw on broader templates of charismatic performativity: the populist defiance against mainstream party politics in post-Tangentopoli Italy and the myth of heroic and robust leadership in post-Gaullist France, respectively.

Crucially, in the discursive institutionalist approach I advocate, the binary media-political logic has no place, as it reproduces a dualist way of thinking[3], failing to detect the common origin of both logics in the 'performative ethos' that is embedded in an institution. Media performativity is not an *external* media logic that colonises the political process or offers political actors the choice to adapt, but an *internal* institutional logic constitutive of the very ontology of any political process and actor[4]. There are, however, scholars who have not welcomed this suggestion, contending that the performative, aesthetic and emotive, elements of political discourse may make more sense of the *public sphere* of politics (in which politics is presented to the wider public, campaigning takes place, and legitimation for decisions and policies is sought), susceptible to the appeals of personalities, sound-bites, and dramatic effects as it is, than the *private sphere*, where policies are crafted and decisions are made by 'closed-door' parliamentary committees, cabinets, and other party caucuses (Bennett and Entman, 2001; Davis, 2007). The private sphere of politics appears to be immune to the constitutive power of media performativity simply because it is not exposed to the public spotlight of the media.

As I wish to argue, however, the distinction between a public and a private sphere in politics, albeit physically existing, has never been clear and definitive in terms of its political consequentiality, and certainly not in the age of media abundance and saturation. First of all, this distinction is predicated on an elitist assumption according to which political actors are exceptional and well-skilled people who know 'the stuff' better than an ordinary person and have the nerve to deal with the complexities and challenges of the political process. The fact

that these actors may appear 'like us' on TV, as cool and friendly guys, is just a gimmick that lasts for so long as they need to be 'on stage'; when the lights are off they go back to their usual business (Wolfsfeld, 2001; Walgrave and van Aelst, 2006). But political actors are not special beings and nor is their staged performance a time-limited trick. They may appear like us because they are like us, that is, like people with weaknesses, caprices, emotions, affiliations, personal backgrounds, secrets, etc., who act not only in the way they (rationally) think but also in the way they feel, or to put it better, the way they feel structures the way political actors think and, ultimately, the way they act (Castells, 2009; Flinders, 2012).

The 'Iron Lady', for instance, was not just a label, a soundbite that intrigued the media and which Margaret Thatcher and her entourage found rather 'flattering' for her public profile as a tough and decisive leader. It was a performative ethos which the then British premier 'performed' both in public events where the media were present and in cabinets and private meetings where the media were absent, so as to establish and consolidate her authority not only over the British electorate but particularly over the British Conservative party, a considerable part of which always had its reservations about her (Bale, 2010). Thatcher was 'ousted' in November 1990 not only as a result of her falling popularity and controversies over 'poll tax' and Europe, but also because her galloping 'authoritarianism' had alienated and even insulted a lot of her colleagues and party cadres (Wickham-Jones and Shell, 1991).

It is widely known, and often criticised, that nowadays political actors take extra care about their self-presentation: how they look and behave, what they say and how they say it. Personalising, conversationalising, and dramatising performances have become exceptionally professionalised, or as Gurevitch et al. have succinctly put it:

> [...] politicians are under pressure to present themselves as personalities with whom citizens would want to interact. The need to construct sincere, authentic personas capable of inspiring trust and generating conversational (parasocial) interaction places new communicative burdens upon political actors who must develop skills in appearing "just like you" and seeming to address "everyone as someone".
> (2009, p.173-174).

This professionalisation, however, entails neither an evolutionist nor an intended transformation of politics, since, as has been noticed earlier in this chapter, personal charisma, conversational ordinariness, and dramatic spectacle have always been constitutive elements of political discourse. I would argue, though, that it does entail an *imagined transformation* which renders the boundaries between the public and private spheres of politics more permeable and porous than ever before.

The caricature of political activity taking place behind closed doors, in a 'sterilised' environment protected from the demands and peculiarities of publicity, is rather at odds with the complex multi-dynamics of today's mediality. As already pointed out, contemporary societies (in the West and, increasingly, all over the world) are overwhelmed by an unprecedented plethora of communication platforms, from press and broadcasters to blogs and social media, which are no longer dependent on mainstream journalism to get access to the microcosm of political actors and celebrities as long as there are people equipped with smartphones and mobile internet (see al-Ghazzi, 2014; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2010). In the context of this polymorphous mediality, what drives political actors' self-presentation is not just the specific observable-measurable media effects that follow the publicity of an action-event (post-publicity), which could be said to be idiosyncratic to the public sphere of politics. It is the indeterminate and unmeasurable but catalytically agonising anticipation (pre-publicity) of the effect that the publicity of an action-event could or would potentially cause (Davis, 2007; Meyen et al, 2014), that is, an *imagined media effect*.

By imagined, I do not mean that media effects are 'unreal'. Neither do I claim that they are 'real' in epistemic terms. The *imaginary* as a conceptual device seeks exactly to both problematise and transcend the epistemic dichotomy real-unreal. As seminal philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis (1987) conceives it, the imaginary is an 'original social institution' – a prototypical creation of society and history – which by imagining, predating, and anticipating

the 'real' has a constitutive effect over it. The 'originality' of the imaginary is not an ahistorical condition, however; in its originality, the imaginary is not placed outside existing social and historical subjectivities. On the contrary, it is always social-historical (ibid) and, as Foucault (1977) has insightfully shown, may contribute to reinforcing the subjectivities with which it is imbricated. Drawing an analogy with the Benthamian idea of the 'panopticon', Foucault argues that the imaginary of extended visibility, and therefore constant surveillance, forces inmates in institutions like prisons and psychiatric clinics to subject themselves to approved institutional norms of conduct without the use of corporeal violence or other form of coercion, thereby having a disciplinary effect which, far beyond subjects' intention, serves to reproduce institutional practices of power.

A similar imaginary of constant visibility and surveillance can be said to apply to politics nowadays, *the imaginary of media omnipresence*, in a rather reverse form though. As Thompson (2005) has acutely noted, in our societies of extended visibility, is not the 'few' (officers) who 'watch' the many (inmates) but the 'many' (the public) who 'watch' the few (political actors). While this may render the political process, in principle, more exposed and potentially transparent, it also requires that political actors take effective measures to prevent the implications, potentially detrimental for their authority, of this 'exposure'. The very fact that a minor gaffe or misdemeanour, an embarrassing and unfortunate moment, can be captured by a mobile phone in the form of a clip, picture or selfie, go viral in a few minutes and subsequently be picked up and reproduced by blogs, news-sites, newspapers, and radio and television channels, makes political actors behave and act more and more as if they were before a camera, under direct media surveillance. Even behind closed doors, political actors 'never stop worrying entirely about whether their plans will "fly" in the media' (Meyer, 2002, p.51), as they are always concerned with the risk of these plans being leaked to the media before even announced.

Hence, in its pre-emptive anticipation of certain effects, the imaginary of media omnipresence bears what Grusin has referred to as 'this desire to premediate the future before it happens [is] accompanied by the desire to colonize the future by extending our networks of media technologies not only spatially across the globe and beyond, but also temporally into the future' (2010, p.57-58). It is this desire for premediation, for making sure that extended visibility and media surveillance takes a form that will not undermine but instead serve institutional interests and goals, which has here the Foucauldian self-subjectifying effect. In their agony to pre-empt and control the political future, political actors resort to institutionally approved and trusted practices, conventional solutions, and sedimented patterns of interactivity and representation; they fall back on the institutional media performativity[5].

The self-subjectifying effect of premediation requires that we no longer retain the view which wants political actors to think and act privately in ways that are substantially different than the ways they think and act publicly (more rational, problem-oriented, etc.). The risk of exposure or leak, for example, requires that they think and act in private as they would think and act in public, and the risk of looking dishonest to their voters requires that they think and act in public as they would think and act in private. Consequently, instead of being nostalgic of a *private-public distinction*, we need to come to terms with the *private-public fusion* and the implications it raises for our understanding of the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication (see below).

To sum up, for the thesis of imagined transformation, mediatization appertains to the practice of self-subjection to institutionally embedded media performativity, a premediating practice attributed to the ubiquitous dynamics of imagined media effects. To understand, therefore, *why* and *to what extent* contemporary politics is mediatized, we need to look not at abstract structuralities or particularistic rationalities but at the institutional imaginaries of media omnipresence which catalyse the fusion of private with public aspects of political life in

mediatic performances. To understand *how* and *in what ways* contemporary politics is mediatized, we need to look not for a single universal media logic or different context-dependent media logics but for the conventional and institutionally embedded repertoires of media performativity which regulate single mediatic practices, as private-public coagulations, at certain moments in time. Overall, it is the analysis of this premediating/self-subjectifying and private-public fusing institutional media performativity that holds the key to the understanding of mediatized politics. It also holds the key to an understanding of the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication beyond macro-theoretical aphoristic interpretations (de facto non-ideological and a priori ideological political communication) and micro-analytical relativistic ones (possibly ideological political communication). The thesis of imagined transformation encourages, instead, an analytical interpretation of political communication as potentially ideological to which I now turn my attention.

Institutional self-subjection and potentially ideological political communication

The private-public fusion that lies at the heart of mediatization as imagined transformation of politics is not something radically new. The whole history of modernity is a history of the shifting boundaries between the private and the public, as Thompson (2011) has stated echoing Hannah Arendt. The issue at stake therefore is not that the private-public fusion happens but how it happens in the age of mediatization, through the premediating and self-subjectifying mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation, and what it means for the place and role of ideology in political communication. As I wish to argue, the private-public fusion does not occur in a structurally monotonic manner, as the colonisation by a universal media logic implies – the private, aesthetic and emotive superficialities, colonise the public, substantive and rational political discourse, rendering political communication de facto non-ideological (disassociated from belief systems and philosophical traditions) or a priori ideological (reconnected with the legitimising and consensual effect of signification).

Neither does it happen in a subjectively polytonic manner, as the strategic adaptation to perceived media logic implies – actors adapt their private goals and instrumentalities to public-institutional normativity and vice versa, rendering political communication possibly ideological (when this adaptation serves to establish and sustain relations of domination).

The self-subjectifying dynamic of premediation forges the private-public fusion through already existing, in the form of institutional media performativity, conventional and sedimented discursive coagulations (what in the next chapter I refer to as *genres*). These are coagulations of the 'partial and particular', such as the exceptional or imperfect individual personality of a party leader, the cool character of a layperson or celebrity, and the phantasmagorical staging of a party rally – what liberal political normativity would consider elements of strictly private interest – with the 'total-universal', such as commitment to a national-social mission, deliberation on a shared concern of everyday life, and galvanisation of a sense of belonging to a collective body – what liberal political normativity would welcome as elements of public interest. In other words, private-public coagulations, stemming from mediatization as self-subjection to institutional media performativity, entail the *re*-activation and *re*-appropriation of performative practices that are already part of an institutional(ised) memory, or as Grusin aptly puts it 'premediating the future entails remediating the past' (2010, p.8).

If self-subjection to institutional media performativity involves the reactivation and reappropriation of practices and discourses from the past (sedimentations), then it potentially involves the recontextualization of institutional symbolisms. Therefore, in the light of the integrationist paradigm in the study of ideology, which takes recontextualization to constitute the very essence of ideology, mediatization as imagined transformation of politics can be reinterpreted as *potentially* ideological. 'The word *potential',* as Hurdley and Dicks have noted, 'is crucial, for here the activation of meaning is a social accomplishment that pre-exists what

is done […] by sign-makers in any given social situation' (2011, p. 281). Symbolic meaning is, if you wish, a possibility immanent to premediating practices of self-subjection rather than a possibility contingent upon subjective-strategic acts of adaptation. The 'Iron Lady' persona, for example, as a performance of toughness, aggression and unyieldingness is imbued with the possibility – it has the potential – to activate the Tory nationalist symbolism of a 'clear, intransigent and non-negotiable vision of […] English identity' (Marquand, 2008, p.58).

This, however, may not be the case in all generic-institutional manifestations of the 'Iron Lady' performance. As a performance that is also associated with the first woman British Prime Minister, the 'Iron Lady' has triggered feminist and gendered discourses, within and outside party politics (Barnett, 2013; Campbell, 2015), involving symbolic meanings far beyond, not only the Tory nationalist tradition, but the Conservative party's history in general. In a nutshell, meaning is institutionally symbolic not *if* actors produce it as such (possibility), as meaning is not produced by actors but by practices in which actors purposefully or habitually engage. It is institutionally symbolic *when* the performative practices by which it is produced are associated with the historical past of an institution (potentiality) 'through discursive associations based on conventional knowledge and value' (Chouliaraki, 2006, p.164) – institutional sedimentations.

Consequently, recontextualization of symbolic meanings rests with the generic performativity of mediatization; with the aesthetic and affective (as we shall see in the next chapter) capacity of mediatic practices of political communication to fuse the private with the public into a single *coagulated* performance, such as the charismatic persona (chapter five), the ordinary character (chapter six), and the spectacular dramaturgy (chapter seven), that tell us something about the past of an institution which is also pertinent to its present. Ideology is therefore a potentiality in the generically formatted – regulated by institutional media performativity – mediatic performances of the private-public fusion. It is *always-already*, as

Althusser (1984) would say, in within institutional media performativity, thanks to the remediating effect of premediation, but its *activation* and *actualisation* is conditioned by the (aesthetic-affective) ways in which this performativity is manifested-instantiated, at certain moments in time and in certain contexts, as a concrete mediatic performance/private-public coagulation.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to theorise the ontologically transformative consequences that the extensive presence and use of communication media, in their entirety, bear for political discourse through different theses on mediatization, each of which raises its own implications for how we theoretically understand the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. On the one hand is the thesis of evolutionist transformation, in which mediatization emerges as a macrosocial, structurally determined, process of colonisation of politics by a single and universal media logic. By being epistemologically compatible only with the exclusionary (and partly inclusionary) paradigmatic conceptions of ideology, this thesis remains anchored to the aphoristic macro-theoretical interpretations of political communication as de facto non-ideological and a priori ideological.

On the other hand is the thesis of intended transformation, in which mediatization matters as a microsocial strategic act of adaptation of political actors to what they perceive to be the media logic in their own institutional context. Epistemologically congruent only with one inclusionary conception of ideology, this thesis fosters an analytical interpretation of political communication as possibly ideological, drawing attention to the instrumentality and structurality-contextuality of discursive acts while disregarding the conventionality-institutionality of discursive practices.

For this reason, I considered it necessary to introduce a third perspective, the thesis of imagined transformation, which understands mediatization as an institutional practice catalysed by the premediating dynamic of the imaginary of media omnipresence, and therefore experienced as self-subjection to institutional media performativity. This thesis provides us with an interpretation of political communication as potentially ideological, that is, ideological insofar as, and to the extent that, concrete mediatic practices performatively activate-actualise generic coagulations of the private with the public recontextualizing institutionally symbolic meanings. As a potentiality of mediatization, ideology has its own social and historical conditions of activation and actualisation that only an analysis of mediatic practices-performances, *in-situ* and *in-actu*, can elucidate; an analysis of how and why mediatic performances are organised and ordered in the way they are at certain moments in time and in certain contexts, or in what ways they are regulated by institutional media performativity. I shall now therefore proceed to introduce an a*nalytics of mediatization.*

3. Methods for analysing the ideological potential of political communication
The analytics of mediatization

It has been clear so far that the ideological potential of political communication lies in the institutional practices of which both mediatized politics and ideology constitute *discursive manifestations/moments*[1]. Mediatization is the discursive moment of self-subjection to institutional media performativity, and ideology, as a potentiality in the latter, is the discursive moment of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past. The questions that we need to address, therefore, seeking to understand the ideological potential of political communication are: first, under what conditions and in what forms does the performative repertoire of mediatization – the mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation and, dramatisation – give rise to private-public coagulations which also perform the recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past? Second, under what conditions and in what ways does this performative recontextualization serve the institutional exercise of power in the present? To this end, as I wish to argue, we need an *analytics of mediatization*, that is, an analytical approach which pays distinctive attention to the discursive, articulatory-recontextualizing, moments of the mediatic practices of political communication.

The analytics of mediatization is effectively a discourse analytics that can inform us of how practices are meaningfully articulated in certain institutional settings in the first place, without taking them for granted as if they were just reflections of politico-economic (see Murdock and Golding, 2005) or semiotic (see Derrida, 1993) structures. Avoiding structuralism (social and semiotic), however, does not necessarily mean endorsing some sort of symbolic interactionism, according to which practices can be adequately studied through the analysis of single individual acts of communication (Jones and Collins, 2006). Nor does it imply carrying out an institutional ethnography (Smith, 1999; Walby, 2005), which also

focuses on what actors do with practices while interacting with other actors (the open-endedness and malleability of practice), without illuminating what is done through practices as a result of actor's self-subjection to institutional sedimentations (the discursive conventionality and institutionality of practice). To understand the organised and ordered, which is at the same time a socially organising and ordering, aspect of institutional practices, the analytics of mediatization draws our attention to *media texts*.

As Smith has put it, 'texts – physical things located in the same locales as the embodied text activators – are active constituents of social relations and are the means by which work and social activity is coordinated beyond the particular local setting of reading/writing' (1999, p.80). While informal conversations and individual speech-acts, in the context of which producers and recipients interact in live time and often in a shared locale, have at their disposal a variety of means to achieve meaningful interaction (i.e. repetition, expression of approval or disapproval, etc.), texts rely primarily on their firmly structured, standardised, and tenacious formality-conventionality so as to render possible the interaction with distant audiences (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Fairclough, 2003; Hasslebladh and Kallinikos, 2000). In doing so, (media) texts 'capture' the conventional and ordered aspect, not only of the textually mediated moments of institutional practices (e.g. personalisation in political advertising), but also of the non-textually mediated ones (e.g. personalisation in the face-to-face encounters of candidates with their constituents).

As Kaid and Johnston have put it, referring to texts-advertisements, 'although the personal style of a candidate could exist outside of mediated forms of communication […] patterns of techniques used and strategies employed (verbal, nonverbal, and television production) should be evident by looking at the candidate's political ads' (2001, p.27). From this point of view, texts simply, but uniquely, allow us to detect the conventional and sedimented patterns of institutional media performativity which are also embedded in the non-

textually mediated forms of political communication. As I argued in the previous chapter, all spheres of political activity, directly and indirectly mediated (public) or non-mediated at all (private) by technologies of communication, fall into the self-subjectifying dynamic of premedition; they are all mediatized. Hence, from the analysis of texts, we can gain invaluable insight into the conventional, recurrent, organised/ordered, and therewith, organising/ordering, aspect of institutional practices of political communication in general.

By seeking to understand institutional practices through textual analysis, the analytics of mediatization does not assume, as it has been unwarrantedly accused of doing (see Couldry, 2004; Jones and Collins, 2006), that practices matter as internalisations of the semiotic structures of texts. Rather, it treats texts as material (and multimodal, as I shall show below; not only linguistic but also para-and-non-linguistic verbal as well as still-and-moving visual) instantiations of the repertoire of institutionally embedded patterns of media performativity, or what discourse analysts often refer to as *genres*[3]. As Chouliaraki has succinctly put it, 'the object of study of the analytics of mediation, therefore, is the various genres across media (print, electronic and new) as regimes of meaning' (2006, p. 157). Consequently, the analytics of mediatization involves the analysis of media texts, in a systematic and consistent way that I will describe in what follows, not because it is interested in texts for their own sake but because media texts offer the most explicit *materialisation of different genres*, which, in their own turn, constitute *discursive manifestations of the mediatic practices* of political communication (in which the analytics of mediatization is actually interested).

At a first level of analysis (multimodality), the analytics of mediatization needs to explore the (technical and semiotic) ways in which different genres are instantiated in certain media texts and, primarily, the *aesthetic qualities* with which genres (and therewith the performative practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation) are invested in these texts. It needs to do so, as it is the quality of aesthetics, and not aesthetics per

se, that allows or not certain mediatic performances to form private-public coagulations capable of recontextualizing institutional symbolisms from the past (Street, 2003; Chouliaraki, 2012). The exploration of the aesthetic qualities of genres is a matter of *multimodal analysis*, the analysis of the different *modes of presentation* and *visual-verbal correspondences* as they are performed in media texts through the technical means of inscription (e.g. camera) and the semiotic means of expression (e.g. language and image), respectively.

At a second level of analysis (multifunctionality), the analytics of mediatization needs to explore the ways in which the recontextualizing dynamic of genres serves the institutional exercise of power. It does so through a *critical discourse analysis* which focuses on the *spacetime* and *emotiocognition* of media texts to understand the different forms of agency and ordering, respectively, that recontextualization enacts. Let me now explain/operationalise in detail how these different analytical tools provide us with an in-depth critical understanding of the recontextualizing potential of genres and, by extension, of the ideological potential of political communication.

Multimodal Analysis

Multimodal analysis is concerned, as Chouliaraki points out, with 'the difference that lies *inside* the semiotic systems themselves' (2006, p.158, emphasis added), drawing on and re-synthesising the deconstructionist insight that meaning is the product of systemic difference in the internal organisation of a semiotic code (Derrida, 1993) and the cornerstone of medium theory, the idea that meaning is the product of systemic difference in the technological affordances of the communication medium (Meyrowitz, 1985; McLuhan, 1964). Multimodal analysis, however, must not be conflated (as I have already warned) with a structuralist analysis of media texts, even if its origin is traced in semiotic and technological structuralism. Multimodal analysis, so to speak, is not technical and semiotic analysis as much as it is techno-

logical and semio-logical analysis of media texts. It seeks to understand the *logos* – the institutional performativity – that regulates both the technical and the semiotic; how technical means of inscription and semiotic means of expression are *conventionally-generically used* (rather than structurally determined) in the institutional production of texts. These patterns of use of technology, what Chouliaraki (2006) calls 'modes of presentation', and semiosis, what she calls 'visual-verbal correspondence', are what multimodal analysis seeks to deconstruct exploring the aesthetic quality, and therefore the recontextualizing dynamic, of genres-mediatic practices.

Modes of presentation

The technical means of inscription of semiotic forms (audial, visual, pictorial, etc.) into media texts are inextricably intertwined with the technical means via which media texts are circulated and disseminated to the public, what we loosely call 'media technologies', such as print (newspapers, magazines), electronic (radio, television), and digital (websites, social media). So, for example, a political advertisement that is designed to be disseminated through electronic and digital media necessarily involves the use of camera for recording of the audio-visual message and, often, of software for editing-montaging this message. Modes of presentation refer to both the conventional techniques of camera shooting-recording, such as shot-distance (close-ups, medium, long shots, etc.), angle (eye-level, high/low-level, reverse/profile, etc.), and point of view (of a character, of the viewer, of a third person, etc.), and to the conventional techniques of editing-montaging, such as continuity cutting (unmarked cut, dissolve, fade, etc.), pace or tempo (slow-motion, accelerated motion, etc.), light, colour, and sound effects (Kaid and Johnston, 2001; Machin and Mayr, 2012; Monaco, 2009; Rose, 2007; Zettl, 2015).

The massive adoption and reproduction of these techniques by broadcast-makers is by no means random (routinised yet not random), but it reflects some firmly consolidated and widely shared perceptions and expectations of the effects that different uses of camera have on

viewers (in line with what I referred to in the previous chapter as the 'anticipatory-imagined media effect'). When a party leader seeks, for example, to look amiable and accessible, the camera usually comes closer or zooms into her face (close-up), in an eye-level angle that represents the leader as if she were looking directly into the viewer's eyes (viewer's point of view), since close-ups are widely perceived to create a sense of intimacy with the represented subject (Edmonds, 1982; Monaco, 2009; Zettl, 2015). This, however, does not mean that intimacy can only be achieved through this specific representational technique (cheerful background music, for example, may also contribute to this sense [Mossberg, 2009]) or that the use of these techniques in any media text assuredly suggests intimacy (e.g. a close-up to a gloomy face may not encourage us to feel this way). It rather means that there is a conventionalised association, deeply embedded in the process of production of media texts, between specific modes of presentation and distinctive forms of *aesthetic realism* which at the same time needs to be interpreted, considering the broader semantic (not only technological but also semiotic; see below about visual-verbal correspondence) context of a specific media text (Rose, 2007). Which, though, are these forms of aesthetic realism?

At a first and incipient level, modes of presentation introduce the viewer to the reality of media texts by providing her with a specific way of *seeing* the represented subject (who or what is represented, where, by whom, and to whom), which we may call *perceptual realism*[4]. Moreover, modes of presentation allow the viewer to relate to the reality of media texts by also providing her with a specific way of *feeling* towards the represented subject (e.g. empathy or sympathy), what we may call *affective realism*. Perceptual and affective realisms are deeply interconnected in the sense that ways of seeing generate ways of feeling which in their own turn, and in conjunction with language, may result in 're-seeing' the represented subject in a different way (e.g. as an icon of something – see next section). Ultimately, the affective ways of seeing and the perceptual ways of feeling, through their interplay, structure the way we

position ourselves against and evaluate the represented subject. As Page and Duffy argue, 'form suggests meaning and guides how viewers think about the candidate' (2009, p.115); we may call this *thought realism*.

Perceptual, affective, and thought realisms comprise the different aesthetic qualities (such as authenticity, intimacy, and ritualism, which I will treat in chapters five, six, and seven, respectively) in the (personalising, conversationalising, and dramatising) performativity of genres. However, aesthetic qualities are not exclusively accorded to the different forms of realism that the modes of presentation establish. Ways of seeing of, feeling about and, ultimately, thinking of the represented subject/object are not only enacted through the conventional patterns of use of the technical means of inscription but also through the conventional patterns of use of the semiotic means of expression, that is, through the patterns of co-appearance and combination of visual with verbal cues, or the visual-verbal correspondences.

Visual-verbal correspondences

Traditional *textual discourse analysis* has offered us great insight into the analysis of the role linguistic properties – both written and oral, as semiotic means of expression – play in the meaning-making process. Delving into the complexity and nuances of the syntactic and grammatical structure of texts, it has illuminated our understanding of the subtleties in meaning, for example in the use of nominalisation or passive voice and indirect speech (see Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 1993; Wodak and Meyer, 2009). *Semiotic analysis*, on the other hand, has invaluably contributed to our appraisal of the role the visual properties of texts play in the meaning-making process, especially in an age inundated with print, electronic, and digital images. Thanks to Peircean semiotics and its appropriation by subsequent works on visual communication (Barthes, 2000; Chouliaraki, 2006; Panofsky, 1970; van Leeuwen, 2001), we know that visual signs (e.g. a picture of a bulldog) may be not only directly-

denotatively related to the reality they represent, as *indexes* (the 'bulldog' as a specific dog race), but also indirectly-connotatively, as *icons*, when the relation is one of generic similarity and 'family resemblance' (e.g. the 'bulldog' as warning sign that there is a dog on a property) or/and *symbols*, when the relation is one of abstraction and cultural/institutional convention (e.g. the 'bulldog' as a symbol of sovereign Tory nationalism in British politics).

It would be, however, an unwarranted limitation to treat the visual in analytical isolation from the verbal and vice-versa. As Derrida succinctly pointed out, the visual-image and the verbal-language are two distinct but inextricably intertwined semiotic aspects of a text (1993), thereby always emerging in patterns of co-appearance and combination which must be the focus of multimodal analysis (see also Chouliaraki, 2006; Kress, 2010; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001). Within these patterns we observe the image to make a claim to *authenticity* of representation, by visualising the reality to which the verbal refers, and language to make a claim to the *authority* of representation, by organising and directing visual flows into a coherent narrative (Chouliaraki, 2006).

In the context of perceptual realism, authenticity and authority point to visual and verbal ways, respectively, of seeing reality, constituting therefore aesthetic qualities of *indexical meaning*. The verbal makes a claim to authority based on the 'power of description'; by simply describing to the viewer what she sees (in images). The visual makes a claim to authenticity based on the 'physical resemblance' of what the viewer is told about (through language) to what she sees (Chouliaraki, 2006). In the context of affective realism, on the other hand, authenticity and authority point to visual and verbal ways, respectively, of feeling towards the represented subject, thereby constituting aesthetic qualities of *iconic meaning*. The verbal makes a claim to authority based on the 'power of narration', that is, by narrating a story about what the viewer sees, and the visual makes a claim to authenticity by virtue of the 'affective affinity' between what the viewer is told about and what she sees (ibid). Finally, in

the context of thought realism, authenticity and authority point to visual and verbal ways, respectively, of thinking about the represented subject, constituting now aesthetic qualities of *symbolic meaning*. The verbal makes a claim to authority based on the 'power of exposition', that is, by confronting the viewer with a normative vision of reality – what is right and/or wrong about what she sees represented in images – and the visual makes a claim to authenticity based on a 'historically-institutionally conventionalised' bond between what the viewer is told about and what she sees (Chouliaraki, 2006).

In summary, although multimodal analysis seeks, in the end, to offer a compelling interpretation of the *symbolically* structured patterns of *thought* – the patterns of recontextualization – with which the viewer is confronted, it reaches this interpretative moment only through paying distinctive attention to *all* the different levels of aesthetic realism (perceptual, affective, and thought), as they are established by the modes of presentation, and types of meaning (indexical, iconic and symbolic), as they are established by the visual-verbal correspondences, in media texts. For symbolic meaning, as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have powerfully argued, is not immanent into any techno-semiotic means per se, but is rather activated through the re-articulation, in these techno-semiotic means, of other already established (indexical, iconic and/or symbolic) meanings-discourses. In this regard, the indexical meaning of perception and the iconic meaning of affect, by giving rise to different aesthetic qualities, become the key to the symbolic meaning of thought, and its recontextualization in the various genres of political communication.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Multimodal analysis, in exploring the difference within the semiotic, may tell us how institutional practices are generically instantiated in media texts, and what aesthetic qualities genres are invested with in these texts. We should not forget, though, that practices exist outside

media texts, in what Chouliaraki calls 'difference outside the semiotic': the meaning-difference that 'lies in the asymmetries of power that traverse the social world and in the historical and political relations within or between social groups' (2006, p.165). It is the analysis of this 'difference' that primarily concerns Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

The idea that discourse and its textual manifestations are the product of power dynamics is by no means new. It can be encountered in the work of several thinkers, from Marxist philosophers like Gramsci and Althusser (even Marx himself), to post-structuralist critics like Bourdieu and Foucault. The idea, however, that power dynamics are distinctively and creatively played out through discourse (not just as reaffirmation and reproduction of a dominant social order), and therefore that discourse plays a crucial role in the exercise of power, is the invaluable contribution of discourse theory and CDA (see Dahlberg and Phelan, 2011). Drawing both on the Marxist (power as a form of domination established on the basis of asymmetries and inequalities lying outside discursive formations) and Foucauldian legacy (power as a disciplinary technology of self-subjection to systems of knowledge and truth articulated through discursive formations), CDA seeks to understand how the 'extra-discursive' asymmetries and relations of domination, the difference outside the technical and the semiotic, are established, sustained and reproduced or challenged and disrupted through the textually mediated discourse (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999).

In this regard, it is argued that discourse fulfils some existentially significant 'meta-functions'[5], which, albeit intrinsically social, are performed through the (generic) techno-semiotic communicative platforms of (media) texts. The first of these functions is the 'ideational', referring to the *ordering-subjectifying capacity* of discourse-recontextualization, or the capacity to inculcate actors with certain institutional ways of thinking about the social world. The second is the 'interpersonal' meta-function, referring to the *agency-enacting capacity* of discourse-recontextualization, or the capacity to confront actors with certain

institutional ways of acting in the social world. Just as multimodal analysis uses certain tools (the analysis of modes of presentation and visual-verbal correspondences in media texts) to explore the aesthetic qualities with which the recontextualizing potential of genres rests, CDA must also use its own tools to explore the ordering and agency-enacting capacity of this recontextualizing potential. These tools are, as I wish to argue, the analytical categories of *spacetime* and *emotiocognition,* respectively. I will now explain the logic that underlies the critical analytical utility of these categories – the logic that textually relates them to the ordering and agency-enacting capacities of discourse.

Spacetime

Space and time are fundamentally ontological conditions of both our natural and sociohistorical existence. Thinkers from the great philosophers of the Enlightenment, like Kant, to the prominent scientists of the twentieth century, like Einstein, have attested at length to the fact that without some sense of space (where we are/live/move, distance, etc.) and time (when something happened or is going to happen, duration, etc.), human beings cannot organise and order, thereby rendering meaningful, their lives (see Morson and Emerson, 1990). Hence, the particular sense of space and time that humans develop structures the way they think of themselves as sociohistorical subjects. As Harvey, echoing Lefebvre, has suggested, 'the history of social change is in part captured by the history of the conceptions of space and time, and the ideological uses to which these conceptions might be put' (1990, p.218). In other words, without the perception of a simultaneous change in both time and space there is no 'action' or 'event'.

An action or event always involves the creation of a certain spatial temporality and temporal spatiality, what Einstein called, in the context of physical world (nature), 'spacetime', and what Bakhtin called (analogically), in the context of fictional world (novel), 'chronotope' (see also Bemong and Borghart, 2010 for more about the Einsteinian analogy in Bakhtin's

work). More than affirming their 'intrinsic interconnectedness' (ibid), the category of spacetime suggests that space and time are not singular given dimensions of natural and social life but multiple dynamic 'experiences' and 'perceptions', inextricably linked to the positionality-subjectivity of the actor. If in the (natural scientific) theory of relativity this positionality is studied in (physico-mathematic) terms of 'gravitational fields', in the (social scientific) critical theory of discourse is studied in (techno-semiotic) terms of 'semantic fields', particularly as symbolic representations, not of the natural, but of the social-historical world (Bakhtin, 1981; Chouliaraki, 2006).

The spatiotemporal or chronotopic frames of discourse-recontextualization foreground a specific representation (reconstruction and reinterpretation) of the sociohistorical referents in symbolic meanings or, as Agha puts it, 'through the inter-linkage of smaller scale semiotic encounters and participation frameworks, [chronotopes] yield larger scale sociohistorical trends' (2007, p.322). In doing so, spatiotemporal frames entail the 'ontological mystification' of the radically contingent historicity of symbolic meaning which, as I argued in chapter one, operates as a (discursive) means to the institutional ordering of social relations. There are two different possible modes-framings of such a mystification, *determinate spacetime* and *indeterminate spacetime*. These are related to three different forms of ordering, which I call *displacement* and *temporalisation* – the two ordering effects of spatiotemporal determinacy – and *eternalisation* – the ordering effect of spatiotemporal indeterminacy.

A determinate spacetime is the symbolic articulation of a definite and concrete spatiotemporal frame of recontextualization, by means, for example, of visual/editing techniques, like slow/accelerated motion, insertion into a text of footage with specific socio-historical references (referred to in chapter five as remediation or manifest intertextuality), and visual/verbal registers that act as socio-historical references (emblems, temporal adverbials, tense, etc.). If this concrete spacetime refers to a past sociohistorical context from which

symbolisms appear to have been 'borrowed' – a context positively (e.g. Attlee era for some Labourites; see chapters five and six) or negatively (e.g. the New Labour era for others; see chapter seven) imprinted in the institutional memory – recontextualization acts as *displacement*, that is, as transferring to the present the positive or negative connotations of the past (Fairclough, 2003; Thompson, 1990).

Sociohistorical referents with positive connotations are often displaced when the current context, in which institutional symbolisms are re-articulated, poses challenges and threats for established social relations, states of affairs, and interests or privileges that the institution defends (Phillips et al., 2004). In this case, recontextualization as displacement seeks to create a sense of continuity with the greatness of the past, thereby diverting attention from embarrassing and challenging circumstances in the present and dissimulating the discontinuities and raptures (contingency) that beset the sociohistorical evolution of institutions. Following the same logic, socio-historical referents with negative connotations are often displaced when the current context of re-articulation is in a transitional phase, with the institution, for instance, trying to promote a new brand for itself and factions within the institution attempting to impose their authority over others (ibid). In this case, recontextualization as displacement seeks to create a sense of discontinuity with a controversial past potentially exposing the pathogenies and pathologies associated with this past, at the same time, it dissimulates the continuities that along with discontinuities are involved in any transition.

Determinate spacetime may not only take us back to the past, but may also delimit the sociohistorical referents of symbolic meanings to the present, recent or current socioeconomic conditions and necessities (e.g. fixing the economy; see chapter five). Recontextualization acts now as *temporalisation*, reducing symbolic meanings to rational decisions and inevitable choices (Thompson, 1990) and, in so doing, mystifies (like the displacement of negative

connotations) continuities with the past, the historical patterns that lie behind institutional policies allegedly dictated by the present situation.

On the other hand, an indeterminate spacetime is the symbolic articulation of an indefinite and vague spatiotemporal frame of recontextualization, mainly through visual blurring or erasing of identifiers of sociohistorical context and verbal references to popular dictums whose origin is lost in the ages (e.g. 'the difficult decision is the right decision'; see chapter seven). Instead of being informed by past (displacement) or dictated by present (temporalisation) choices and decisions, symbolic meanings appear now as 'permanent, unchanging and ever-recurring' (Thompson, 1990, p.66) 'axioms' and 'general truths'. Recontextualization acts, therefore, as *eternalisation* mystifying both continuities and discontinuities with the past so that the sociohistorical particularities and exceptionalities of symbolic meanings are reconstituted as natural and normal – are reified.

Emotiocognition

The ordering capacity of discourse, the ways of thinking with which recontextualization inculcates actors, are not independent from and external to its agency-enacting capacity, the ways of acting with which recontextualization confronts actors. On the one hand, the way we think organises and orders the way we act and, on the other, the cumulative consequences of collective action may lead to the restructuring of patterns of thought (Thompson, 1984). Influenced by cognitive neuroscience and psychology, some discourse theorists have tried to operationalise the thought-action bond by focusing on the 'cognitions' through which discourses operate in the human mind. In this regard, discourse is able to enact and mobilise certain forms of action insofar as it contains information with some relevance to one or more semantic nodes in the mental models or networks (memory) of the human mind (see Hart, 2018; van Dijk, 2018).

Problematically, though, such a cognition-based explanation of discursive agency has disregarded the catalytic role of affect in decision-making and action-taking, encouraging, in line with rationalistic explanations of social action, its relegation to the sphere of instincts as distraction from rational thought (see Brock et al., 2005; Hirschman, 2013; Mullins, 1972). Indeed, as I have noted in chapter one, the rationalistic 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm in the study of ideology implies a dichotomy of cognition versus affect which broadly corresponds with the opposition between rational and irrational thought-action. Such a dichotomisation, however, has been contested by a plethora of studies, within the burgeoning fields of affective neuroscience and the psychology of emotions, which demonstrate that affective energy is rather an integral aspect of the organisation, coordination, and prioritisation of cognitions, and therefore of heuristic value in the mobilisation of action (see Berezin, 2002; Damasio, 1994; Keltner et al., 2013; Marcus, 2013).

CDA takes affect not only as a sensory but also as a semiotic mechanism (Chouliaraki, 2015) and, in so doing, it seeks to understand how the amorphous libidinal energy of affect (what, in the analytical context of multimodality, I broadly referred to as affective realism) 'gets caught up in a network of signifiers' (Chang and Glynos, 2011, p.114); how affect is morphed, through the techno-semiotic mechanisms of media texts, into concrete *emotions* (of hope, anxiety, anger, fear, etc.), thereby activating certain systems of cognitive appraisal leading to the enactment of certain forms of agency instead of others. We may empathise, for instance, with represented subjects who look anxious, as we may be invited to 'feel' their concerns and anxieties as our own, but we may also empathise with represented subjects who look enthusiastic, as, likewise, we may be are urged to 'feel' their enthusiasm as our own. However, while (empathic) anxiety, has been found to be cognitively 'associated with heightened vigilance and the avoidance of danger' (Castells, 2009, p.147), (empathic) enthusiasm is argued to induce risk-taking dispositional action (Keltner et al., 2013). I shall

refer to this techno-semiotic re-articulation of affect as *emotiocognition,* distinguishing two types: the *emotiocognition of disposition,* which is linked to a *partisan form of agency,* and the *emotiocognition of surveillance,* linked to a *cross-partisan form of agency.*

Emotiocognitions of disposition and surveillance appertain to the two emotive-cognitive systems through which the human mind perceives, processes, and responds to – appraises – external stimuli: the 'dispositional' and 'surveillant' system, respectively. The logic that underlies the distinction between these two systems is that the 'working memory' (the memory which collects and processes external stimuli) only follows two possible paths of cognitive appraisal. On the one hand, it 'tunes consciousness to rely on the habituated programme of action' (Marcus, 2013, p.27), on what we know and trust (dispositions), preventing us from looking for new and novel information, considering alternatives, and engaging in a process of deliberation. On the other, it mobilises us to 'weigh the various options, the evidence that this or that option will succeed (or fail) and the likely results which might follow from this (or that) initiative' (Marcus, 2013, p.28), and therefore to take under consideration and carefully process (surveillance) new information that may contradict what we already know. The heuristic value of affect lies exactly in its, techno-semiotically articulated, capacity to generate the appropriate emotional grip that will direct our working memory to the one or the other system of cognitive appraisal.

There are emotions which, by virtue of the cataclysmic feelings they generate – of success and reward (enthusiasm) or failure and disappointment (anger, ressentiment or melancholy) – are likely to direct working memory away from the micro-details (and the need to process them) of the information it receives, encouraging cognition to adhere to pre-existing, firmly held dispositions (Keltner et al., 2013). By this token, political discourse that involves the use of such sentimental frames, in its textual articulation through visual and verbal pointers of success or failure, satisfaction or disappointment, elation or repressed vindictiveness, etc.,

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confronts us with the emotiocognition of disposition. It confronts us with a call to act in defence of the 'party line' (institutional dispositions), not because we are urged to consider it more credible or effective, but because it is in absolute concordance with our entrenched forms of knowledge (personal dispositions) as traditional voters of a party (Berezin, 2002; Ridout and Searles, 2011). Discourse-recontextualization enacts, therefore, a *partisan* form of agency.

On the other hand, there are emotions which, by virtue of the ambivalent and precarious feelings they generate – of expectation and uncertainty (hope and anxiety) or self-preservation and survival (fear) – are likely to activate the need for more carefully-deliberately processed information, encouraging surveillance of the surrounding environment and the opportunities or threats it raises (Keltner et al., 2013). In this regard, political discourse that involves the use of relevant sentimental frames, in its textual articulation through embellished or dark-bleak future-oriented images, visual-verbal cues of past achievements or imminent threats, etc., confronts us with the emotiocognition of surveillance. It confronts us with a call to act in endorsement of a party not because the party line generally matches our own dispositions (it may contradict them), but because we are motivated to consider this party as the best option in relation to what concerns us at the time of voting (Castells, 2009; Ridout and Searles, 2011). Discourse-recontextualization enacts, therefore, a *cross-partisan* agency.

In summary, CDA attempts a close investigation of both the ideational function/ordering and the interpersonal function/agency-enacting capacity of discourse-recontextualization, taking them as fundamentally social but also (inevitably) techno-semiotically performed functions of media texts. It looks into the spatiotemporal framing of recontextualization which, by mystifying the sociohistorical contingency of symbolic meanings, construes-orders certain institutional arrangements as continuities or discontinuities with the past (determinacy/displacement), rationalistic inevitabilities of the present (determinacy/temporalisation), or ahistorical and universal validities

(indeterminacy/eternalisation). At the same time, it looks into the emotive-cognitive framing of recontextualization which, by regulating the process of appraisal of symbolic meanings, enacts partisan (through emotions that encourage adherence to dispositions and, therefore, party-line action) or cross-partisan (through emotions that encourage surveillance of available information and, therefore, informed action-endorsement) forms of agency.

Conclusion: responding to some potential critiques

In this chapter, I have tried to delineate a consistent and systematic framework for the analysis of the ideological potential of political communication: the analytics of mediatization. This analytical framework is predicated on the principle that both ideology and mediatization are discursive moments – moments of meaning making in and therefore constitutive of – the institutional practices of political communication. Ideology as a moment of recontextualization of institutional symbolisms constitutes a potentiality of the moments of self-subjection to institutional media performativity, 'captured' in the different textually instantiated genres of political communication. Towards the in-depth exploration of this potentiality, the analytics of mediatization applies a multimodal analysis, an analysis of the modes of presentation (perceptual, affective, thought realism) and visual-verbal correspondences (indexical, iconic and symbolic meaning) in media texts, oriented at interpretively exploring the different aesthetic qualities, and their symbolic meanings, with which genres are invested in these texts. It also applies a critical discourse analysis, an analysis of the spacetime (spatiotemporal determinacy or indeterminacy) and emotiocognition (emotive-cognitive dispositionality or surveillance) in media texts, oriented at exploring how the different forms of ordering (displacement, temporalisation, eternalisation) and agency (partisanship, cross-partisanship), respectively, are enacted by the recontextualization of symbolic meanings in these texts.

I would like now to respond to some critiques that are often raised against interpretive methodological frameworks (e.g. social semiotics and CDA) that involve, in one way or another, some sort of textual analysis, such as the analytics of mediatization I propose in this chapter. First of all, let me briefly summarise the response to a critique – critique 1 – with which I have already grappled in the beginning of this chapter.

Critique 1: *Discourse analysis by taking texts as its empirical point of reference tries to read practices off texts, as if practice was reducible to the internal structural arrangements of the techno-semiotic system of representation.* As I have argued, the analytics of mediatization treats texts as material instantiations and symbolic articulations of social practices in the form of genres, not practices as social extensions of texts-linguistic/semiotic structures. What we study by analysing media texts is the recurrent and conventional patterns of institutional media performativity as they are *generically-discursively manifested in* media texts, not as if they were *structurally determined by* texts.

Critique 2. The overemphasis of discourse analysis on texts and, therewith, on the standardised and systematised aspect of practice may not imply the 'textualisation' of practice; however, it extensively severs practice, which is always about action, from the individuals and groups, the actors, that are involved in the formation and transformation of practices (Couldry, 2004; Hurdley and Dicks, 2011; Jones and Collins, 2006). As I have stressed in the two previous chapters, practices have a twofold character: first, they may be seen, in contrast to single individual acts, as regular and conventional patterns that organise and order action in ways that actors may not be aware of, primarily because of their routinised and habitual self-subjection to these patterns (the subjectifying dynamic of practice). Second, practices may be seen, in contrast to structures or systems, as malleable and open-ended patterns that allow actors to recognise and undertake certain forms of actions and, in so doing, to cumulatively transform practices (reflexivity of practice). From this point of view, it could be argued that

the analytics of mediatization is more interested in the first than in the second aspect of practices (which some contend, and I would agree, is better understood through ethnographic research [see Couldry, 2004; Smith, 1999]). This, however, does not mean that the analytics of mediatization completely ignores the actor in the process of production of media texts or disregards the purposeful character of practice.

One of the analytical categories I have discussed in this chapter as part of CDA, that of emotiocognition, is particularly oriented at exploring the different forms of agency enacted through the textually articulated discourses. The cross-partisan agency, for example, comes to reaffirm what political sociologists often describe as a 'strategy' of appealing to undecided and unaffiliated voters, voters who make up their minds based not on dogmatic convictions/dispositions, but on the information they are given about parties' efficacy in dealing with the issues that concern voters the most (see, for example, Klüver and Sagarzazu, 2016; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). The partisan agency, on the other hand, speaks to another popular political strategy, the strategy of galvanising the 'core' traditional voters whose support to a party depends on convictional/dispositional rather than information-based motivations (ibid).

Arguably, the analytics of mediatization takes these forms of agency to be discursively enacted through media texts and, therefore, as external to and independent from their individual manifestations in particular actions. In doing so, it reminds us that if practices are transformed as a cumulative result of actors' actions, this is because discourse has already brought practices into existence (even prior to actors' own existence) by constituting them as meaningfully ordered and organised patterns of action that actors can subsequently trace, recognise, and eventually undertake. By this token, the analysis of texts gives us an insight into how text-producers have acted in producing texts, not as sovereign individuals but as 'social-historical

subjects' (Wodak and Meyer, 2009), as actors always-already self-subjected to the institutionally embedded patterns of media performativity.

Critique 3. The agency-enacting capacity of discourse may not completely disregard the role of the actor in the production of media texts, it does disregard though her role in the reception of media texts. Discourse analytic methods overlook the actor's active engagement in the 'decoding' and interpretation of texts, as the interpretations they offer are solely based on some 'actor-independent' assumptions about text-recipients' response to certain representational techniques. It is true that the analytics of mediatization involves several such 'assumptions'. While considering the modes of presentation of media texts, for example, it draws on assumptions about the affective response of viewers to the different uses of camera (e.g. close-ups encourage the viewer to empathise with the represented subject) or about the social responses of viewers to the different spatiotemporal framings of recontextualization (e.g. temporalisation urges the viewer to think of the represented activity as an activity dictated by the rationalities of the present).

By drawing on these assumptions, however, the analytics of mediatization does not imply that the recipients of media texts will always and only respond in the ways they are expected to. The assumptions and expectations about viewer's responses to media texts – the anticipation of media effect, in other words – are neither real nor unreal but imagined, that is, 'pre-real' or premediating (see previous chapter). Both producers and recipients come to produce and receive texts, respectively, by already having in mind, whether they realise it or not, certain assumptions and expectations about how texts work and what they do (or, as I put it above, by being always-already socio-historical subjects). It is these imagined ways of thinking (ordering) and acting (agency), discursively established as more possible than others under certain spatiotemporal and emotive-cognitive conditions of reception, which the

analytics of mediatization seeks to understand, without presupposing that all interpretations of media texts necessarily stem from these assumptions and expectations.

Media texts may be subject to different interpretations by different people in different social contexts (see Hall, 1980; Morley, 1980; Thompson, 1995). The discourse analyst, for example, interprets media texts by focusing on the institutional sedimentations that are instantiated in texts, in the form of genres, as she may be interested in understanding the ideological potential of practices of political communication – their potential to recontextualize institutional symbolisms from the past. Recipients of media texts may not be interested in such an understanding of texts; they may interpret, for instance, an election broadcast merely as a pamphlet from which they can get information about a party's policies or as a means of propaganda which seeks to legitimise inefficient and unjust policies. However, the fact that the viewer may 'misrecognise' what the analyst conceives as ideology does not mean that ideology should not be part of the interpretation of a text. Nor does the fact that the viewer may 'recognise' the legitimising function of a text mean that ideology cannot seek to serve the institutional exercise of power in other ways, which the viewer may not be aware of.

Consequently, the *explanation* (e.g. the ordering capacity of discourse as it is techno-semiotically performed through an election broadcast) that the analyst provides for her own *understanding* (e.g. the ideological) of a media text must not be rejected as relativist or irrelevant simply because the recipients of this text may have a different understanding of it. As Chouliaraki and Fairclough succinctly put it, 'CDA does not itself advocate a particular understanding of text, though it may advocate a particular explanation. An explanation re-describes properties of a text by using a particular theoretical framework to locate the text in social practice' (1999, p.87). This is, ultimately, what makes critical analysis of discourse 'critical'; its ability to offer an explanation for a certain understanding of texts which the recipients may not be aware of, or interested in, or which they may be aware of but interested

in other, different explanations of it. In this regard, 'the interpretation of ideology […] is not only a projection of possible meaning but a potential intervention in social life, that is, a projection that may intervene in the very social relations that the object of interpretation serves to sustain' (Thompson, 1990, p. 294).

Critique 4. It is exactly this interventionist power of the analyst's explanation which renders the critical analysis of texts a 'self-fulfilling prophecy', that is, a reaffirmation of the analyst's own preconceptions and biases (Stubbs, 1997; Widdowson, 1996). This is, indeed, a critique that strikes at the heart of the analytics of mediatization. It not only questions its capacity to inform our understanding of institutional practices (as the previous three critiques have tried to do), but also its very nature as an interpretivist-hermeneutic method of social inquiry. By being heavily dependent on interpretation, critics contend, discourse analytic methods give the analyst an unconditional and unchecked power of imposing on social phenomena her own subjective and biased views, thereby promoting, even unintentionally, a particular political agenda (Breeze, 2011).

First of all, is necessary to recall here that it is not only discourse analytic methods that depend on interpretation. All forms of scientific inquiry involve interpretation; is just that in some cases, interpretation may be clearly distinguished from the 'analysis', as in studies that use statistical research methods, and not an integral part of – inseparable from – the analysis, as it is instead in studies that use hermeneutical methods (see Bryman, 2008). In all cases, however, interpretation remains by far the most interesting, important, and influential part of the research. As Max Weber, the father of interpretive sociology, has argued, statistically significant trends tell us nothing by themselves about social actions unless they can be understood and explained with reference to a subjective meaning (1978). His early insight into social science, often forgotten in the frantic search for the 'right statistical formula', is particularly relevant today. It is vindicated, I would say, by the recent failure of polling

organisations to accurately predict election results, as in the 2015 British general election, the 2016 British EU referendum, and the 2016 American presidential election. If critics are right in saying that pollsters 'underestimated' several findings and indices (e.g. the 'shy, not-out' Brexit-Trump voter) and 'overestimated' others (e.g. support for liberal-moderate candidates and plans) in their predictions (Fenton, 2016; Mercer et al., 2016), this is not a sign of a statistical error but, primarily, a sign that the interpretative frames through which researchers have been used to evaluating the importance of several factors may be inadequate or no longer relevant.

By this token, it is not interpretation per se that undermines the validity of research – interpretation is, instead, the quintessence of the latter – but the quality of the interpretative framework, particularly its unsystematic and inconsistent internal organisation and external application, as well as its unsystematic and inconsistent adaptation or non-adaptation to newly emerging conditions. Hence, just like the statistician, who tries to hold her interpretation accountable to the confidence intervals and significance levels of her analytical method, the discourse analyst must try to hold her own interpretation accountable to the specific operationalisation of the analytical framework she follows, by justifying every single interpretive decision she makes with reference to, and only to, the analytical tools included in this framework (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). This means that the analytical framework itself needs to be as consistent, systematic, and well-operationalised as possible, and that the analyst must also follow it step-by-step consistently and systematically (Fairclough, 1996; Rose, 2007). It also means that the discourse analyst needs to constantly and extensively reflect on her interpretation, to be as transparent as possible about choices and predilections, preconceptions and biases that may implicate her analytical rigour; she must be highly self-reflective (Gill, 1996; Tonkiss, 1988).

Having developed and defended an analytics of mediatization as a strong framework for the analysis of the ideological potential of political communication, let me now proceed to explain, and justify, why and how *case-study research* provides fecund ground for the empirical application of this framework. Why does a *paradigmatic case study* best serve the purpose of this thesis to produce an understanding of the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication and how such a case study can be built?

4. A paradigmatic case for the study of the ideological potential of political communication:

Political advertising in recent election campaigns of the major parties in the UK and Greece

The conceptual revisionism I attempted in chapters one and two, as I have already warned, cannot and must not provide us with categorical theoretical claims about the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. It rather tells us that ideology, as recontextualization of institutional symbolisms, is a potentiality in the mediatic practices of political communication, these premediating practices of self-subjection to institutional media performativity. It tells us that the understanding of the place and role of ideology in political communication is an analytical matter rather than a macro-theoretical one; a matter of analysing the conventional institutionally embedded discursive patterns of media performativity, the genres, instead of a matter of a grand theory of ideology and mediatization. In its turn, the analytics of mediatization tells us that the ideological analysis of mediatic practices rests with the analysis of media texts. It rests with the (multimodal) analysis of the aesthetic qualities with which genres are invested in media texts, thereby forming public-private coagulations capable of recontextualizing institutional symbolisms from the past, and with the (critical discourse) analysis of the spatiotemporal and emotive-cognitive framing of recontextualization by virtue of which forms of ordering and agency are enacted in the present.

In the light of these conceptual and analytical advancements, we can now reformulate the research questions, that this thesis has posited at the centre of understanding the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication (see Introduction), into concrete empirical questions (see table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1 Research questions as concrete analytical questions

How do the conventional, institutionally, embedded patterns of media performativity emerge as concrete mediatic performances at specific moments in time? →	How are *genres* instantiated in specific *media texts*? In what modes of presentation and visual-verbal correspondences?
How do these practices enable the recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past? →	What are the *aesthetic qualities* with which genres are textually invested, and how do they fuse the private with the public in institutionally symbolic coagulations?
What are the specific ways of thinking and acting to which the recontextualizing mediatic practices give rise? →	What forms of *ordering* and *agency* does the recontextualizing dynamic of genres enact by means of its spatiotemporal and emotive-cognitive framing?
How do these ways of thinking and acting respond to the pragmatic considerations with which institutions are currently confronted? →	How do these forms of ordering and agency serve to establish certain *party identities* and broader *socio-political subjectivities*?

Having put in place the right empirical questions and the proper analytical tools to explore them, what we need now is the empirical material or 'data', to put it in the positivist jargon, the analysis of which will provide us with the answers to the above questions. As has already been stressed, the data on which the analytics of mediatization rely are media texts. What kind of media texts, though? Media texts with any institutional affiliation and from any historical period? First of all, we should bear in mind that the analytical interpretation this thesis advocates strongly opposes the idea of a large corpus of context-independent data-texts. It does so on the basis that such a corpus would not allow us to pay enough attention to and

produce an in-depth understanding of the actual analytical object of the current study, as this object is not some 'trend' on which we have to *statistically generalise* but a concrete practice on which we need to *analytically generalise.* To this end, I suggest the building of a paradigmatic case study.

Case-study research is quite useful, as a methodology of hermeneutical social science, for investigating social phenomena as they unfold in their real-life contexts. It is instrumental to understanding the internal mechanisms and logics – the practices – that allow a social phenomenon to take the form in which we encounter it in a specific institutional setting, as these mechanisms and logics are immanent to the latter (institutional sedimentations) rather than to the phenomenon itself or actors' interpretations of it (Eckstein, 2000; Yin, 2009). Case-study research, in other words, provides fertile ground for developing an interpretation that informs us about the social and historical conditions of activation and actualisation of social phenomena; the practices via which the latter are brought into being in a specific institutional setting and how these practices operate within this setting. In a nutshell, it provides fertile ground for developing the analytical interpretation – ideology as potentiality in the institutionally embedded mediatic practices of political communication – that this thesis strongly advocates.

Case-study research has been criticised for not allowing generalisation on its findings exactly because it relies on single 'cases' instead of representative 'samples' (see Flyvbjerg, 2006[1]). The statistical generalisability that is implied in this critique, however – the ability to draw conclusions about the frequency-volume and causality of some repetitive trends in social phenomena based on a large enough sample size – is not the only, and often not the most insightful, form of generalisability. Case studies may allow for a different generalisability, what Yin (2009) refers to as *analytical generalisability*, that is, the ability to reflect on and make logical inferences about the internal working of context-dependent practices, instead of merely

observing and making statistically significant inferences about the external features of context-independent processes. The ability to explain how and why ideology works in the way it does in certain practices of political communication at certain moments in time, rather than to prove how often, in what scale, and through what patterns of causation it functions as it does.

To be sure, not all types of case-study research are equally suitable for drawing analytical generalisations. Some case studies, for example, are designed on a basis of 'extremity', deliberately involving generic and contextual 'outliers' (see Flyvbjerg, 2006), so as to falsify-reject a claim and attain 'negative', or *a contrario*, generalisation. This thesis, however, does not need an extreme case study, as it seeks not only to reject the claim that political communication is de facto non-ideological or a priori ideological, but also to explore the ideological potential of political communication, offering an understanding of the place and role of ideology in it. Instead of generic and contextual outliers, this thesis needs generic and contextual paradigms, or what Flyvbjerg (2006) calls a *paradigmatic case study*, a case study designed to exhibit and crystallise these generic and contextual characteristics that are widely recognised, by a relevant audience, for their typicality and conventionality, and therefore can be used as analytical exemplars.

> [W]e may select such cases on the basis of taken-for-granted, intuitive procedures but are often recalled on to account for that selection. That account must be sensible to other members of the scholarly communities of which we are part. This may even be argued to be a general characteristic of scholarship, scientific or otherwise, and not unique to the selection of paradigmatic social scientific case studies (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.233).

Flyvbjerg's insight here is that the paradigmatic status of a case study cannot be justified only in accordance with the conceptual and analytical principles that the researcher espouses but also with reference to the suitability of the case study to speak to the audience it addresses and to engage this audience in the debate it raises[2]. Taking this into account, I would like to introduce the study of *political advertising in the recent election campaigns of the major political parties in the UK and Greece* as a paradigmatic case study with respect to exploring

the ideological potential of political communication, and gaining a panoptic and (inter)generic understanding of the place and role of ideology in it. Let me now explain what is paradigmatic, in this regard, about (i) political advertising as platform of political communication, (ii) major political parties as institutional settings, (iii) UK and Greece as institutional genealogies, and (iv) recent election campaigns as historical context.

Political Advertising as paradigmatic platform of political communication

Political advertising, Nimmo and Felsberg argue, has been 'the mainstream of modern electoral politics' (1986, p.248), either in the form of 'party election broadcasts' (as in the UK), or 'political spots' (as in Greece)[3]. Arguably, nowadays, with all the innovations of live and interactive e-campaigning available to political parties (see Chadwick and Howard, 2009), it could be said that political advertising represents an outdated and unpopular platform of political communication. Indeed, researchers have persistently found since the early 1990s that the Anglo-American publics dislike political ads for being boring, unsubstantial and unreliable, reflecting a growing disillusionment with party politics in Western democracies (see Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1995; Scammell and Semetko, 1995). At the same time, however, is noteworthy that political parties have kept spending a great deal of their campaign funds on the production and distribution (where political advertising is paid) of election broadcasts which, following the increasing professionalisation of political communication in the last three decades, have developed into highly sophisticated multi-generic media texts (see Gunter et al., 2015; Kaid and Johnston, 2001; Scammell and Langer, 2006a).

Instead of being supplanted by, election broadcasts have penetrated into the mediality of the twenty-first century, becoming accessible not only through national TV channels but also parties' official websites and YouTube channels, as well as candidates' social media accounts (Jamieson and Campbell, 2006; Rackaway, 2014). As Scammell and Langer have

noted, political advertising 'by virtue of its journalistically unmediated nature it offers the clearest evidence of how parties/candidates choose to present themselves to the mass of voters. It is documentary evidence of the state of modern political persuasion' (2006a, p.764). Expanding on this, I would argue that political advertising, primarily thanks to its multi-generic nature, is a political communication platform paradigmatic of the self-subjectifying dynamic of premediation; of how political actors perform themselves to the mass of voters through institutionally embedded patterns of media performativity; how single individual persons and activities are performatively reconstituted as universal-historical personae and events, that is, institutionally symbolic private-public coagulations (see also Kissas, 2015; 2017b).

The *talking head genre*, for instance, in which the one and only performer is the party leader, provides us with an exemplar of personalisation, of how the leader's individual personality is reconstituted as charismatic persona, authentically embodying a politics of mission (see chapter five). On the other hand, the *testimonial*, in which the performer is a non-political person, provides us with an exemplar of conversationalisation, of how the individual character of a layperson or celebrity, and/or their private lay activities, are re-dissected as archetypes of ordinariness, intimately re-institutionalising a politics of everyday life (see chapter six). Finally, the *cinéma-vérité* genre, in which the leader and the layperson engage in an interactive performance, and the *neutral reporter* genre, in which the performance is about the impersonal observations by a third person, provide us with an exemplar of dramatisation, of how ecstatic imaginaries are re-signified as spectacles ritualistically galvanising a politics of belonging (chapter seven).

Although there are some studies which are concerned with the generic composition of political ads – the rhetorical/semantic (Devlin, 1986; Diamond and Bates, 1992; Lowry and Naser, 2010; Nimmo and Felsberg, 1986) and aesthetic/affective (Kaid and Johnston, 2001; Scammell and Langer, 2006; Jamieson, 1986) features of genres – their main focus is on

identifying broad trends across different countries and historical periods, rather than on delving into the ideological-recontextualizing potential of genres and the institutional power dynamics this potential serves in a specific sociohistorical context[4]. This is an analytical gap which this thesis intends to fill, by applying its analytics of mediatization to political ads produced in the run up to January 2015 and May 2015 general elections in Greece and the UK, respectively, by the two major political parties in each country. Let me now explain why I have chosen to analyse election broadcasts by the so-called *major political parties*. What is paradigmatic about these parties with respect to the objectives of this thesis?

Major political parties as paradigmatic institutional settings

During the twentieth century, most Western democracies have seen their formal institutional politics more or less dominated by two parties. Either there have been two parties with considerably greater electoral impact than the others, and often with parliamentary-congressional majority[5], or there are two parties that have been successfully holding power for a long time as the leading parties in multi-party coalitions (as, for example, in Scandinavian countries). These parties are usually referred to, rather loosely, as the major parties of the Left and the Right. More precisely, however, are argued to occupy the 'centre-Left' and 'centre-Right', the moderate, pragmatic-oriented, 'catchall' space of the politico-ideological spectrum, where the median voter stands according to economic/market explanations of party competition, so as to achieve high polling levels that allow them to maintain their status as major parties (Kirchheimer, 1966; Krouwel, 2006; Panebianco, 1988).

As several students of party organisation and campaigning have influentially contended, major political parties remain major, to the extent they do, primarily because they have managed to be effective electoral machines, serving as exemplars of adaptation to the most up-to-date and professionalised practices of political communication (Farrell and Webb,

2002; Negrine, 2008; Mair, 1998), or as I would put it, as exemplars of premediation and self-subjection to institutional media performativity. Moreover and relatedly, major political parties are often more active and creative in political advertising than minor parties, either because of electoral regulations that allocate them more broadcast slots (especially in countries where paid political advertising is prohibited) and/or because they are more successful in fundraising, and therefore able to spend more on ad production (see McNair, 2007; Kaid and Holtz-Bacha, 2006).

As noted earlier on, for a case study to be paradigmatic it needs to be able to speak to accounts that have, in one way or another, shaped the debate that the analyst seeks to reopen; here, the debate around the ideological potential of political communication in the age of mediatization. By this token, my choice of major political parties as an institutional setting is paradigmatic in the sense that major parties' political communication is widely perceived (especially in the political science's field of party organisation-campaigning studies) to be shaped by mediatic practices on an unprecedentedly extensive scale compared to 'non-major' parties (for some this shaping may translate into colonisation by or adaptation to media logic, for others into self-subjection to institutional media performativity). The analyst is, therefore, given the chance to explore a *highly mediatized* context, where most of the generic characteristics of mediatic practices, in which ideology potentially lies as recontextualization of institutional symbolisms, are expected to be prominent features of political communication. The choice of major political parties is also paradigmatic in the sense that major parties' political communication is widely perceived (especially in the political science's field of party economic-marketing studies) to be driven by electoral considerations and office-seeking, thereby giving the analyst the chance to explore a *highly pragmatist* context, where what matters the most is the effective exercise of institutional power, which ideology-recontextualization potentially serves by enacting certain form of agency and ordering. I will

now explain why I have chosen the major parties in the UK and Greece in particular. What is paradigmatic about these two contexts with respect to the problematic of this study?

UK and Greece as paradigmatic institutional genealogies

Institutional settings have their own genealogies as a result of the particular pathways to institutionalisation they have followed: these socio-discursive processes whereby they have developed into stable and enduring sites of political action-interaction with their own internal logics-sedimentations (see chapter one). Arguably, case-study research, by taking as its point of departure that the phenomena it explores are context-dependent, suggests that we cannot analyse social phenomena without an understanding of the context out of which they emerge, and, as Foucault would argue, to understand a context we need to understand its genealogy (Hook, 2007). In itself, such a suggestion does not provide justification for the selection of specific institutional genealogies, instead of others, as part of a paradigmatic case study. It may just give the analyst the liberty to choose the major parties from countries in which she is interested or to which certain analytical constraints (e.g. linguistic-cultural) do not apply, for example.

Justification rests, as already stressed, with the potential of the particular genealogical choice to appeal to broader patterns of thought in scholarship that have, whether we like it or not, structured the research debate in which the case study seeks to intervene. By this token, if the two previous paradigmatic choices are justified on the basis of widely shared perceptions about *mediatized politics* (the one pillar of this thesis) – political advertising offers us paradigmatic access to the key mediatic practices of contemporary political communication and major political parties constitute paradigmatic cases of institutions that make intensive and pragmatic-driven use of political advertising – the paradigmatic choice of institutional

genealogies is justified on the basis of widely shared perceptions about *ideological politics* (the second pillar of this thesis).

Just a brief overview of the major studies on the genealogy of the European political parties, conducted primarily by political historians and political sociologists, suffices to realise that great historical events and social transformations in modern Europe, such as national or industrial revolutions, religious reformations, civil wars and dictatorships, have given rise to competing narratives-discourses – party ideologies – that have, in their own distinctive ways, shaped the transition to modern democracy in Europe. For 'classical' political sociology, which is primarily concerned with party politics in the 'old' democracies of North-Western Europe, such as Britain and France, party ideologies have been moulded by *social cleavages* emanating from large-scale sociohistorical transformations in the late seventeenth and, especially, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – for instance, conflict between Protestants and Catholics following the Reformation, Royalists and Radicals following the French Revolution, protectionists and free-traders following industrialisation, etc. (see Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). This is how the classic 'spatial' (Right-Left) and 'philosophical' (Conservatism-Liberalism-Socialism) model of ideological politics arose (Knight, 2006): 'Right wingers' in defence of the monarchy and the old status quo, 'Left wingers' in pursuit of revolutionary causes; 'Liberals' in defence of the new-emerging bourgeoisie and free-trade, and, later, 'Socialists' in defence of the rights of the working class and social equality, to name a few common conceptions.

There are, however, countries, especially in Southern Europe – for example, Spain and Greece – where party politics and the transition to democracy have not been marked by the great social transformations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but by historical events, such as civil wars and dictatorships, in the twentieth century, and therefore not as much by social cleavages as by *historical traumas* (see Diamandouros and Gunther, 2001; Hallin and

Mancini, 2004; Lupu, 2015). Although these historical traumas did not lead to a radical reinvention of ideological politics for the 'new' democracies of the European South, they have re-defined and polarised the spatial model, relating Right-wingers, for example, to a militarist national-mindedness and Left-wingers to an ethical national resistance.

These two different models of ideological politics are of more indirect than direct interest to this thesis; the thesis does not take them as gospels of ideological politics in the 'old' and 'new' democracies of the West but rather as testaments to the inextricable bond between ideology and institutional genealogy in both cases, specifically as two manifestations of this bond that are well-documented and influential in political history and sociology. If we understand ideology as is proposed in this thesis – as recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past – then these two models, by providing us with two visions of institutional genealogy, also provide us with two understandings of what may count as institutional symbolism (as I have pointed out, institutionally symbolic is the meaning that is associated, by abstraction and convention, with the historical past of an institution, and thus with its genealogy).

To address the first vision of institutional genealogy, a genealogy attributed to discursive formations that have grown out of social transformations and cleavages urging a long and pluralistic transition to democratic party politics, I take *United Kingdom* as an example, for reasons that have to do mainly with linguistic constraints. For the same reasons, I take *Greece* as an example of the second paradigmatic vision, an institutional genealogy attributed to discursive formations that emerged out of relatively recent historical traumas urging a short and polarised transition to democratic party politics. Let me now give a brief overview of the discursive formations that have shaped British and Greek democratic party politics and, by extension, the two major parties in the UK (the *Conservative Party* and the

Labour Party), and Greece (*New Democracy* (ND) and the *Coalition of Radical Left* (SYRIZA)), providing them with their own distinctive repositories of institutional symbolisms.

Britain: a long and pluralistic transition to democracy

Britain's transition to democracy has been a long process, from the first challenge to absolute monarchy in the late seventeenth century, to the Great Reform acts of the nineteenth, and full enfranchisement in the early twentieth century. It has been a protracted process of compromises and concessions from *above* rather than of triumphal crusades and revolutions from *below*, without this meaning that defiant movements did not play an influential role in this process (see below on democratic republicanism). Democracy came, as David Marquand has succinctly put it, following J.G.A Pocock, through 'the medieval technique of expanding the king-in-parliament to include new categories of counsellors and representatives' (2008, p.37). It came, then, gradually and incrementally rather than abruptly and forcibly; it came as the ripe fruit of the antagonism and interplay between different narratives-responses to aforementioned sociohistorical transformations, and the social cleavages they generated.

One of these narratives (discursive formations) is what Marquand calls *Tory nationalism* (ibid), attributing its origin to the Tories, a post-civil war parliamentary faction which stood for the restoration of absolute monarchy and the pre-civil war social order in general, in ardent defence of landed interests and collective English identity within the Kingdom as well as of the imperial interests of Great Britain outside of it. The defence of monarchy and landed interests was gradually downplayed, as a result of the numerous reforms that established and consolidated the character of constitutional monarchy, on the one hand, and of the socio-economic transformations that rendered industrial and entrepreneurial activity the engine of the British economy, on the other (see Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Adherence to a Burkean *organic social order* and to a Disraelian *assertive Englishness*, however, have remained cornerstones of Tory nationalism, reflected in the '[…] Salisburyite Conservatism's

Second Jubilee jingoism, Bonar Law's exploiting of the Loyalist card in the 1910s, Churchill's playing to the imperial gallery in the 1930s and 1940s, and Margaret Thatcher's 'Iron Lady' identity in the 1980s […]' (Ramsden, 1998, p.117).

Another narrative that has played its own part in the transition to democracy and to the shaping of the democratic politics of the twentieth century in Britain is what Marquand (2008) calls *Whig imperialism*, which originated with the Tories' parliamentary opponents, the Whigs. Contra to the Tory intransigent and backward-looking approach to the changes that the British nation and society were undergoing, Whigs fostered a more flexible and forward-looking approach based on 'gradual progress, timely accommodation, responsive evolution and subtle statecraft' (Marquand, 2008, p.44). There was no radical spirit in this approach. Whigs did not oppose monarchy and landed interests, but wanted, for example, tariffs on trade lifted so the new-emerging class of capitalist entrepreneurs would not feel excluded and be vulnerable to radical appeals. Nor did they oppose Britain's imperial interests, but they believed that these would be better served by *ethical patriotism* – a patriotism holding Britain up as a moral exemplar (of a metropolitan mother-country) in the world – than aggressive nationalism (Ward, 2004). Overall, Whig imperialism calls for a smooth and inclusive transition to the new with the least possible disruptions for the existing social order. It has been quite popular in both the two (British) major parties, primarily but not exclusively as a vision of Britain's new position in the interwar and post-war era, informing, for instance, Chamberlain's appeasement approach to Hitler's European expansionism and Macmillan's tripartite (United States-European Economic Community (EEC)-Commonwealth) strategy of balance (Ramsden, 1998), as well as MacDonald's view of socialism as a cumulative and incremental change that '[…] would emerge from the growing success of capitalism' (Thorpe, 2001, p.12) and Attlee's Atlanticism and post-colonial adaptation.

A third narrative that has substantially shaped British democratic politics is what Marquand, echoing Sydney Webb, calls *democratic collectivism* (2008), giving name to a tradition inspired by several currents of politico-economic philosophy, such as Bentham's utilitarianism, Bernard Shaw's interventionism and, later, Keynesian economics. Democratic collectivism is for European pragmatists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries what Whig imperialism was for English gentlemen of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that is, an adaptive and inclusive response to the demands and organised interests of a nascent social class. As Whig imperialists had sought for a balance between landed and capitalist interests before them, democratic collectivists sought for a balance between expanding market capitalism and the growing demands of working classes for social security and justice, especially in the aftermaths of the First World War and Soviet Revolution (Marquand, 2008). The means via which such a balance and a more just social order can be achieved is, for democratic collectivism, *central planning* by the state, predicated on professional/scientific expertise and technological advancement (Hirst, 1994). Much of Labour's symbolic obsession with nationalisation, since the introduction in the 1918 party constitution of the much-debated clause IV, and commitment to welfare state (Leach, 2009) as well as the Conservatives' caring paternalism of the 1940s and 1950s (Ramsden, 1998) are indebted to democratic collectivism.

Last but not least, the fourth narrative in the matrix of antagonistic but interrelated discourses that can be traced in the genealogy of the major British political parties is, in Marquand's (2008) terms, *democratic republicanism*. In contrast to the aforementioned narratives, all of which have been inspired by established political and academic elites, democratic republicanism owes much to the radical movements that sprouted in the wake of the French Revolution, such as the Jacobins and Paineites (fierce opponents of the monarchic state and power of the Church), and, later, to syndicalism and guild socialism, which called for

extra-institutional/parliamentarian organisation of resistance against savage capitalism, unaccountable elites, and uncaring bureaucratised states (ibid). At the heart of democratic republicanism lies, therefore, the idea of a self-governing polity founded on the values of *communitarianism* and *social solidarity*; an idea which underlies, for example, Blairite 'devolutionism' (Leach, 2009) and post-Thatcherite 'one-nation Conservatism' (Bale, 2010). At the same time, democratic republicanism also fosters the idea of an *anti-establishment people's movement* above and beyond institutional means; a populist idea that can be found in Thatcherite 'Euroscepticism' (Gifford, 2016) as well as Labourite disillusionment with parliamentarianism in the 1980s (Thorpe, 2001).

Greece: a short and polarised transition to democracy

If Britain's transition to democracy was a long pluralistic story of 'gives and takes' among different political traditions, Greece's transition to democracy was a very short and polarised story of clash between two radically opposed (almost personal) narratives. Although Greece was established as an independent kingdom by the London protocol of 1832, the institution of monarchy would prove quite unstable and fragile until its final abolition with the 1974 referendum, where an overwhelming majority voted in favour of a presidential republic putting to rest royalist-radical divisions (Charalambis, 2004). In the meantime, this relatively young European nation-state would not experience a profound industrialisation and, as a consequence, would not develop sound class cleavages in its society (Dimitrakopoulos and Passas, 2010). On the contrary, the state would emerge as the major capitalist in the post-war years, by authorising public investment programmes in a largely agrarian and civil-service-oriented economy; an economy also riddled with networks of political patronage-clientelism almost inseparable from parliamentary parties (ibid).

No dramatic change has taken place in Greece's post-dictatorship, or post-authoritarian era, the first genuinely democratic regime in the short history of the Greek state[6], mainly

because of the rapid-unexpected, and simultaneously 'smooth' and unopposed, transition to democracy. In July 1974, after the tragic military fiasco in Cyprus and the Turkish invasion, the colonels' junta, which had been ruling the country for seven years, desperately called for a political government to take over (Charalambis and Demertzis, 1993). Such a government was finally formed by Konstantinos Karamanlis, former Prime Minister (PM) and founder of ND, on July 23rd, 1974. Almost four months later, Karamanlis would successfully lead the country to the first free elections, polling an astonishing 54.37% of the popular vote (Lyrintzis, 2005).

The transition to democracy lasted, therefore, just four months, and the political parties that undertook to facilitate this transition were founded just after the collapse of dictatorship. Arguably, the transition to democracy could not have been led by the political formations of the pre-dictatorship era, as they were either banned, like the Communist Party (KKE) and Communist Party Interior (KKE Esoterikou), or largely stigmatised as remnants of the post-civil war, epiphenomenally democratic but substantially authoritarian, system of power, like the National Radical Union (ERE) of Karamanlis and the Union Centre (EK) of George Papandreou Sr. (Voulgaris, 2008). For these reasons, Karamanlis dissolved ERE and founded ND in October 1974 and Andreas Papandreou, refusing to take over the leadership of his father's party (from which he had already defected before the coup), founded PASOK in September 1974 (Featherstone, 1982). The narratives that the two leaders spearheaded, and which would pervade Greek party politics for the generation to come, were built on a tremendous polarisation, the origin of which can be traced back in the recent past, particularly in the trauma of the civil war and its corollary, the military dictatorship.

The first narrative is what I shall refer to as *paternalist modernisation*, describing the major aspects of Karamanlis' vision of the Greek nation and society (to which he himself referred as 'radical liberalism', pointing to his strong will that the country take the path of Western liberal democracy, and which his epigones in the party would call 'Karamanlism'),

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fragments of which could be found later in Mitsotakis' Sr. (former Greek PM from ND) 'neoliberal attempt' and Simitis' (former Greek PM from PASOK) 'Europeanisation project' (Pappas, 2014). Problematically for Karamanlis, he was part of the post-civil war authoritarian regime, serving as PM from 1955 to 1963. Instead of building upon a glorious legacy, therefore, Karamanlis had to invent his party's identity by silencing the denigrating connotations of the civil-war Right, as political representation of a militarist national-mindedness which systematically denied political rights and civil liberties to those who were suspected of defending and/or enabling communist/anti-national propaganda (Clogg, 1987). Consequently, rather than an aggressive anti-communist nationalism (which had been extensively played on by the junta until the Cyprus humiliation), Karamanlis fostered a *rearguard pro-Western nationalism*; a nationalism at the heart of which lay the idea that Greece needed to be modernised, to embrace the liberal democratic institutions of the developed countries of the West, and ultimately to become a member of the European Economic Community (EEC), so as to fulfil its true potential as a great nation. To achieve this, Karamanlis believed, the nation needed a strong and decisive leader (he was inspired in this regard by De Gaulle), exemplifying his paternalist view of both the PM's position in the state – primeministerialism – and state's role in the economy and society – statism (Voulgaris, 2008).

The second narrative, to which I shall refer as *ethno-populist resistance*, emerged, in sharp contrast to the previous one, through the masterful rhetoric of perhaps the most controversial political figure in post-authoritarian Greek politics, Andreas Papandreou. Papandreou was not only unashamed of his political past (as the socialist voice in EK and the man who was arrested and exiled by the junta), but even capitalised on it, provocatively claiming for his party the whole legacy of people's resistance against the nation's enemies; from the anti-Nazi militants of the 1940s, to his father's anti-Right 'relentless struggle' in the 1960s, to the anti-dictatorial movements of the 1970s (Voulgaris, 2008). While 'the people'

who fought against external and internal authoritarianism and totalitarianism may have come from a variety of socio-political backgrounds and the 'enemies of the nation' may have been of a different kind each time, in Papandreou's ethno-populism both constituted coherent and compact, mutually exclusive ('us' versus 'them') categories: the righteous/ethical category of the *non-privileged*, the wronged and oppressed-excluded people, on the one hand, and on the other the category of the *oppressive establishment*, whether internal – the 'evil Right' and 'big capital' – or external – the 'imperialist US' and 'neoliberal Europe' (Clogg, 1987). To Karamanlis' rearguard pro-Western nationalism, Papandreou responded exclamatorily with a *polarising anti-Western patriotism*, exemplifying the ethno-populism that would dominate Greek politics in the 1980s and 1990s and to which not only his successors in PASOK's leadership but also many of his opponents would yield, i.e. ND under Evert and Karamanlis Jr. (Pappas, 2014).

As I will demonstrate in my analysis, SYRIZA, a relatively new party which was formed as an alliance of existing parties, platforms, and movements of the Left – the largest of which was the 'Coalition of Left and Progress' (SYNASPISMOS)[7] – recently emerged as the leading party of the Greek Left, and one of the two (new) major parties in Greek politics, not only because of PASOK's collapse in the double election (May-June) of 2012, but primarily because of its own capitalisation on the ethno-populism of resistance. Put this way, both PASOK's collapse (from almost 44% in the 2009 election to just above 12% in the (June) 2012 election) and SYRIZA's triumph (from just below 5% in the 2009 election to almost 27% in the (June) 2012 election) have a common denominator: the ethno-populism of resistance. PASOK 'betrayed' it, ironically under Papandreou's son's leadership, when it appended (2010) the first bailout agreement (Memorandum) with the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, committing Greece to unprecedented measures of austerity and radical economic reforms (Aslanidis and Kaltwasser, 2016). SYRIZA 'reclaimed'

it by calling the Greek people to a formidable 'anti-Memorandum' struggle, a resistance against 'internal oligarchies' and the 'undemocratic European establishment' which backs them (Moschonas, 2013).

Summing up, in case-study research, context-section is inevitable as without context there is no case to study, but this does not mean that context is selected randomly or to the analyst's convenience. In this thesis, where my aim is to build a paradigmatic case for the study of the ideological potential of political communication, context-selection needs to be in a dialectic with widely shared understandings of both mediatized (as addressed in the previous two sections of this chapter) and ideological party politics (as addressed in the current section). In this regard, my decision to consider institutional genealogy as a parameter in context-selection reflects a broader understanding, in political history and sociology, of party ideology as product of the genealogy of political parties (the sociohistorical conditions that have shaped their formation and development), and the choice of UK and Greece as particular institutional genealogies reflects popular-influential historical-sociological understandings of ideological party politics in the 'old' and 'new' democracies of the West, respectively. The one focuses on the social cleavages that have underlain the formation of the North-Western European parties in a pluralistic way, that is, by giving rise to different antagonistic discursive formations which in their interaction have shaped the (long) transition to democratic politics. The other focuses on the historical traumas that have underlain the formation of the Southern European parties in a polarised way, that is, by giving rise to two radically antithetic discursive formations which have shaped the (short) transition to democratic politics through their clash.

Conclusion: recent election campaigns as paradigmatic historical context

So far in this chapter, I have tried to justify how a paradigmatic case study, the study of political advertising in the British and Greek major parties' recent election campaigns, can provide

fecund empirical ground for the understanding of the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication. Firstly, I argued that we need to begin with political advertising (as a platform of political communication) since the different genres that are usually drawn in the production of election broadcasts constitute typical-exemplar manifestations of the mediatic practices that shape contemporary political communication – they give us a representative picture of what personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation in political communication look like. Secondly, I argued that we need to look into broadcasts by major political parties (as an institutional setting) since these parties are well known for their extensive subjection to the aforementioned mediatic practices – which bears implications for the place of ideology in political communication (the recontextualizing potential of aesthetic qualities) – and their convergence towards a centrist pragmatism – which bears implications for the role of ideology in contemporary politics (the agency-enacting and ordering capacity of recontextualization). Thirdly, I argued that we need to look into broadcasts by the major political parties in the UK and Greece since these two countries represent institutional genealogies that are well known for being marked by social cleavages, typical in North-Western European party politics, and historical traumas, typical in Southern European party politics – they give us a representative picture of what pluralistic and polarised ideological politics, respectively, look like. I shall now conclude this series of paradigmatic choices by explaining the choice to focus on election broadcasts from recent election campaigns. Why are recent campaigns of paradigmatic importance with respect to the objectives of this thesis?

Yin suggests that case study research should be preferred when, among other things, 'the focus is on a *contemporary* phenomenon within a real-life context' (2009, p.2, emphasis added). As I wish to argue, complementarily to Yin, it is primarily the emphasis that case-study research puts on real-life contexts which makes contemporariness important for a case study, especially for a paradigmatic one. Of course, there are case studies which seek to understand

historical phenomena in their own contexts (in the past), but even for them the contemporary dimension cannot be said to be irrelevant; as part of historical research, a historical case study explores the past to gain a better understanding of the present (Amenta, 2009).

For what concerns me in this thesis, that is, the place and role of ideology in *contemporary* political communication, contemporariness is obviously part of the problematic itself but it is also instrumental to the selection of a paradigmatic case study. The latter, to the extent that it generally seeks to draw attention to and improve our understanding of the conventional/typical mechanisms and logics that shape and regulate a social phenomenon, may increase its explanatory value by focusing on a contemporary, even more a recent, version of this phenomenon. Arguably, it is more effective to talk about something 'old', such as institutional symbolisms from a political party's past, and 'conventional', such as the genres of political advertising, with reference to something 'new' and 'fresh', something that is still in the memory of those whose views have been taken into account while designing this case study as paradigmatic (e.g. political sociologists, party historians, media-and-advertising analysts, etc.), and therefore topical enough to bring them to the same table of debate.

What is 'recent', however, is relative. Given that parliamentary elections are normally held in the UK and Greece every five and four years, respectively, the last two election campaigns in each country – a time range which does not exceed the decade – may be considered recent. My choice here is to focus on the most recent election campaigns, at least the ones which had already taken place before the empirical analysis began[8], and the reason of this choice is the shift in the pair of major parties in Greece – the fall of PASOK and the rise of SYRIZA. This shift was first detected in the two consecutive parliamentary elections of 2012, as noted above, but at that time was premature to talk about a de facto, consolidated, new pair of major parties in Greece. Rather, it is the (January) 2015 parliamentary election, which,

by reaffirming and reinforcing this trend (as SYRIZA won that election) has established SYRIZA as one of the two major parties in Greece so far.

Consequently, and as is summarised in the table below (4.2), in what follows, I will discuss the analysis of election broadcasts, one from each genre of political advertising (leader's talking head, testimonial, cinéma-vérité, and neutral reporter) – where applicable –, produced by the two major parties in Greece and the UK in the run up to the January and May 2015 general elections, respectively. The analytical discussion is organised across the three major mediatic practices, that I have considered to be constitutive of contemporary political communication, and the genres of political advertising in which these practices are discursively manifested, that is, personalisation and the talking head (in chapter five), conversationalisation and the testimonial (in chapter six), dramatisation and the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter (in chapter seven).

Table 4.2 Election broadcasts from each genre for each party

	New Democracy	SYRIZA	Conservative	Labour
Leader's talking head	'The future of the country is in your hands' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrGutboxJfQ)	'This Sunday hope makes history' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?x-yt-cl=84411374&v=DhroXVGNppU&x-yt-ts=1421828030)	'It's working. Don't let them wreck it' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrqG6CbmZjw)	'Ed Miliband: a portrait' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ac_pbq-zHc)
Testimonial	'We vote to build' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpG2ryNFw6A)	'I want to live with dignity' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iJIobq5Yro)	'Securing a better future for your family' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLJo1tj7QZE)	Harry Leslie Smith on defending the NHS' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OW-dD7IRkbk) 'Steve Coogan on the choice in this election' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhw5RHvPalk)
Cinéma-vérité	'We make the pitch' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyyLnvEvJ8M#t=10)	'Hope' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTseB9PAv2I)	'What kind of country do we want to be?' (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtQAW7PJePI)	'Ed Miliband: a portrait'
Neutral reporter	Not applicable	'Hope'	'It's working. Don't let them wreck it'	Not applicable

5. Personalisation in the leader's talking head
Mediatized charisma and the politics of mission

'In Ancient Greece, kings needed to be philosophers. In the Middle Ages, leaders needed to be brave warriors. Today, it is important to look good on TV'.

(Yankova-Dimova, HuffPost, 15/11/2011)

Few, if any, would disagree when Manuel Castells writes that 'media politics is personalized politics' (2009, p.202). As noted in chapter two, in the age of mediatization, political communication is largely shaped by a generic performance (discursive practice) which construes politics as a personal matter, an activity inextricably interwoven with leaders' charismatic personalities, and those of candidates' in general. The concept of *charisma* has been, loosely, used by some researchers to describe a 'gifted' personality, someone bestowed with remarkable communicative attributes and skills that excite and mobilise the public (House et al, 1991; Potts, 2009). These accounts owe much to the Weberian understanding of charisma as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional power or qualities' (Weber, 1976, p.124).

Contemporary scholars of political communication, without necessarily espousing Weber's pre-secular/magical connotations of charismatic leadership, they retain his insight that (media) charisma is a distinct sort of quality, which cannot always be specified and measured – like a 'secret', as Mancini puts it (2011) – but which can always be 'felt' by the people. In this regard, a charismatic leader may be, *inter alia,* an amazing orator, a demagogue, a devoted public servant or a heroic master, insofar as she is able to enchant and electrify the public (see Gardner and Avolio, 1998; Sheafer, 2001). However, many of these scholars flag up the caveat that these qualities are not independent from the context to which we refer each time, as different political and media cultures may give prominence and value to different personal

qualities (see Balmas and Sheafer, 2013). As Corner has insightfully suggested, 'the identity of the politician as a person of qualities is most emphatically and strategically put forward, with inflections towards what are perceived as the contours of popular sentiment or sectional value' (2000, p.393).

By this token, and in breach with the Weberian tradition, charisma may not be only about exceptional and remarkable qualities; it may be about a leader who embodies decisiveness and grandeur as much as about a leader who embodies humbleness and ordinariness. In a nutshell, charisma is not about qualities inherent in the person who carries them but about (aesthetic) qualities that are pertinent to the 'institutional habitus' (Wodak, 2015), or what I referred to, in chapter two, as institutional media performativity. What makes political actors look good on TV is not their 'given' exceptional ability to adapt to an alleged TV logic (as the intended transformation thesis of mediatization would want it, for example), an ability that would radically distinguish the telegenic leader from the 'Greek philosopher' and 'medieval king', as implied in the opening quote, leaving mediatized charisma completely disassociated from the myths and conventions of the past. It is, instead, as I wish to argue, the aesthetic capacity of concrete mediatic performances, regulated as they are by institutional media performativity, to reconstitute the individual personality of a leader as *authentic* embodiment of certain institutional sedimentations.

In an era when elements of the private sphere of sociality, such as trust, immediacy, intimacy, etc., have been elevated to evaluative qualities of the public sphere, the issue at stake for the charismatic leader, as Richard Sennett (1977) stressed long ago, is to convince people that her performance 'out there' is a natural extension of her behaviour and acting 'in here'; that there is an uninterrupted continuity between her private and public life. A leader is charismatic, therefore, not because she manages to look stunning on stage but because she manages to look authentic on stage; because from an individual person she is recast as an

authentic *persona*. The concept of persona is a manifestation of the private-public fusion which lies at the heart of mediatized politics (chapter two), as it defines the charismatic leader as 'a specific form of public self that articulates "universal" discourses' (Chouliaraki, 2012, p.5) – embodies institutional sedimentations in the form of what I call *politics of mission* – 'with aesthetic choices of unique individuality' (ibid) – what I refer to as *aesthetic regimes of authenticity*. This performativity of mediatized charisma, and particularly its articulatory-recontextualizing dynamic – in other words, the ideological potential of mediatized charisma – is what I want to explore in this chapter, taking as my empirical point of departure a quite popular genre of political advertising, the *leader's talking head* (talking head, henceforth).

The talking head is the oldest, yet one of the most popular genres of political advertising (McNair, 2007). It is hard to imagine an election campaign of a major political party without at least one broadcast that involves, in one way or another, the party leader, even the unpopular ones; after all, she is aspiring to be the next premier of her country. The structure of the talking head, as its name reveals, is more than straightforward: there is only one starring figure, the party leader, who stands and talks before the camera in a plain setting, usually her office or home. The leader needs to convey the impression 'that he can handle the issues, and most importantly, that he can handle the job', Devlin argues (1986, p. 26). Putting this into a broader context that speaks to the literature on charismatic leadership, the talking head can be said to constitute a generic performance where the leader appears as a person dedicated to the accomplishment of a great mission. In this regard, the talking head conveys the impression that, more than being able to handle the job, 'charismatic leaders have a mission, as saviour of the people', as Eatwell puts it (in Wodak, 2015, p.133).

We, as viewers, are encouraged therefore to appraise the leader not so much in terms of her records of efficacy and policy achievements as in terms of her authentic dedication to the mission she supposedly is undertaking. 'There is a symbolic excess at work in the figure of

the politician', Corner reminds us, 'a relationship between person and political system, and often between person and nation, which exceeds rationalistic commitments to particular programmes and even perceived levels of competence in the performance of public office' (2000, p.398). Crucially, it is the performative-discursive construction of the leader as an authentic persona which shapes our perception of leaders as hard-working and competent, and not the other way around. This authenticity, however, no longer relies on the physical realism of 'live' experience – what we see happening in real time – but on the aesthetic realism of the camera, that is, on what we are invited to perceive (perceptive realism and indexical meaning), feel (affective realism and iconic meaning), and think (thought realism and symbolic meaning) in the spacetimes and emotiocognitions of techno-semiotic representations.

At the same time, spatiotemporal and emotive-cognitive frames, other than differences within the technical and the semiotic, are also social-historical differentials recontextualized as symbolisms through the technical and the semiotic, enacting different forms of institutional agency and ordering, respectively (see chapter three). Consequently, if we are to understand the ideological potential of mediatized charisma, we need to explore both the multimodal articulation of authenticity into different aesthetic regimes (different forms of realism and meaning as established by the modes of presentation and visual-verbal correspondences, respectively, in the talking head) and the multifunctional articulation of authenticity into different recontextualizing practices, or different politics of mission (different forms of agency and ordering as enacted through the emotiocognition and spacetime of the talking head, respectively).

Although the leader's talking head has a simple structure, as I pointed out earlier, there is some variation in terms of its multimodality and, particularly, in terms of the modes of presentation that are used each time. This may restructure and differentiate the matrix of authenticities within which the leader's persona is performed as a seamless continuum of

private and public selves and, therewith, the recontextualizing dynamic of the politics of mission. Such a representational variation is detectable in the relevant broadcasts launched by the four parties that concern me in this study, allowing me to distinguish two types, or sub-generic rubrics, of the talking head: the *leader's personal address talking head,* instantiated in Conservative-Cameron's ('it's working, don't let them wreck it'), ND-Samaras' ('the future of the country is in your hands'), and SYRIZA-Tsipras' ('this Sunday hope makes history') talking head broadcasts, and the *leader's interview-style talking head,* instantiated in Labour-Miliband's broadcast ('Ed Miliband. A portrait')[1].

In the first type, leaders, in our case David Cameron, the then leader of the Conservative party and incumbent British PM, Antonis Samaras, the then leader of ND and incumbent Greek PM, and Alexis Tsipras, the leader of SYRIZA and then leader of the opposition, appear before the camera looking straight to the lens while they are talking, as if addressing the viewer directly. The point of view of representation is therefore that of the viewer who, as an addressee, is invited to focus on the qualities of the address, that is, on the confidence, decisiveness, and self-composure of the addresser-orator. In Cameron's and Samaras' talking heads, as I demonstrate in the second part of this chapter, these qualities comprise an aesthetic regime of authenticity, the *disciplined leader*, which relies on our sympathy for persons-leaders admirably different from us (non-intimate), giving rise to a disciplinary politics of mission. In Tsipras' talking head, on the other hand, as I show in the third part of this chapter, the same qualities comprise a different aesthetic regime of authenticity, the *defiant leader*, based on our empathy for persons-leaders idealistically similar to us (quasi-intimate), giving rise to a defiant politics of mission.

In the second type of the talking head (interview-style), the leader, in our case Ed Miliband, the then leader of the British Labour party, is represented looking not straight ahead to the camera but slightly to the left of it, as if he was responding to questions posed by a third

person who is not visible to the viewer. The point of view of representation is therefore that of an imagined interviewer, inviting the viewer, not as an addressee but as a witness of the leader's interview, to focus on the qualities of the interview which are different from those of the address. In an interview, we do not expect the interviewee-interlocutor to be decisive and over-confident (as, in this way, she risks looking arrogant) but rather honest and natural. As I demonstrate in the first part of this chapter, in Miliband's talking head these qualities comprise an aesthetic regime of authenticity, the *ordinary leader*, which relies on our empathy for a person-leader realistically similar to us (intimate), giving rise to a compassionate politics of mission. I shall now discuss these three aesthetic regimes of authenticity, and their different recontextualizing principles, in greater depth.

The authenticity of the ordinary leader and the compassionate politics of mission

It is not a secret that Ed Miliband is not among the most popular of Labour's leaders. While Cameron was an asset for the Conservatives in the 2015 campaign, appearing in all party election broadcasts, for Labour, Miliband was the 'Achilles heel' of the campaign, and was absent from all but one party broadcast (Dermody, 2016), his 'portrait' which I shall discuss in the current section of this chapter[2]. The fact that Miliband even in this single broadcast is not represented as addressing the viewer directly must not be surprising, media pundits suggest. Peter Bradshaw (2015), for instance, Guardian's film critic, argues that Miliband's 'faintly nasal voice' and 'wimpish posture' do not fly well in public, following another Guardian commentator who opines that Miliband does not have the 'X-Factor' given that he is largely perceived as 'weird geeky' (Freedland, 2011). Arguably, these communicatively unattractive and non-telegenic features – uncharismatic to these commentators – would look alien, even awkward and embarrassing, in the context of a televised personal address where the leader is expected to be a skilful orator. However, mediatized charisma, in the way this study

understands it, is not an element inherent in certain personalities – rhetorically adept and television-masterful ones – but a generic performance capable of establishing the leader as an authentic persona.

Indeed, Ed Miliband does not try to look like a brilliant orator before camera but rather as he is as an individual person in his private life, and to this end, the interview-style talking head is more effective than the personal address. By shifting attention from the leader as addresser/orator (point of view of the viewer) to the leader as interviewee/interlocutor (point of view of the imagined interviewer), the interview-style talking head urges the viewer to reappraise Miliband's lack of rhetorical appeal as a (authentic) sign that he behaves in the formal, firmly fixed setting of a public interview as he would talk and behave in the informal setting of a private chat, that is, with all his awkward idiosyncrasies (see above). In doing so, it presents Miliband as an imperfect, average, and therefore realistically similar to us (intimate) persona: the ordinary leader who stands as an authentic embodiment of the mission to change people's lives for the better. Let me elaborate a bit further on the performative practice (remediation) which turns Miliband's ordinariness into an aesthetic quality of authenticity, delimiting, at the same time, the recontextualizing dynamic of his politics of mission.

The ordinary as an aesthetic quality of authenticity

Miliband introduces his mission by saying: *'If we win the election, I think millions of people will live better lives and that's what politics is all about, that's what my parents taught me'*. Visually, the above words act as a lead-in to a pictorial collage that disrupts the representational monotony of the talking head by *remediating* family moments and, mainly, moments from the life of Ed's father, Ralph Miliband. Remediation, or what Fairclough (1992) calls 'manifest intertextuality' – the explicit presence in a text (here an election broadcast) of other individual texts, such as pictures from Ralph Miliband's life – constitutes, from a discourse analytic perspective, a performative practice; 'a practice of representation that re-constitutes

[mediatized charisma]', to paraphrase Chouliaraki, 'as an authentic event worthy of "our" emotion at the moment that it claims to simply re-disseminate it' (2015, p. 1363). Of course, at the level of perceptual realism and indexical meaning, the remediation of the pictorial collage still performs this simple function of re-dissemination: it seeks to establish a direct relationship between what is said/described by the leader-interlocutor (in voiceover) about his father (that he was a '*refugee from the Nazis*', '*he came to England and learnt English*', '*he served in the Royal Navy*' and '*worked as a removal man*') and what is seen by the viewer-witness (photos of Ralph Miliband with his wife and their two sons, as well as photos from his service in the Royal Navy).

Other than a description of facts, however, Miliband's voiceover also comprises a narration of the empathic feelings that had a prominent place in his father's life, such as the '*great affection*' with which he reminisced his service in the Royal Navy, his '*love*' for Britain '*for the refuge it gave him*', and his values of 'togetherness and unity' ('*he used to talk about* […] *how people of all classes, all face, all background came together*'). For Ralph Miliband, we are told, politics was an idea not as much comprehended by the mind as felt by the heart; it was a matter of empathy with '*a common cause, a common mission*'. This is the profound bond between the two men: not just the kinship but the empathic dedication to the mission of changing people's life; an iconic bond which is hammered through the performativity of remediation. By drawing the viewer's attention to pictures that give the impression, as Bradshaw (2015) has acutely noted, that 'Ed is the son who really looks like Ralph', followed by Ed's declaration: '*this is at the core of my politics*', remediation represents the leader, more than the son, as the mentee of Ralph, the 'elect' inheritor of his life mission.

Consequently, from the *indexical meaning of the father-son relationship* we are moving to the *iconic meaning of the mentor-mentee relationship* which rests with the affective realism of *empathy*. To empathise, Chismar writes, 'is to respond to another's perceived emotional

state by experiencing feelings of a similar sort' (1988, p.287), that is, to be able to identify with the other, to put ourselves in their shoes without special effort or even understanding of their cause[3]. We, as viewers-witnesses, therefore, are invited to empathise with Miliband because we can identify in him the human imperfection from which we all, more or less, suffer as ordinary people, realising at the same time that this imperfect ordinariness is not necessarily an obstacle. If it does not prevent us from pursuing our goals and progressing, why to prevent him from accomplishing the mission he has inherited?

Apart from father and mentor of Labour's leader, Ralph Miliband has been a hugely influential figure of the British Left, especially thanks to his prolific writings on the contemporary relevance of Marxism and the need to fight for the political revival of socialism (Blackledge, 2011). Are these Marxist-socialist credentials, however, the underlying principles of the mission that the leader has inherited from his father? In its empathic appeal, which is grounded on the recognition of likeness as mutual imperfection rather than on understanding of the other's cause, remediation invites the viewer to identify with the leader as heir not to his father's intellectual legacy (that would presuppose understanding of the cause) but rather to his personal one: his background as a hard-working refugee with a patriotic sensibility and strong commitment to the idea that politics matters. It is Ralph Miliband's personal life, instead of his academic work, which is foregrounded as a testament to the mission that his son has undertaken to continue. Hence, remediation functions not just as re-dissemination but also as affective/iconic and, ultimately, symbolic re-dissection of the inherited mission confronting us with a particular politics of mission, what I call here *compassionate politics of mission*.

The compassionate politics of mission appertains to the symbolic capacity of the narration of empathic feelings to operate as a selective narrative that avoids the radical and controversial aspects of Ralph's academic work, which often put him at odds with the Labour party, while embracing the moderate and uncontroversial values of his personal life, which can

be also traced in the genealogy of the party. In doing so, the compassionate politics of mission induces the viewer, along with *feeling* the leader as an authentic continuator of a great mission, to *think* of him as an embodiment of the high values (institutional sedimentations) that unite Labour, namely *central planning* and *ethical patriotism*.

First, the empathic feelings of affection and togetherness/unity encourage a positive interpretation of Miliband's claim that politics '*can have a fundamental impact on people's lives*': with the right plan and policies a government can change people's lives for the better ('*millions of people will live better lives*'); an interpretation which seeks to justify, in the viewer's thought, the intervening role of government in several socio-economic activities. By this token, '*politics as a matter of life and death*', confessed by both Ralph and his son-mentee Ed, is not just a descriptive phrase but a *symbolic exposition* of the democratic collectivist idea of central political planning (see chapter four), a symbol to which all Labour administrations, even the most market-friendly ones, have adhered so far (see Leech, 2009).

Second, the same empathic feelings, when expressed through references to Ralph Miliband's service in the Royal Navy and his love for Britain, besides restoring a sense of his patriotism – repeatedly questioned by nationalist tabloids[4] – also attempt the reinvigoration of the Whig imperialist idea of an open Britain which stands as a moral exemplar in the world ('*he loved Britain for the refuge it gave him*'); they are not just references to a vague sense of patriotism but symbolic expositions of the ethical patriotism which the Labour party has historically cherished (Thorpe, 2001). Let me now proceed with examining how these symbols are spatiotemporally and emotive-cognitively recontextualized as a compassionate politics of mission which enacts a cross-partisan form of agency and a dissimulative form of ordering-continuity with the past, thereby responding to certain pragmatic institutional challenges and pathogenies.

The ordinary as a recontextualizing practice of hope and displacement

Recontextualization, let us recall, as transition from the affective to the symbolic, turns the amorphous libidinal energy of affect, here the empathy for the ordinary leader, to the social-historical dynamic of emotion, thereby enacting agency (see chapter three). In the pictorial remediation examined in the previous section, there are signifiers, such as the 'war refugee', the 'removal man', the 'night school student' and, ultimately, the 'promulgator of the politics of life and death', which point to a life of hard work and full commitment to certain values. These signifiers allow Miliband's imperfect ordinariness to emerge as a signified of the *power of will and faith*. What matters in our individual and collective struggles is not the possession of an exceptional and formidable personality but the strong and endless will to work hard for something in which we really believe; this is what true leadership is about. Arguably, this is a moral of *hope*, hope that despite our imperfections and idiosyncrasies we can achieve great things, both at the individual level of our private life and, more importantly, at the collective level of our public life, where hope becomes a political hope, the hope that politics can make a real change in people's lives.

In its association with a discourse of change, hope involves some level of uncertainty – what kind of change can Labour achieve and to what extent? is it going to be the change that we hope for? what if it goes beyond what we are eager to change? – and in so doing, it activates the cognitive need for more information about what generates this uncertainty (Castells, 2009). In other words, hope gives rise to an appraisal system, what I have called the emotiocognition of surveillance (see chapter four), which calls for informed and cross-partisan agency. We could argue therefore that the remediation of the life of the leader's father as a testament to the power of will and faith recontextualizes popular and uncontroversial symbolisms from the party's past (central planning and ethical patriotism), inviting the viewer to espouse the leader's mission not on the dispositional basis of party affiliation but on the surveillant basis of the

party's capacity to manifest the desired change. Consequently, the compassionate politics of mission seeks to appeal not only to Labour voters, for whom central planning and ethical patriotism has an unquestionable symbolic value, but also to Conservatives who may want better public services (central planning as a pragmatic request) and Liberals who may want a more collaborative foreign policy (ethical patriotism as a pragmatic request), thereby enacting a *centrist* agency which comes to rebut the critique that under Miliband the party turned disproportionally to the left (see Pickard, 2015).

The recontextualizing dynamic of the compassionate politics of mission, however, is not only about how institutional agency is emotive-cognitively enacted but also about how institutional ordering is attempted through the spatiotemporal framing of remediation: the chronotope of *early post-war Britain* in this case. Indeed, as we can infer from the references in Miliband's narrative (verbal), the time frame of remediation can be stretched back to just before the 1940s – the starting point is when his parents fled to Britain to avoid the Nazis ('*my parents both refugees from the Nazis*'; '*he* [his father] *came to England, he learnt English*'). As we can also infer from the pictorial collage that accompanies his narrative (visual), it can be stretched forward to the early 1980s – the most recent pictures show Ed and David at quite a young age. Hence, the spacetime of remediation takes us back to what Marquand (2008) has called the 'golden years' of democratic collectivism and Whig imperialism, when the first ever Labour majority governments started building the welfare state and British Commonwealth. If Marquand is right in saying that 'the Atlee Government did more good to more people than any previous or subsequent British Government' (2008, p.149), it comes as no surprise that this era represents for many a magnificent chapter in the history of the Labour party; a chapter that is now reopened (displaced), allowing the leadership to capitalise on it.

By transferring the positive socio-historical connotations of the first post-war Labour administrations to the present time, recontextualization acts as *displacement*. It reactivates a

tradition and the greatness of a bygone past mystifying the failures and inefficiencies of the present; it performs a 'time-honoured disguise' through a 'borrowed language' veiling 'the new scene of the world history', as Thompson would argue (1990, p.62). This is not to say that there is an objective truth about the current state of affairs which is concealed. Discursive mystification is not epistemological but ontological (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999), in the sense that recontextualization, in its attempt to establish meaningful institutional practices (regimes of meaning), mystifies the radical contingency of the social; it constructs the social as an uncontested definitive entity. Particularly, recontextualization qua displacement of symbols of central planning and ethical patriotism from early post-war Britain establishes a continuity between Attlee's and Miliband's Labour which disregards discontinuities and ruptures in the meantime, such as New Labour's pro-market welfare reforms and the ethically questionable interventionism in the Iraq case (Atkins, 2011), thereby casting into oblivion Labour's responsibility for the pathogenies in the NHS, for example, and instability in the Middle East, respectively.

Summing up, the interview-style talking head establishes an aesthetic regime of authenticity which rests with the empathic appeal of the realistically similar to us persona of the ordinary leader. Invested with this empathic appeal, the pictorial remediation in Miliband's talking head broadcast recasts the leader's personal imperfections as authentic embodiment of the mission of changing people's lives, giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the compassionate politics of mission. This politics of mission hopefully displaces – recontextualizes – social-patriotic symbols (ethical patriotism and central planning), reaffirming the party's allegiance to the political centre at the very moment it establishes a dissimulative continuity with a highly regarded past – a continuity which mystifies the party's recent 'neoliberal' and 'authoritarian' deviations.

The authenticity of the disciplined leader and the disciplinary politics of mission

Unlike the Miliband case, saying that Cameron, Samaras, and Tsipras are charismatic leaders would not sound counter-intuitive, as their performances echo the conventional wisdom that poses the charismatic leader as a skilful orator who looks decisive and confident. However, as I wish to argue, the 'gifted' Cameron, Samaras, and Tsipras are charismatic for the same reason that the 'ungifted' Miliband is: not because of the characteristics per se they are endowed with as individuals, but because of the generic modes of presentation in their performances (here, the personal address style which adopts the point of view of the viewer) which construe these characteristics as aesthetic qualities of authenticity. While decisiveness and confidence are under the risk of being interpreted as a sign of arrogance in the context of interview-style talking head, in the personal address talking head, they are reappraised as qualities that facilitate the seamless private-public continuum in the discursive construction of the charismatic self.

Cameron's and Samaras' erect and almost motionless posture, their classic suits, direct gazes, stable and calm voices, and clear-distinct enunciation give rise to an aesthetic regime of confidence and self-composure which is fully aligned with the personal (private) backgrounds of the two leaders: the Etonian upper-class Cameron, and the Harvard-educated descendant of an elite family, Samaras. In a similar vein, Tsipras' erect posture and direct gaze, combined with a tension in his movements (constant gesturing) and voice (increasing volume) and a no-tie suit, give rise to an aesthetic regime of confidence and exuberance/combativeness which seems like a natural extension and evolution of his own personal background as a former leading protester and activist.

Despite their similarity, however, which differentiates them from the performativity of the interview-style talking head, the charismatic performances of the personal address talking heads also differ among each other. While in the case of Cameron and Samaras, decisiveness

and self-composure cultivate a sense of *discipline* (lack of motion, calm and stable voice) – the disciplined leader whose mission is to bring and maintain national security and stability – which appeals to the viewer's sympathy for a persona admirably different from her, in the case of Tsipras, they cultivate a sense of *defiance* (gesturing, tension in voice) – the defiant leader whose mission is to fight for the moral vindication of the non-privileged – appealing to the viewer's empathy for a persona idealistically similar to her. Let me examine the case of the disciplined leader in the Conservatives' and ND's personal address talking heads before I turn to the case of the defiant leader in SYRIZA's.

The disciplined as an aesthetic quality of authenticity

In the Conservatives' personal address talking head, the leader's mission is introduced in a way like that used in Labour's interview-style talking head, that is, through the performativity of remediation. Cameron appears before the camera holding a handwritten note with the phrase '*there is no money*', while telling the viewer that '*[…] over the past five years that is what we've had to mend, that is what our long-term economic plan has been all about*'. Remediation here establishes the indexical meaning of representation – a direct relationship between the *plan* that is verbally described by the leader-addresser and the *note* that is visually exposed to the viewer-addressee – as the following: the economic plan the Conservatives have implemented since they returned to power was in fact determined by the need to mend a ruined economy. It is, therefore, a plan about the creation of new businesses and jobs ('*there are now two million more people in work; there are 760,000 more businesses*'), the reduction of public deficit ('*we've halved the deficit as a share of our economy*'), tax cuts ('*cutting income tax for over 26 million people*'), and the boosting of the competitiveness of British economy ('*we were the fastest growing major economy in Europe*'); it is a plan of fiscal consolidation and market expansion that more or less maintains key (neoliberal) policies that the Conservative party has ardently defended in the last thirty years (Lee, 2015).

What the remediation of the 'no money' note foregrounds in this broadcast, however, is not as much the normative aspect of the party's plan (this is rather mystified as I shall show later on) as the rationality of this plan, its necessity and indispensability for a 'ruined' economy. '*Let's turn the clock back five years, when Labour was in office; they left behind this note, there is no money. After spending and borrowing too much Labour's legacy was a deficit almost as large as that of Greece*'. In narrating the chronicle that led to the adoption of the plan of fixing the economy, Cameron tries to persuade the viewer that the 'root of all evil' is Labour's extravagant spending and borrowing, and therefore that his mission has been to clear the mess that a reckless Labour administration left behind. The note by itself cannot convince us either that there was an economic meltdown or that Labour's policies were responsible for it; the viewer is not provided with any further evidence that would certify the authenticity of this document and how exactly it reached Cameron's hands. However, the authenticity of the note, as a sign both of Labour's recklessness/irresponsibility and Cameron's responsible response, is not predicated on the note's own epistemic validity but on what Papacharissi (2015) calls 'affective attunement', accomplished here through remediation. It is the particular ways the viewer is encouraged to feel towards the leader that allow her to overcome doubt about what she sees, while regulating, at the same time, what she thinks about what she sees.

Arguably, the viewer's attention is captured by the decisiveness and confidence with which Cameron brandishes the note before the camera rather than by the note itself (we can barely read what is written on it). As I wish to argue, these aesthetic qualities (semiotically harnessed, as I have already pointed out, through erect posture, direct gaze, etc.) establish the leader as a disciplined person who is worthy of our *sympathy* rather than our empathy. Cameron stands neither as the imperfectly ordinary person with whom we could identify (this is Miliband's case) nor as the decisively defiant person who we might, ideally, want to be (this is Tsipras' case – see later in this chapter). This, however, does not prevent us from recognising

with 'a positive regard or a non-fleeting concern', what Chismar understands as sympathy (1988, p.257), the exceptionality and admirableness of the qualities that he embodies. Decisiveness and self-composure are the qualities that have made the leader what he is both in private (the Etonian upper-class person) and public life (the determined, competent and ruthless politician, as Freedland (2011) has described him). They are qualities which, although we may not find them (or do not want to) in ourselves – thereby realising the distance and lack of intimacy in our imagined or 'mediated quasi-interaction' (Thompson, 1995) with the leader – we still respect and admire in others. Consequently, the viewer is invited to recognise and appreciate that Cameron has the experience, the strength, and the courage to do for us what we cannot or do not want to do by ourselves and, therefore, to sympathise with him. It is this sympathy for the disciplined leader and his cause which authenticates the note in the viewer's eyes, linking it (iconically) to the mission of fixing the economy and, more than this, (symbolically) to the mission of establishing stability and security for the country.

Like Miliband's empathic narration, Cameron's sympathetic one gives rise to a selective narrative; a narrative that takes Labour's policy of spending and borrowing as the only cause of the recent economic malaise (disregarding, for example, the 2008 crash or market inefficiencies and failures), and therefore the Conservatives' economic plan as the only remedy. In doing so, this narrative, and particularly its verbal aspect, comes to perform a fundamental classificatory activity, a semiotic activity of separation and dichotomisation, an 'us' versus 'them' division which evokes certain symbolic meanings from the past (Chouliaraki, 2006): 'We', the Conservatives, as the prudent and responsible party with the mission to protect and secure national stability and order ('*vote for the Conservatives* […] *and you will have the **security** of a plan that is working, you will have **stable** government and the **strong** economy* […]') against 'Them', Labour, as a reckless and irresponsible party ('*Ed*

*Miliband, propped up by the SNP, would **wreck** the recovery with more debt, more borrowing, more taxes*').

It is not a coincidence that Cameron choses Greece as a metaphor to describe the extent of damage that Labour has caused to the economy. At the time Britain was in the run-up to the general election, Greece was on the brink of default, under a newly elected government with strong leanings to the radical left (at least according to its own statesmen) and under the economic surveillance of European authorities and the IMF. Greece's situation recalls what, in the mind of a right-wing nationalist with memories from the 1976 IMF bailout and the 1978-9 'winter of discontent', is inscribed as loss of national sovereignty and national humiliation (Aldous, 2013). From this point of view, the 'no money' note is symbolically remediated as a menace, not only to economic recovery, but also – and more crucially – to social stability and national independence, in a move that introduces a *disciplinary politics of mission*: there is no need for experimentation and change as long as Britain has regained its security and stability ('*you'll have the security of a plan that is working*'), and indeed a change at this point would be detrimental ('*but vote for any other party and Britain's recovery could be stopped dead in its tracks*'); all we have to do is to strictly follow the current working plan ('*if we **stick** to the plan we can look forward to a brighter, more secure future*').

This disciplinary politics of mission conceives change, therefore, as a peril of destabilisation and insecurity, necessary only when is inevitable – 'if ain't broke, don't fix it', as the Tory vernacular has it (see Ramsden 1998, p.16) – enshrining, *à contrario*, conservation and order. In doing so, it encourages the viewer to think of the disciplined leader with whom she sympathises (beyond the *indexical meaning of the Etonian, upper-class person* and by virtue of the *iconic meaning as fixer of the economy*) as a *symbol of the restoration and conservation of order*; a symbol, which, as I have noted in the previous chapter, lies at the heart

of Tory nationalism, one of the most influential traditions (institutional sedimentation) in the genealogy of the Conservative party.

Let me now turn to ND's talking head broadcast, in which the leader's mission is introduced by means of the remediation of ceremonial video footage. In this video, the viewer can watch ND's founder and then PM, Konstantinos Karamanlis, signing the agreement by which Greece was granted full membership in the then EEC, while listening to his voice (voiceover) saying: '*A solid vision and an unfaltering faith in the necessity of a united Europe*'. Like in Miliband's case, remediation here establishes Samaras as the authentic heir to a historic personality's great legacy, but Samaras' authenticity is not predicated on empathy but on sympathy, exactly as Cameron's authenticity is. What links Samaras to his predecessor is that they both share an almost *heroic* determination to carry out their interrelated missions. Karamanlis' mission was to get Greece into the EEC and Samaras' is to keep Greece in the EU. This linkage is visually attained through the juxtaposition of a picture of Karamanlis in the end of the remediated footage, saluting people from a balcony with his typical self-confidence and robustness, with Samaras' appearance before the camera in an erect posture, speaking, like his predecessor, with a calm and stable voice. It is also verbally harnessed in Samaras' reminder to the viewer: '*this is my mission, which I have taken over and I will continue*'.

Heroic determination is therefore the shared aesthetic quality which binds the two leaders to the same persona, the disciplined leader, who is worthy of our sympathy since, as Chismar has smartly noted, 'while I may empathise with all the characters of a drama, I am likely to sympathise only with the *hero*' (1988, p.257, emphasis added). Arguably, sympathy does for disciplined Samaras what empathy does for ordinary Miliband, that is, it enables the establishment of an authentic bond between the leader and a historic personality that enjoys an outstanding place in the party's pantheon.

After claiming allegiance to his outstanding predecessor, Samaras proceeds to describe the next steps that the government needs to take after the election for his (inherited) mission to be accomplished, just as Cameron described the plan his government had to implement as part of the accomplishment of his own mission. '*We complete the final negotiation* […] *we shield the country's economy with the preventive support line* […]'. What Samaras refers to is the implementation of the bailout agreement that previous governments since 2010, including his own, have appended with Greece's creditors, the so-called 'memorandum', and the measures of austerity and fiscal consolidation it involves (Kennedy, 2016). The logics and logistics of the memorandum, however, albeit relevant to the descriptive function of language, are rather downplayed by the narrating one. Just as Cameron's narrative, capitalising on the sympathetic feelings of the viewer, redirects attention from the economic to the national(ist) aspect of his plan (the restoration of order), Samaras' narrative, capitalising on the same feelings, redirects attention from the economic aspect of the memorandum to the fulfilment of national duty and the protection of national unity. '*Then, it was a national goal to get onto this great road and today it is again **national duty** to take our homeland even further*' […] *and I will accomplish this mission along with all the pro-European and democratic forces, because when we are **united** we are unbeatable*'). In doing so, Samaras' narrative moves from the *indexical* – the relationship between '*the disciplined' and the Harvard graduate elitist* – to the *iconic* – the relationship between '*the disciplined' and the implementer of the memorandum* – and from there to the *symbolic* – the relationship between '*the disciplined' and the safeguard of stability and order* – meaning of remediation.

Samaras' narrative, like Cameron's and Miliband's examined above, is a selective narrative. It recounts Greece's accession to the EEC as a national goal, disregarding dissenting voices across the political spectrum which opposed the idea and the practices of the European Union. It also appeals to unity and the need for a broad pro-EU alliance, misrecognising that

ND had condoned polarisation by ardently standing for single-party majoritarian governments until recently (Kissas, 2013). In doing so, Samaras' sympathetic narrative seeks to establish a symbolic dichotomy, as Cameron's narrative also does, contrasting the pro-European/pro-coalition choice as a choice of national responsibility and patriotism with the anti-European/anti-coalition choice as a choice of national irresponsibility and instability ('*in this election either Greece becomes **stronger within Europe** or our homeland enters a period of governmental **instability**'*). As I wish to argue, this dichotomisation attests to a disciplinary politics of mission which urges the viewer to think of Samaras not just as any symbol of national duty and unity but as a symbol of what was referred to in the previous chapter as 'rearguard pro-Western nationalism'; the authentic embodiment of a nationalism that has in its core the idea that Greece can fulfil its great potential only as part of the developed Western-European world, under the aegis and guidance of a strong leadership. This rearguard pro-Western nationalism carries the personal imprint of Karamanlis, as the remediation of the ceremonial footage reminds us, constituting one of the pillars of his paternalist modernisation vision which has shaped ND's history in the post-authoritarian era.

To summarise, in both the Conservatives' and ND's talking head broadcasts, sympathy functions as the affective mechanism of remediation, recasting the disciplined leader as authentic embodiment of the missionary politics of national security and stability, and thereby recontextualizing nationalist symbolisms from the parties' past, such as restoration of organic order (Conservatives) and rearguard pro-Western nationalism (ND). Let me now delve into the emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal framings of this recontextualization in an attempt to reflect on the different forms of institutional agency and ordering that the disciplinary politics of mission enacts.

The disciplined as a recontextualizing practice of hope-anxiety, displacement and temporalisation

While our empathy for Miliband's imperfect ordinariness is channelled into hope, our sympathy for Cameron's and Samaras' admirable self-discipline is channelled into a *dipole of hope and anxiety*. Apart from being fuelled by the power of will and faith, hope may also be (and usually is) the emotional product of a forward-looking, future-oriented, approach to life, and as such is often combined with the anxiety of disillusionment in the event of failed expectations (Curato, 2016). In political campaigns, as Castells (2009) has observed, this blending of hope with anxiety usually takes the form of a dipole: hope emerges as the emotional investment of the message of the campaigning party while anxiety is raised in response to the plans and actions of the opponent.

Indeed, the hope-anxiety dipole is pertinent to the dichotomising effect ('us' versus 'them') of remediation which underlies the politics of mission in both the Conservatives' ('no money' note) and ND's (ceremonial footage) talking head broadcasts. In both cases, the disciplinary politics of mission activates a future imagination – '*we can look forward to a brighter, more secure **future***' (Cameron); '*the **future** of the country is in your hands*' (Samaras) – in a way that concentrates the positive prospects of this future towards the party that the narrator represents/leads – '*so vote for the Conservatives on Thursday and you'll have the **security** of a plan that is working, you'll have **stable** government and the **strong** economy on which our schools, our NHS, and your family's future depend*' (Cameron); '*a coalition government with ND in its core […] because in this election, either Greece becomes **stronger** within Europe […]*' (Samaras) – while orienting the negative ones towards the other parties/opponents – '*But vote for any other party and Britain's recovery could be **stopped dead** in its tracks*' (Cameron); '*[…] or our homeland enters a period of governmental **instability***' (Samaras).

Like hope, the anxiety that hope may imply, as a consequence of the uncertainty that lies in its future orientation, is also a moderate emotion 'associated with heightened vigilance and the avoidance of danger' (Castells, 2009, p.147). The hope-anxiety dipole is therefore generative of the emotiocognition of surveillance which, as it has been stressed in the previous chapter, calls for informed/cross-partisan agency. By recontextualizing nationalist symbolisms from the parties' past in a hopeful but also anxious frame, the disciplinary politics of mission presents leaders' mission not as a party/faction-oriented but as a nation-oriented mission, assisted by the party-agent. In the Conservatives' case, taking into account that voters still considered the party well to the right of themselves at the time of the election (Curtice, 2015), *disciplinary agency* reassures viewers-voters that the party's insistence on fiscal consolidation is not a right-wing obsession. It does so by making a call to all these voters (cross-partisanship) who believe that the country needs economic stability and that the Conservatives, even though 'too right-wing' for their taste, are better able to secure it than Labour. ND's disciplinary agency, on the other hand, seeks to dismiss the public perception of the party's plan as being forced by the Memorandum and, therefore, as a cession of national sovereignty to foreign economic interests (see Teperoglou and Tsatsanis, 2014), by making a call not to the party 'core' voters but all the (pro-European) voters who believe that the country's national interest can only be protected within the EU.

Let me now turn to the ordering dynamic of the disciplinary politics of mission, the dynamic that rests with the spatiotemporal mode of operation of remediation. In ND's broadcast, remediation is structured by a chronotopic frame, *early post-authoritarian Greece*, which, like the one in Labour's talking head (early post-war Britain), gives the impression that symbols, here the symbolism of rearguard pro-Western nationalism, have been extracted directly from the original context of their articulation. In this regard, a chapter of tremendous historical gravity is reopened for ND with the remediation of the ceremonial footage, as it was

reopened for Labour with the remediation of the pictorial collage. In ND's case, remediation takes us back to May 1979, to a ceremony at the Zappeion Hall, a historical building in the centre of Athens, where the protocol of Greece's accession to the then EEC was signed by the Greek PM of the time, Konstantinos Karamanlis, and the leaders of the other EEC state-members. Five years had passed since the military junta collapsed and, in the meantime, Karamanlis had already formed his second government, achieving what many both within and outside his party praise as the most vital and long-sighted national goal in the history of modern Greece, that is, joining the Western-European bloc (Voulgaris, 2008).

Recontextualisation acts here, like in Labour's talking head, as *displacement* of the positive connotations with which the symbol of rearguard pro-Western nationalism was bestowed in the first post-dictatorship ND administrations. In doing so, it establishes a Europeanist-modernising continuity between Karamanlis' and Samaras' ND which mystifies (in the ontological sense described earlier on) some sound Eurosceptic and anti-reformist discontinuities in ND's history. These discontinuities could be seen when the party (in opposition) tacitly backed the Greek Orthodox Church in its clash with the government back in 2000, over the latter's decision to remove religious affiliation from national ID cards in accordance with EU law; and more recently, in 2010, when (again in opposition) it rejected the first European bailout agreement (Pappas, 2014). Displacement therefore dissimulates ND's responsibility for having morally undermined structural socio-economic reforms which could have accelerated the country's modernisation-Europeanisation and, therewith, its disentanglement from 'clientelist statism', and which could have potentially prevented the recent debt crisis (Featherstone and Papadimitriou, 2008; Pappas, 2014). At the same time, however, displacement fetishizes Europeanism, leaving unquestioned the severe social side-effects (e.g. widening of inequalities, galloping poverty and unemployment) of the neoliberally inspired bailout agreements which ND has approved since it returned to power in 2012.

In sharp opposition to Labour's and ND's talking head broadcasts, the social-historical referents of the symbol of restoration of order are silenced in the Conservatives' broadcast. Instead of taking us back to a specific historical moment in the past, Cameron's narrative is delimited to the present, to the chronotope of *Britain today*, as we can infer from the linguistic references to 'the last five years' ('*Let's turn the clock back five years*'; '*over the last five years*') and the 'British people' ('*thanks to the hard work of the British people*'). In doing so, it represents the 'no money' note and its symbolic meaning (destabilisation and disorder) as a recent domestic product, particularly a product of the last Labour administration. Cameron conspicuously blames Labour's recent spending and borrowing policies for all the predicaments of the British economy, in a move that projects the neoliberal solution, which lies behind the disciplinary politics of mission (the fiscal consolidation and market-expansion that Cameron's plan/mission involves), as necessary and inevitable.

Recontextualization acts here as *temporalisation*, severing symbolic meanings, and the policies and decisions that are justified by them, from any semiotic registers that could reveal their sociohistorical contingency; symbolisms are reconstructed as temporal rationalities rather than historicalities. If recontextualization qua displacement overemphasises continuity with the past, mystifying 'embarrassing' ruptures in the historical itinerary of an institution, recontextualization qua temporalisation overemphasises discontinuity, thereby mystifying 'suspicious' continuities with the institutional past. Indeed, the Tory nationalist symbol of the restoration of order is recontextualized here in a way that rationalises Cameron's mission (as a necessity and inevitability of the present) without recalling any ties with the 'nasty party' of the past (Quinn, 2011), the Thatcherite legacy of authoritarianism and savage neoliberalism. Arguably, temporalisation serves the rebranding of the party that Cameron has attempted since he took over the leadership (Bale, 2010) and, more crucially, it serves to mystify the striking continuities between Thatcher's administrations and the Cameron-led coalition government,

namely their common neoliberal policies of austerity and privatisation which not only have they failed to deliver on their fiscal goals but also have exacerbated economic and social inequalities (Hall, 2011; Fuchs, 2016b).

Summing up, the personal address talking head establishes an aesthetic regime of authenticity which rests with the sympathetic appeal of the admirably different from us persona of the disciplined leader. Invested with this sympathetic appeal, the remediation of the no-money note in Cameron's and of the ceremonial footage in Samaras' talking head broadcasts recast the self-composure and toughness in the leaders' personalities as authentic embodiment of the mission to safeguard national stability and security, giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the disciplinary politics of mission. This politics of mission recontextualizes nationalist symbols from the Conservatives' and ND's past (restoration of order and rearguard pro-Western nationalism, respectively) in a bipolar frame of hope and anxiety which seeks to boost parties' perception, among non-partisan voters, as undogmatic and nationally responsible forces. However, while in the Conservatives' case recontextualization takes the form of temporalisation, inculcating a dissimulative sense of discontinuity with the Thatcherite neoliberal past, in ND's case it takes the form of displacement, forging, instead, a dissimulative sense of continuity with the Karamanlite Europhile and pro-modernisation past.

The authenticity of the defiant leader and the defiant politics of mission

In the empirical examples I have discussed so far – Labour's interview-style talking head and the Conservatives' and ND's personal address talking head broadcasts – the leader's mission enters the realm of signification through the performativity of remediation (the remediation of a pictorial collage in Labour's, of a handwritten note in the Conservatives', and of a ceremonial video footage in ND's broadcasts, respectively). SYRIZA's personal address talking head is an exception to this pattern, in the sense that it does not involve the remediation of any audio-

visual content. The leader's mission is rather introduced by virtue of what Bourdieu (2007) calls 'corporeal hexis', that is, without the assistance of the explicit intertextuality of remediation but, purely, through the expressive deployment (performance) of the leader's body, or the performativity of embodiment. This does not mean, however, that Miliband's, Cameron's and Samaras' personae do not act as embodiments of these leaders' missions or that Tsipras' persona is not intertextual. Intertextuality (and semiotic embodiment) is not always explicit and manifest but it may be, and it usually is, implicit and tacit, or 'constitutive', what Fairclough calls *interdiscursivity*; 'a text may "incorporate" an individual other text without the latter being explicitly cued – one can respond to another text in the way one words one's own text, for example' (1992, p.271).

By this token, Miliband's and Cameron's-Samaras' personae do act as authentic embodiments of the compassionate and disciplinary politics of mission, respectively, but they do so in a synergetic relation to the explicit intertextuality of remediation. Tsipras' persona, on the contrary, acts as authentic embodiment of the defiant politics of mission solely thanks to the implicit intertextuality of his bodily self-performance. It is this interdiscursive performativity of embodiment (the defiant persona) which forges a seamless continuity between the former student protester-activist and the current decisive/confident, and at the same time exuberant/combative, leader (perceptual realism), thereby recasting Tsipras as authentic embodiment of a widespread cultural imaginary – the *culture of the underdog* (affective realism) – and a polarising institutional symbolism – the *ethno-populism of resistance* (thought realism). Let me elaborate on this double aesthetic/semiotic movement, the movement from the perceptual to the affective, and from there to the thought realism of interdiscursivity.

The defiant as an aesthetic quality of authenticity

Tsipras addresses the viewer not in the flat and motionless manner of Cameron and Samaras but in an exuberant, almost combative one: he deliberately refuses, as in all his public appearances, to wear a tie with his shirt[5], he gradually raises the volume of his voice during his address, and he invests his speech with lively-intense gesturing, performing a kind of stylistic disobedience and protest which pushes the structure of the televised address to its limits. However, Tsipras' performance of defiance is still scripted and staged, so as not to disrupt the effective delivery of the message of the ad but rather to authenticate it. It establishes a direct relationship between what the viewer-addressee sees – an exuberant and combative leader – and what the leader-addresser describes to her as the issue at stake in this election, that is, resistance against and redress of the injustices that the Greek people have suffered so far ('*This Sunday we vote for Greece, for the young boys and girls that have migrated, for the working people, for the lost dignity of the pensioners, for a fresh start with security and self-confidence*'), thereby producing the indexical meaning of representation: Tsipras' mission is to fight for the people who need it. But to fight against whom or what?

In other public addresses, Tsipras has identified an 'enemy of the people' against whom he needs to fight, often the creators and defenders of the Memorandum, domestic (primarily the ND-PASOK coalition government) and foreign (primarily the German government and the IMF) (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014). In this broadcast, however, there is no such identification. That there is an enemy is implied in his exhortation '*This Sunday* […] *our people raise their head with dignity and pride*', but it is an enemy who, nevertheless, remains deliberately indeterminate. This is because, as Freeden has succinctly put it (2003), the decontestation of the, ontologically contestable and indeterminate, political meaning is never a *fait accompli*; concepts are always left with some vagueness which allows the addressee to fill the 'meaning-puzzle' with her own preferred 'bits'. By this token, the viewer of this broadcast

is invited to project onto the indeterminate category of 'enemy' her own enemies, irrespective of the cause of the wrongdoing she is suffering and her social background.

Instead of naming concrete enemies, Tsipras' defiant performance seeks to galvanise the *culture of the underdog* that is pervasive in the Greek society, an imaginary of righteous resistance by those – the so-called non-privileged – who feel wronged and oppressed, no matter why and by whom (Stefanidis, 2007). It acts, in other words, as iconic embodiment of the underdog inviting the viewer to empathise with the defiant leader. It is important to clarify here that the empathy of the viewer-addressee towards the defiant Tsipras is different from the empathy of the viewer-witness towards the ordinary Miliband. In Tsipras, we do not see exactly an intimate-ordinary persona, an exemplar of the imperfect ordinariness of our individual selves, but what I would call a *quasi-intimate* persona, an idealistic and latent version of our collective self. We see in Tsipras the *defiance* which, although deeply embedded in Greek culture, is not always manifest in Greek people's individual lives (resulting in the emotional state of ressentiment, as I will show later on), probably due to the constraining formalities and necessities of the daily struggle for making ends meet. Consequently, the viewer may trust Tsipras' mission to fight for the people not only because she can *see* the continuity between the student protester and the exuberant/combative leader, but also because she can *feel* the widely cherished but repressed culture of the underdog being authentically embodied in the quasi-intimate persona of defiant leader; because she can feel Tsipras' mission as a mission of *moral vindication of the non-privileged.*

As Diamadouros has noted, the righteousness of the underdog is grounded on the alleged moral superiority of the oppressed; the oppressed is always right and this is the cause of her misfortune (in Stefanidis, 2007). The right of the oppressed in this case is an ethno-ancestral right, as Tsipras' narrative reveals: '*Greece should mean Democracy, Light and Culture'.* Arguably, among the different things that Greece may mean to someone, Tsipras

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chooses to mention values which bring Ancient Greece to the viewer's mind and, therewith, a glorious past of which contemporary Greeks are tremendously proud. From this point of view, the verbal reference to 'democracy', 'light', and 'culture' amounts to a powerful exposition of *national pride* which turns ND's pro-European nationalism on its head. The viewer is now invited to think that it is not Greece that owes her democratisation and modernisation to Europe but Europe that owes to Greece the birth of Western democracy and culture. She is also invited to think that if there is a current disharmony and clash between Greece and Europe, as the one implied by the Greek people's opposition to European bailout agreements, this is because Europe has deviated from the classical universal values Greece genuinely represents. It is Europe which needs to change, not Greece ('*Greece moves on within **a changing Europe***').

Consequently, Tsipras' selective narrative of national pride gives rise to a defiant politics of mission which reconstructs from the *iconic meaning of the underdog* the *symbolic meaning of a populist* (the abstract notion of the non-privileged people who raise their head against an indeterminate enemy) and *polarising* (Greek values against European memoranda) nationalism, thereby establishing the defiant persona as a symbol of the ethno-populism of resistance. Although not directly derivable from SYRIZA's own genealogy (it comes instead from PASOK's, as pointed out in chapter four), this symbol has largely shaped the Greek politics of the Left that the party is trying now to monopolise; it is part of SYRIZA's reinvented past. I shall now focus on the implications raised by the recontextualization of the symbol of ethno-populist resistance for the agency-enacting and ordering capacity of the defiant politics of mission.

The defiant as a recontextualizing practice of ressentiment and eternalisation

The empathic authenticity of the defiant leader is caught up in a chain of signifiers which, as I wish to argue, turn the libidinal affective energy of empathy to the socio-historically contingent emotional energy of ressentiment, thereby enacting a partisan form of agency. Ironically, yet

not paradoxically, in an election broadcast like this, with the title 'This Sunday hope makes history', the recontextualization of the ethno-populist symbol of resistance appeals not to hope but to *ressentiment*[6]. In line with the latent-repressed culture of the underdog (see previous sub-section), hope is semiotically framed as a repressed and unfulfilled ideal ('*this Sunday we vote for…the **lost** dignity…*') which is in awaiting of its historic vindication ('*there is **only one step left** before hope makes history*'; '*our people **raise their head**…*'). It emotionally speaks therefore to what the German philosopher Max Scheler calls the 'repressed imaginary of vindictiveness', an imaginary marked by 'the desire for political and moral recognition and the powerlessness to impose it' (Demertzis, 2006, p. 119). In a nutshell, the defiant politics of mission is invested with a resenting hope, or ressentiment, the emotion of repressed and unfulfilled moral indignation and righteous resistance.

Unlike hope (and the anxiety that sometimes goes with it), the moderate emotional response to national(ist)/disciplinary and social-patriotic/compassionate discourses that involve some level of future uncertainty, ressentiment is an intense and negative emotional response to polarising-populist/defiant discourses that involve repressed moral indignation. In doing so, ressentiment does not encourage the search for new information, related, for example, to social change (Miliband's compassionate politics of mission) or (in)stability and (in)security (Cameron's and Samaras' disciplinary politics of mission), but the reinforcement of (repressed) dispositions related to the vindication of a righteous 'us' (Demertzis, 2006); it instantly mobilises the emotiocognition of disposition which calls for unconditional/partisan agency. By this token, Tsipras' defiant persona, as embodiment of the repressed imaginary of vindictiveness and resistance, recontextualizes polarising ethno-populist symbolisms from the party's reinvented past, urging the disappointed-resentful 'anti-Memorandum' viewer – probably former PASOK voter – to unconditionally rally behind the leader's mission of moral vindication. Arguably, such a partisan agency assists SYRIZA's attempt to occupy the electoral

space that PASOK's collapse left empty and consolidate its position as the leading party of the Left (Moschonas, 2013). To conclude, I shall discuss how the recontextualization of the ethno-populist symbol of resistance, along with the enactment of resenting partisan agency, intervenes (as a result of the spatiotemporal framing of interdiscursivity) in institutional ordering.

Spatiotemporally, the defiant politics of mission silences the social-historical referents of ethno-populist resistance. It does so, however, not by delimiting this symbol to the present, as Cameron's disciplinary politics of mission does with the restoration of order, but by throwing it into the indeterminate past. As I noted while examining the multimodal articulation of Tsipras' narrative, indeterminacy is a constitutive component of the performativity of defiance, construing oppressiveness as an empty signifier on which the Greek underdog can project her own historical enemies, from the Ottoman master in the nineteenth century, to the German conqueror in the twentieth, to the Memorandum defender in the twenty-first. What legitimises resistance against all these, and many other, imagined enemies is not the common nature of the different oppressors as much as the imperishable nature of the (always the same) oppressed, that is, the moral righteousness of the Greek underdog, grounded as it is on the universal values that originate in Ancient Greece – in a *glorious past lost in the ages*. Hence, Tsipras' exhortation '*there is only a step before hope makes history. This Sunday let's make this step*' vociferously resounds as the fulfilment of an eternal prophecy, the fulfilment of repressed imaginaries of moral vindication which 'seem to stretch indefinitely into the past, so that any trace of their origin is lost and any question of their end is unimaginable' (Thompson, 1990, p.66).

Recontextualization acts here therefore as *eternalisation,* a form of discursive ordering which effectively mutes any questions about the sociohistorical origin and contingency of the symbol of ethno-populist resistance – a symbol which has more to do with the traumas of the

civil war and dictatorship than with ancient Greek ideals (see chapter four about PASOK's anti-Right and anti-Western ethos) – reconstituting it as an immanent and ever-lasting characteristic of the political culture of the Greek Left. By this token, recontextualization naturalises and normalises the transition from the anti-Right and anti-Western leftism of the early post-authoritarian era, which would make SYRIZA look like a replica of the old PASOK, to an *anti-Memorandum leftism* which transcends the Right-Left fault-lines and confuses the pro-Western – anti-Western dichotomy having some serious 'reactionary' consequences.

Firstly, far right-wing parties, such as the *Independent Greeks* – SYRIZA's post-election ally – and the neo-Nazi *Golden Dawn*, could claim an affinity to the mission of moral vindication and therewith popular-political legitimacy, since they too have embraced the anti-Memorandum rhetoric (see Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013). Secondly, SYRIZA appears as the party which defends true European values, as they have been inherited by Ancient Greece, the party which is not against Europe per se but against the version of Europe which has betrayed these values; the Europe of the 'barbaric and inhuman' Memoranda (Blair, 2012). Hence, ethno-populism serves to reassure, rather than alarm, domestic economic elites and international markets that a SYRIZA government may 'bark but not bite', as the Financial Times columnist Tony Barber (2014) has put it, that is, its anti-conformism and radicalism would not risk a complete break with Greece's creditors, forcing the country to leave the EU.

Summing up, SYRIZA's personal address talking head establishes an aesthetic regime of authenticity which rests with the empathic appeal of the idealistically similar to us persona of the defiant leader. Invested with this empathic appeal, interdiscursivity in Tsipras' bodily performance recasts the leader's personal exuberance and combativeness as authentic embodiment of the mission of moral vindication of the non-privileged, giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the defiant politics of mission. This politics of mission resentfully eternalises – recontextualizes – ethno-populist symbols from SYRIZA's reinvented past

(ethno-populist resistance) and, in so doing, it offers a partisan recourse to the disillusioned anti-Memorandum voter, at the very moment it reifies some reactionary and compromising proclivities of anti-Memorandum leftism.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to shed light on the discursive construction of political charisma as it is performed in the leader's talking head genre of political advertising. The talking head invites its viewer to appraise the leader's charismatic nature in terms of her suitability for the mission she has undertaken. At the same time, it disarticulates suitability from the possession of certain (extraordinary and exceptional) characteristics as essentially charismatic, re-articulating it with the performative potential of the leader's individual personality to act as an authentic persona. This performative potential is aesthetic in the sense that it is regulated by different aesthetic regimes of authenticity – such as, the authenticity of the ordinary, disciplined, and defiant leader – each of which produces a seamless continuum of private-public self in the leader's self-performance.

The ordinary persona, for example, establishes a continuity between the awkward-geeky Ed and the imperfect/ungifted orator-leader Miliband who, by looking realistically similar to us, is worthy of our empathy. The disciplined persona, reversely, establishes a continuity between the elite-background David and Antonis and the exceptional/gifted orators-leaders Cameron and Samaras who, by looking admirably different from us, are worthy of our sympathy. Finally, the defiant persona establishes a continuity between the protester-activist Alexis and the gifted/exuberant orator-leader Tsipras who is worthy of our empathy because he looks idealistically similar to us.

Consequently, the leader's talking head personalises politics but not in the sense of reducing it to a game of individual personalities, just for the sake of the aesthetic pleasure of

authenticity. Charismatic leaders, as has been stressed throughout this chapter, not only look vaguely and indistinctly authentic as individual personalities, but also look concretely and distinctively like authentic embodiments of certain institutional sedimentations. The different aesthetic regimes of authenticity, by re-signifying private individual personalities (and their own idiosyncrasies-peculiarities) as authentic public personae with which we can empathise or sympathise, have their own recontextualizing dynamics – what I have called compassionate (embodied by the ordinary leader), disciplinary (embodied by the disciplined leader) and defiant (embodied by the defiant leader) politics of mission.

Each of these performative politics of mission constitutes a discursive formation which brings to the present a variety of symbolic fragments from the past (social-patriotic symbolisms in the compassionate, nationalist symbolisms in the disciplinary, ethno-populist symbolisms in the defiant politics of mission) through an emotive-cognitive matrix which encourages non-partisan voters to trust the charismatic leader, and his politics of mission, as an agent of change (hope) or stability/security (hope-anxiety) in the country and partisan voters to trust him as an agent of moral vindication (ressentiment). The politics of mission also brings these symbolisms to the present through a spatiotemporally determinate framing of remediation/explicit intertextuality (displacement of social-patriotic and temporalisation of nationalist symbolisms), entailing the mystification of neoliberal experimentation (Labour) and obsession with neoliberalism (Conservatives), and their failures in British politics. Additionally, through the same (determinate) spatiotemporal mode of remediation (displacement of nationalist symbolisms) and the spatiotemporally indeterminate framing of interdiscursivity (eternalisation of ethno-populist symbolisms), the politics of mission, respectively, mystifies neoliberal anti-reformism (ND) and reifies reactionary anti-conformism (SYRIZA) in Greek politics.

Beyond the politics of mission, however, political advertising also generically-paradigmatically introduces into political communication a politics that is no longer performed by the leader's charismatic persona but by the ordinary persona of the layperson and celebrity, as well as their everyday activities. To this *politics of everyday life* I turn my attention in the following chapter.

6. Conversationalisation in the testimonial
Mediatized ordinariness and the politics of everyday life

'Politics is actually about everyday life. It's about all of us: what we dream, what we want, what we achieve and what we want for everybody else'

(Jeremy Corbyn, speech in Glastonbury festival, 24/06/2017[1])

The simulation in political discourse of informal and quotidian conversational activity, that is, the use in political discourse of colloquial language and 'catchy' phrases – what are often referred as 'sound-bites' (Hallin, 1992) – is, like personalisation, part of the performative repertoire of contemporary political communication. Apart from its 'species affinity' to it, this conversationalisation of political discourse may be also said to significantly overlap with personalisation; by virtue of its simplifying and 'condensing' work (Corner, 2000), personalisation may have a conversationalising effect. However, conversationalisation is something more than the simplifying, or, as some critics put it in a rather derogatory manner, 'dumbing down' epiphenomenon of personalisation (Postman, 1985), which deserves to be examined as a performative practice on its own, separately from but also in a synergetic relation to personalisation (and dramatisation as I will argue in the next chapter).

As I wish to argue, if personalisation is about the discursive construction of charisma, conversationalisation is about the discursive construction of ordinariness, or, as Fairclough has it, conversationalisation constitutes a 'linguistic/discursive form of recognition of the increased cultural authority of the mass of the population through an accommodation to and valorization of their *private* discursive practices in the *public* domain […]' (1994, p.245, emphasis added). In this regard, the *ordinary* is not a self-existing entity, endowed with a definitive set of essentialist characteristics (e.g. middle-class origin, state education, unexceptional private life, etc.), but a generic performance of political communication which, like charisma, discursively fuses the private with the public in a socio-historically (institutionally) contingent, and

potentially recontextualizing, coagulation. Let me briefly explain in what distinctive sense the ordinary performs this private-public fusion, thereby differing from, albeit always in a dialectic with, charisma.

As several social theorists have extensively documented, in late modernity, 'the political' has ceased to be what the Enlightenment imaginary wanted it to be, that is, a privilege of certain traditional institutions, such as parliaments, congresses, political parties, etc. (Bennett, 1998; Giddens, 1991; Slater, 2001). New and alternative spheres of political socialisation have proliferated in late modern societies – from music activist groups and anti-corporate social movements to chauvinist-masochist sport clubs and extremist-fundamentalist religious networks – wherein politics re-emerges in the form Jeremy Corbyn describes in the opening quote, that is, as a matter of the self, of what we are and what we want; a matter of everyday life, or what Giddens (1991) has called 'life politics' and Bennett (1998) 'lifestyle politics'. In the context of this de-institutionalised *politics of everyday life,* the problematic of individual/private self-identification, previously resolved by the institutional politics of class, has been elevated to a primary concern of popular culture (public-collective identity), now addressed through the use and appropriation of the symbolic materials that communication media (old and new) have rendered available to and accessible by an unprecedented number of social-political actors (Street, 2001; Thompson, 2011).

In this regard, mediatized ordinariness could be approached as the *performative re-institutionalisation* of the politics of everyday life. By this, I mean the communicative/discursive reinsertion into the realm of institutional-party politics of the voices, stories, and routines of non-institutional/extra-institutional people like us as 'endorsers', what McNair (2007) calls the *testimonial* genre, which serves to make institutional actors look accessible and compassionate again in an era of increasing disillusionment with institutional party politics (Fairclough, 1994; Price, 2007). Hence, the crucial question this chapter seeks to

explore is exactly how the politics of everyday life is re-institutionalised as a generic performance of the ordinary, with its own aesthetic qualities and recontextualizing dynamics, serving the institutional exercise of power; in a nutshell, what concerns me in this chapter is the ideological potential of mediatized ordinariness.

Testimonial is the 'politician-free PEB' (Scammell and Langer, 2006b), the genre of political advertising 'in which the views of non-candidates are enlisted for the purposes of endorsement', as McNair argues (2007, p.97). These non-candidates may be either *laypersons* – 'the ordinary voter' – or *celebrities* – 'famous and respected personalities from the worlds of politics, entertainment, the arts and sport' (ibid), who, albeit non/extra-institutional and unelected figures, 'may legitimately represent politically the views and values of others', as Street has noted (2004, p. 447); their performance may serve to re-institutionalise the politics of everyday life. How do they manage to do so?

First and foremost, the non-candidate needs to convince the viewer that she is in touch with the politics of everyday life, that she shares the passions and compassions of the public she claims to represent, that she is a 'representative sample' of this public. The non-candidate needs therefore to develop with her audience what Thompson (1995) has called a 'non-reciprocal *intimacy* at a distance'. This is a sense of intimacy which no longer rests with physical proximity but with the aesthetic capacity of the performativity of the testimonial to empathically reconstitute an individuality (and/or her private activities) which is otherwise *meaningless to the many* – unknown (as in the case of the layperson) or known but remote/extraordinary (as in the case of celebrity) – as a *meaningful persona/experience*, that is, recognisable for the qualities it embodies not just by the many but by *each one of us* separately. This intimacy is the aesthetic quality that lies at the heart of mediatized ordinariness.

Unsurprisingly, we have already encountered intimacy as an aesthetic quality of the realistically similar to us (ordinary) persona of the charismatic leader (see chapter five). In that

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case, though, intimacy was not the end in itself of the charismatic performance but rather the means via which a conventionally-intuitively uncharismatic leader was established as an *authentic persona*, that is, her imperfect/average public image was empathically reconstituted, thereby inviting the viewer to reappraise it, as a natural extension of her private individual profile. In an 'inverse' logic, authenticity can be the means via which a conventionally-intuitively non-ordinary person, the celebrity, is established as an *intimate persona*, a persona whose often remote and extraordinary private life is empathically reconstituted/re-institutionalised as, and therefore reconciled with, the caring and compassionate public image of a political advocate (Chouliaraki, 2012; Marshall, 1997; Street, 2004).

However, not all charismatic leaders establish their authenticity in terms of intimacy (see, for example, the case of the non-intimate disciplined persona) and nor do all ordinary figures establish their intimacy in terms of authenticity (in the case of the layperson, for example, there is no need for private/off-stage life to be authentically interlaced with a public image since the former is unknown to the viewer). Put this way, authenticity and intimacy function as different *valence vectors* of aesthetic realism in the mediatic performances, while at the same time existing in a synergetic relation to each other which is exemplarily manifested in the case of *ordinary charisma* (authenticity as intimacy) and *celebrity ordinariness* (intimacy as authenticity). If anything, this dialectic demonstrates that mediatized ordinariness falls into different *aesthetic regimes of intimacy* (like mediatized charisma falls into different aesthetic regimes of authenticity). Consequently, if we are to understand the ideological potential of mediatized ordinariness, we need to explore the multimodal articulation of intimacy into different aesthetic regimes (forms of realism and meaning as established by modes of presentation and visual-verbal correspondences, respectively, in the testimonial) and, along with it, the multifunctional articulation of intimacy in different recontextualizing practices, or

different re-institutionalisations of the politics of everyday life (forms of agency and ordering as enacted through the emotiocognition and spacetime of the testimonial, respectively).

Unlike the leader's talking head, the testimonial involves a variety of different modes of presentation (beyond the simple variation in terms of point of view that we encounter in the former), allowing us to identify three different types of testimonial in the broadcasts launched by the four parties that concern me in this study. One type is the (interview-style) *talking head testimonial* which accommodates the non-candidate's mini stories or statements, filmed in an outdoor space as in SYRIZA's testimonial ('I want to live with dignity') or in the interviewee's home/workplace as in the Labour's (lay) testimonial ('Harry Leslie Smith on defending the NHS'). As I shall demonstrate in the first part of this chapter, the talking head testimonial establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy, the *demotic imaginary,* which is a prosopography of the ordinary-layperson as embodiment of certain popular vernacular conventionalities (such as wisdom of the elderly, civil ethics, or passionate youth) with which the viewer can empathically identify, thereby giving rise to a demotic politics of everyday life.

Another type is the documentary-style testimonial (henceforth, documentary), which consists of edited footage from people's everyday routine activities, such as family moments-activities in the Conservatives' ('Securing a better future for your family') and work-related activities/chores in ND's ('I vote to build') testimonials. As I shall show in the second part of this chapter, the documentary establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy, the *banal sentimentality,* which is an iconography of the ordinary-lay activity as a voyeuristic experience in which the viewer can indulgingly reassure herself (as in the nurturing parenting or misery syndrome); thereby giving rise to a banal politics of everyday life.

There is, finally, the type of testimonial that mixes-integrates the two aforementioned types (talking head and documentary). This is the case of Labour's celebrity testimonial ('Steve Coogan on the choice in this election'). As I shall show in the third part of this chapter, the

celebrity testimonial establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy, the redemptive-reconciliatory self-disclosure (*confession*), which both exposes and transcends the contradictions between the demotic and the banal through a confessional persona to which the viewer can empathically relate, thereby giving rise to a confessional politics of everyday life. Let me discuss these three aesthetic regimes of intimacy and their different recontextualizing principles in turn.

The intimacy of the demotic imaginary and the demotic politics of everyday life

The demotic as an aesthetic quality of intimacy

In its use of relatively unedited scenery, which involves all the particularities and peculiarities of live communicative settings (e.g. pauses in speech and ongoing background activities), the talking head testimonial attempts a *graphic* and *naturalistic* representation of the ordinary. In Labour's lay testimonial, such a representation is achieved by means of the interview-style format which, as I illustrated in the previous chapter, establishes a relationship of 'interlocutor/interviewee' and 'witness' between the represented subject and the viewer. Here, the viewer is invited to witness: (i) the ravages of time in the representation of the first interviewee, both physical – through close-ups to his wrinkled hands, for example – and mental – the seeming memory lapses conveyed through the visual effect of blurring; and (ii) the identifiers of occupation in the representation of the second one, both on her own body, such as the white coat she wears, and in the background, such as the clinic facilities. At the same time, the viewer witnesses the self-introduction/description of the two characters, thereby being 'instructed' to perceive the ordinary person as (indexical meaning): (i) Harry Leslie Smith, an old man who has endured a lot in his life (*'My name is Harry Leslie Smith. I was born in 1923 in Barnsley […]. My older sister Marian contracted tuberculosis when she was 4 […] she died in that infirmary. […] I went back to England in 1948 to extend my service in the Airforce*

[...]'), and (ii) Charlotte, the NHS worker (*'I'm Charlotte, I'm a registrar in obstetrics and gynaecology. I've been working for the NHS for five years now'*), respectively.

In SYRIZA's testimonial, on the other hand, the naturalistic representation of the ordinary is achieved in a slightly different way; by means of what Devlin (1986) calls the 'man-in-the-street' ad. This ad-template confronts the viewer, using the 'vox pop technique' (see McNair, 2007), with a sequence of short statements (as interview segments-extracts) made by different people in outdoor spaces – *in the street*, instead of a continuous narrative coming from one person in her home or workplace. Seven young individuals appear in this broadcast declaring their intention to vote (boy: *'On January 25th I vote for the first time';* another boy*: 'I vote'*; girl: *'On January 25th I have the opportunity'*) and to vote specifically SYRIZA (girl: *'I hope in SYRIZA'*; another girl: *'On January 25th I vote SYRIZA'*). Arguably, this visual (young age) and verbal (intention to vote) correspondence allows the viewer to perceive the ordinary (indexical meaning) as a first-time voter.

The naturalistic representation of the layperson sketches out therefore a prosopography of the ordinary which does not raise divisive sociological references, especially in terms of class, as much as instantly recognised, typical and conventional – homogenising – characteristics of certain occupations (e.g. the NHS worker in Labour's testimonial) or age groups (e.g. the elderly in Labour's testimonial and the youth in SYRIZA's one). Instead of galvanising or just reaffirming a class consciousness, the talking head testimonial introduces in political advertising popular vernacular conventionalities, what I call echoing Turner (2010), *demotic imaginaries*, with which the viewers can identify; here, the imaginary of *elderly's wisdom* (embodied by Smith), *civil ethics* (embodied by Charlotte), and *passionate youth* (embodied by the seven first-time voters). As I wish to argue, the intimacy these imaginaries carry with them is no longer a matter of perceptive realism and indexical meaning but of the affective realism of and iconic meaning in the prosopography of the layperson. Smith's aged

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body, for example, could be interpreted merely as a sign of natural decline, but it is the affective energy of empathy[2] in the narration of the tragic end to his sister's life ('*my mum did her best to take care of her. In the end, although my mother regretted doing it, she said to my dad: we will have to take her to a pay workhouse infirmary. I just can't imagine anymore she died in that infirmary…';* a verbal pause and a visual blackness follow) that urges the viewer to see Smith's aged body as an accumulation of traumatic experiences which, instead of making him give up, generated the need to contribute to society and the country ('*I went back to England in 1948 and **extended** my service in the Airforce'*). Smith stands, in other words, as an *icon of the demotic imaginary of veteran-elderly's wisdom*.

In the same vein, Charlotte's occupational signifiers do not simply point to a job but to a great service to society. Arguably, the empathic narrative about how she feels as an NHS worker (*'I'm really really **proud** to work for the NHS, it does great things for so many people. I'm really **concerned** about the future of the NHS'*) foregrounds a compassionate and considerate professional approach, and commitment to what she does, thereby construing Charlotte as an *icon of civil ethics*. Finally, what unites the seven young characters in SYRIZA's broadcast is not only their common attribute as first-time voters but also, and more crucially, the same concerns and desires that they all voice loudly – literally, at a relatively high volume, and metaphorically, in an angrily assertive manner. The young therefore do not stay idle and self-complacent in their trendy (e.g. the fashionably dressed boy) and hip hop (e.g. the boy with rasta hair and piercings) lifestyles or, to put it differently, these lifestyles are not apolitical but the very aesthetic platforms by means of which the young perform their political claims (see Douglas and Poletti, 2016) for dignity ('*I want **to live** with dignity*') and employment ('*I want **to earn** my future*'; '*I want **to work**'*). It is this passion of youth that commands the surplus meaning – the *icon of the passionate youth* – that subsumes all these different individuals into one ordinary persona.

Consequently, the empathic realism in the laypersons' narratives establishes our intimacy, as viewers, with the represented characters not on the basis of different sociological categories but on that of different demotic imaginaries which, in turn, re-dissect these characters as ordinary icons of the politics of everyday life. Much like the leaders' narratives examined in the previous chapter, the narratives of the ordinary persons are selective narratives, or 'narrativizations' (Thompson, 1990). They create a sense of continuity and coherence in meaning (like all narratives) which is by no means self-existent and natural but the symbolic effect of the expository-evaluative authority of the narrator (Chouliaraki, 2006). The generic difference is that, in this case, the symbolic power of exposition does not point to a politics of mission, as it would be embodied by the authentic persona of a charismatic leader, but to a politics of everyday life as it is re-institutionalised by means of the intimate, particularly demotic, persona of an ordinary person; a *demotic politics of everyday life*.

Smith, for instance, in forcefully stating that *'the NHS is not just important, it is essential, and a **healthy society** means a **healthy country'*,* uses his authority as ordinary icon (the wise old man) to convince the viewer that healthcare is not simply an individual good that we always had and will always be able to enjoy even without the NHS. Just as his parents could not afford his sister's treatment in the pre-NHS era, a lot of people may not be able to afford treatment in a post-NHS era, as the juxtaposition of his own past with Britain's future implies ('*I don't want my past to become Britain's future')*. Healthcare is presented, instead, as an essentially social (a healthy society) and, by extension, national (a healthy country) good; securing health service is not an individual responsibility but a social and genuinely patriotic duty, the high sense of which is imprinted in Smith's personal life – i.e. as a man who voluntarily chose to extend his service in the Royal Airforce after the war. His veteran wisdom, however, speaks not only for him but also on behalf of the party, as in the last couple of years Smith has come to prominence in the Labour community for his ardent support of the NHS,

with respect to which he addressed the Labour party conference in 2014 (Lusher, 2016). Consequently, Smith's public-and-party-intimate persona acts as a platform of re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life in the form of the demotic politics of elderly's wisdom, thereby recontextualizing the symbol of ethical patriotism (see also previous chapter and chapter four regarding this symbolic meaning) as justification of the essentiality of NHS.

Charlotte, on the other hand, draws on the authority her standing as an icon of civil ethics bestows on her to critically contemplate the challenges the NHS faces – '*there are more stretches every day, cuts are being made and people are frustrated they can't go to the GP'* – concluding that '[…] *we must protect the NHS'.* It is not simply that she, because of her position, may have access to information and data we do not that makes her exposition compelling – what, from a Weberian viewpoint, we would call 'bureaucratic authority'. Charlotte does not provide any numbers or other scientific evidence to support her 'diagnostic' claims, since she does not speak as a managerial expert as much as an ordinary professional who genuinely cares about the service she offers to society. It is this empathic civil ethics which urges the viewer *to think* of public servants not as the cause of but as the solution to the problems in the NHS. Arguably, this is a thought deeply embedded in Labour *étatisme,* according to which the professional ethics of civil servants, in sharp opposition to the 'managerial culture of the private sector' (Marquand, 2008, p.304), provides a fecund substratum for the effective and just implementation of centrally planned governmental policies, such as those clarified in the textual message that visually cuts into Charlotte's narrative[3]. Consequently, Charlotte's persona, like Smith's one, is also a public-and-party-intimate persona which acts as a platform of re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life, now in the form of the demotic politics of civil ethics, thereby recontextualizing the symbol of central planning as justification of the protection (and rescue) of NHS.

Finally, the seven first-time voters in SYRIZA's testimonial capitalise on the ordinary authority that the icon of passionate youth carries with it to demonstrate what young people are voting for in this election, that is, for actively participating in the commons and making an impact on the current state of affairs ('*I vote to take a stand*'; '*to make my voice heard*'). The causative form 'to make my voice heard', however, implies an intermediary, the party (SYRIZA), which can genuinely and effectively voice young people's concerns and claims in the mainstream public sphere. By distinguishing SYRIZA as the party of young people, the public-intimate persona of first-time voter also becomes a party-intimate persona and, in so doing, it re-institutionalises the politics of everyday life in the form of the demotic politics of passionate youth. This is a re-institutionalisation with a dual recontextualizing dynamic.

On the one hand, the demotic politics of passionate youth brings to the front universal values of the Left, such as 'dignity', 'employment', and 'voice', thereby recontextualizing symbols of *political participation* and *democratic claiming* from SYRIZA's leftist past – the Eurocommunist-democratic Left to which SYRIZA's antecedent left-wing parties (now party factions) belonged, and which has been unappealing to the polarised Greek political culture but relatively influential in some intellectual circles (Moschonas, 2013). On the other hand, the 'dignified youth' ('*I want to live with dignity'*), for example, had been extensively employed (along with other similar sound-bites, such as the 'proud elderly') in A. Papandreou's (PASOK founder) polarising rhetoric as a symbol of the *vindication of the non-privileged* (Featherstone, 1982). From this viewpoint, the demotic politics of the passionate youth can also be said to recontextualize symbols of the ethno-populism of resistance, the discursive mantra which has been far more popular than the legacy of the Eurocommunist Left in the Greek post-authoritarian leftist political culture (see chapter four).

The demotic imaginaries discussed so far, by functioning as aesthetic moulds of different intimate personae – the wise old man/veteran, the ethical civil servant, and the

passionate young voter – enable the institutional re-appropriation of the politics of everyday life and, by extension, the recontextualization of symbolisms from the parties' past – central planning, ethical patriotism, and political participation-claiming, respectively. How exactly are these symbolisms recontextualized in the talking head testimonials though? In what emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal mechanisms, and with what claims to institutional agency and ordering?

The demotic as a recontextualizing practice of hope-anxiety and anger, displacement and temporalisation

The talking head testimonial fosters, affectively, the empathic identification of the viewer with an ordinary person but it does not do so in the same way across the three demotic imaginaries discussed in the previous section. This is because the recontextualizing dynamic of the demotic politics of everyday life *captures* empathic identification in its own different emotive-cognitive frames; the demotic politics of elderly's wisdom and civil ethics emotionally channel empathic identification into a *hope-anxiety dipole* (emotiocognition of surveillance) while the demotic politics of passionate youth channels it into *anger* (emotiocognition of disposition).

The imaginaries of elderly's wisdom and civil ethics grant Smith and Charlotte, respectively, the demotic authority to speak about the future of the NHS. Particularly, Smith is able to make a cogent argument about the future of the NHS by drawing on the wisdom his long and tumultuous life has bequeathed him, and which envisages the NHS as an oasis of hope in modern Britain ('*the very fact that I could walk in there and see a doctor without paying a penny, that was such a… it was a **miracle**'*). Charlotte, on the other hand, is able to make a compelling case for the current state of the NHS by capitalising on her genuine interest as a considerate civil servant. Her professional ethics ensures that the NHS is still an oasis of hope nowadays despite the pressures it is under ('*it does **great things** every day for so many people*').

Both narratives are therefore *future-oriented* conveying a hopeful message, which in Smith's case is informed by experience of the past while in Charlotte's by experience of the present.

As the emotional product of an empathically forward-looking approach to life, hope is often accompanied, as stressed in the previous chapter, by the anxiety that future-uncertainty creates. In this case, however, anxiety does not seem to be associated with uncertainty about an unknown future but rather with the uncertainty raised by the projection of a known, unpleasant past (Smith: '*I don't want my **past** to become Britain's future*') and present (Charlotte: 'if it continuous **as it is**…the NHS, as we knew it, it won't exist anymore') onto the future. As Spinoza put it, integrating both dimensions of uncertainty, 'hope is nothing but unsteady joy, arising from the image of a *future* or *past* thing about whose issue we are in doubt' (2001, p.113, emphasis added).

This hope-anxiety dipole, by triggering the cognitive need for assessment of the risks involved in undertaking a specific action and, therefore for more and better processed information about the subjects that generate hope and anxiety, activates the emotiocognition of surveillance which calls for informed and cross-partisan agency (Castells, 2009; Marcus, 2002). What generates hope and anxiety in Labour's talking head testimonial is the NHS, particularly the future projection of its past-present image, and what we need to know about it is offered to us through the wisdom of the elderly-veteran and the professional ethics of the civil servant. We need to know therefore that the protection of the NHS is not just Labour's privileged territory of action, an idea that would appeal only to core Labour voters, but patriotic duty (ethical patriotism) and governmental responsibility (central planning), an idea (the demotic politics of everyday life) that appeals, instead, to voters from across the political spectrum.

In SYRIZA's talking head testimonial, on the other hand, the imaginary of passionate youth grants the seven first-time voters the demotic authority to voice the concerns of young

people. Interestingly, like the politics of mission (see previous chapter), the (re-institutionalisation of) politics of everyday life relates (verbally) the party to the hope that is about to 'come' in Greek society ('*I hope in SYRIZA*') not in an emotionally hopeful frame though, as if for coming hope to finally reach its destination the mobilisation of other was presupposed. In the politics of mission, where the persona of defiant leader embodies the repressed and unfulfilled imaginary of moral indignation, the emotional precondition of hope was ressentiment, while in the politics of everyday life, where the persona of the ordinary young voter throws into relief the demotic imaginary of passionate youth, the emotional precondition of hope is *anger*.

Arguably, protesting for human rights often involves tension and rage, like the tension and rage pictured on the (non-smiling, frowny or glaring) faces and expressed in the (loud and/or sharp) voices of the seven first-time voters, or the 'capacity for anger and outrage, even the ability to hate' (1990, p.242), as Solomon argues. Although both ressentiment and anger are associated with a perceived injustice and moral indignation, ressentiment always remains a negative, unproductive and passive emotion, as it encapsulates the powerlessness of fulfilling a repressed imaginary of vindictiveness (see chapter five). Anger, on the other hand, does not suffer from the powerlessness of ressentiment; by not being plunged by a repressed imaginary of the past, it can be positive-productive, it can enable active participation and passionate claiming in the present (West-Newman, 2004). The claim for dignity, for example, is given a prominent place in both SYRIZA's broadcasts (the leader's talking head and the talking head testimonial) but it is only in the young people's statements that it emerges, angrily-positively, as a universal human value-right ('*I want to live with dignity*') – not a lost privilege, as it is resentfully-negatively recalled in Tsipras' narrative ('*the lost dignity of pensioners*').

Anger is therefore an intense emotion that encourages risk-taking behaviour (Castells, 2009) and increases individual commitment to a candidate (Ridout and Searles, 2011); it

activates, in other words, the emotiocognition of disposition and a call for partisan agency. This anger-led partisan agency, enacted by the demotic politics of passionate youth, differs from the ressentiment-led partisan agency of the politics of mission. The politics of mission, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, resentfully recontextualizes polarising symbolisms (the ethno-populism of resistance) from the party's reinvented past, urging the (resentful) anti-memorandum former PASOK viewer to rally behind the leader's mission. The demotic politics of passionate youth, on the other hand, recontextualizes symbolisms of participation and claiming, descending not exclusively from the (popular) ethno-populism of resistance, on which SYRIZA has recently capitalised, but also from the (unpopular) tradition of the Eurocommunist-democratic Left (see earlier on). It is this second aspect of recontextualization that to speaks to anger and, therefore, appeals not to resentful anti-memorandum voters (who, as I noted in the previous chapter, could come from both left-and-right-wing backgrounds) but to angry left-wing voters, the voters who really believe that with SYRIZA the country would 'go Left' for the first time, that 'the Left would be in government for the first time'[4].

The emotive-cognitive framing of the performativity of demotic imaginaries, and its agency-enacting capacity, is in a constant dialectic with the spatiotemporal framing of this performativity, and therefore its ordering capacity. Turning now to this spatiotemporal framing, I wish to argue that the naturalism of the talking head testimonial serves to establish a *determinate* chronotope allowing us either to trace down the origin of the recontextualized symbolisms in the *past* (in line with the past-oriented version of the hope-anxiety dipole), as Smith's narrative does, or to circumscribe and delimit the recontextualized symbolisms to the *present* (in line with the present-oriented version of the hope-anxiety dipole and anger), as Charlotte's narrative and the young people's statements do. Let me elaborate further on these different chronotopic determinacies and their ordering implications.

Smith's narrative outlines two concrete spatiotemporal frames, what we could call, *parochial interwar Britain* and *national(ised) post-war Britain*, respectively. The first frame, chronicled back in the 1920s and 1930s when there was no NHS ('*I was born in **1923 in Barnsley**. Back then…there was no social health care*'), carries with it negative connotations (e.g. the traumatic experience of his sister's death), while the second, succeeding the former in 1948, the year the NHS was opened ('*when I went back to **England in 1948** and extended my service in the Airforce, the NHS was open*'), carries positive connotations (e.g. the national pride of serving in the Royal Airforce and living in a country which provides free healthcare to all its citizens). While Smith specifically refers to the province where he was born back in the pre-NHS era (Barnsley), he refers, contrarily, to England in general as the place he returned to when the NHS era had just begun; a shift which comes to signify the 'nationalising' effect of the opening of the NHS and, along with it, the reconstruction and reunification that followed the bitter inter-war years.

The spatiotemporal mode of operation of Smith's narrative recounts post-war Britain as a hopeful era of *healthy nationalisation* (and nationalisation of health), when Labour's ethical patriotism was in its apogee, and, by juxtaposition, inter-war Britain as an anxiety-causing era of *unhealthy parochialism*. Like in Miliband's talking head broadcast, recontextualization acts here as *displacement*, that is, as a form of ordering the present, and the future, by transferring to them the positive and negative connotations of a glorious (national) and traumatic (parochial) past, respectively. It reconstructs post-war nationalisation as an uninterrupted and undifferentiated continuity, as if during all the times that Labour was in office, and only then, Britain enjoyed the exact same-great quality health service (which now is at risk of being lost if the Conservatives remain in power). In doing so, recontextualization qua displacement mystifies discontinuities in the not so distant past, especially under New Labour's health reforms. What is mystified here is not necessarily the marketisation and

privatisation these reforms attempted (epistemological mystification which would imply that pro-market reforms are essentially wrong) but rather the contradictory and controversial policy overload they suffered from (Paton, 2006) (ontological mystification or, as Butler (1991) would pose it, the 'radical concealment' of the contestability that is constitutive of any social reform).

Counter to Smith's demotic authority as a wise old man, which rests with the distant past and the accumulation of experience, Charlotte's demotic authority as an ethical civil servant rests with the present, namely the last five years that she has been an NHS worker (*'I've been working in the NHS for **five years** now'*). Her narrative therefore does not stretch back into the (pre)history of the NHS. Having been working for the NHS for exactly as long as the Conservative-Lib Dem coalition has been in power (the last five years before the election), Charlotte can assure us that the dismantling of the NHS is a result of the policies of austerity which are currently implemented ('*there are more stretches **every day**, cuts **are being** made* […]') and, by extension, of the coalition's neoliberal onslaught. Consequently, the need to protect the NHS through central governmental planning, symbolically professed by the demotic politics of civil ethics, is not (presented as) a (Labourite) doctrinaire obsession but a necessity dictated by the current state of the NHS, like Cameron's restoration of order was (presented as) a necessity dictated by the current state of the economy (see previous chapter).

Recontextualization now silences the socio-historical referents of the symbol of central planning, in a *temporalising* move that construes central planning as a rational solution to the neoliberal problem. In doing so, it forges a discontinuity between previous Labour administrations and the coalition government, which mystifies not only some common (pro-market/privatising) approaches to the NHS (Jarman and Greer, 2015) but also the complicated history of political-government centralisation in both parties' past. If, for example, Thatcher's neoliberal policies not only did not they restrict but, instead, reinforced governmental control, as Marquand (2008) has argued, and Brown's dirigiste response to the financial crisis did not

undermine but rather saved neoliberalism, according to Wright (2015), then recontextualization qua temporalisation misrecognises that central planning is not a rationality programmed to fix a (neoliberal) problem (as it can be part of it) but rather a socio-historically (institutionally) contingent option.

Recontextualization acts as temporalisation too in SYRIZA's talking head testimonial, here silencing the sociohistorical referents of the symbol of political participation and democratic claiming. The spacetime of representation in this broadcast is that of *Greece today*: the seven first-time voters are represented in settings most of which constitute popular venues for the contemporary young Athenian, such as Syntagma Square, the Law School, and Ermou Street (the most famous commercial street in the city centre). The temporality of the demotic authority of passionate youth, which allows these individuals to speak as representatives of young voters in general, is also verbally implied in one of the girl's statement '***our generation is confronted with unemployment***'. Paradoxically, although this statement accurately depicts the reality of the time, as youth unemployment was just above 50% in the fall of 2014 (Chan, 2015), it only allows for unemployment to be seen as a politically relevant problem for the country today – an effect of the Memorandum – and, therefore, employment as a politically relevant claim for young Greeks today rather than a diachronic and universal claim of the Left.

This temporalisation of historical symbols of the Left gives the impression of a self-confident leftism: SYRIZA does not need to prove its leftism – it is already the 'first-time Left' in the eyes of its supporters (Prifti, 2015) – but ambitiously seeks to take its self-evident leftism a step further: to reintroduce it as *(pseudo)radicalism*. This was, after all, the ultimate goal of the transition from the 'Coalition of Left and *Progress*' (SYNASPISMOS) to the 'Coalition of *Radical* Left' almost ten years before this election (Moschonas, 2013). In line with this project of radicalisation, temporalisation serves to harness the discontinuity between SYRIZA and the unpopular Eurocommunist intellectualism of its antecedents, a discontinuity which the anti-

Memorandum rhetoric has turned into a continuity with the ethno-populism of resistance (see also above on the dual dynamic of recontextualization), accommodating a variety of contradicting, radical but also reactionary (far-right) movements, as I argued in the previous chapter.

Summing up, the talking head testimonial establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy which rests with the naturalistic prosopography of the layperson as embodiment of a demotic imaginary. It is the empathic identification with the demotic – the wisdom of the old veteran, the professional ethics of the civil servant, and the passion of the young voter, which allows for the (relatively or completely) unknown individualities of Smith, Charlotte, and the seven first-time voters, respectively, to be recast as intimate re-institutionalisations of the politics of everyday life, thereby giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the demotic politics (of elderly's wisdom, civil ethics, and passionate youth). This demotic politics displaces the Labourite symbol of ethical patriotism (elderly's wisdom), cultivating a dissimulative sense of continuity with the party's post-war past of national reconstruction. It also temporalises the Labourite symbol of central planning (civil ethics) and the Left symbol of political participation and democratic claiming in SYRIZA's case (passionate youth), mystifying the neoliberal shades of nationalisation-centralisation and the reactionary shades of radicalisation, respectively. Finally, while the recontextualization of Labourite symbolisms occurs in a bipolar frame of hope and anxiety, which enacts a cross-partisan pro-NHS agency, the recontextualization of SYRIZA's leftist symbolisms takes place in a frame of anger appealing, instead, to partisan voters who look forward to the first 'truly' Left government.

The intimacy of banal sentimentality and the banal politics of everyday life

The banal as an aesthetic quality of intimacy

In contrast to the graphic naturalism of the talking head testimonial, the documentary attempts a *melodramatic* representation of the ordinary based on footage of intimate-private moments from people's everyday life, or *lay activities*. The represented subjects do not speak live on camera, as rather seem to be unaware of its presence, but their thoughts are conveyed to us through voiceovers. In the Conservatives' documentary, for example, the viewer is exposed to footage from various everyday activities in which both adults and kids are involved – feeding the ducks in the lake, playing with toys at home or in the playground, studying, and traveling to the seaside. Visually, all the images are quite bright, with vivid colours, highlighting the pleasant nature of the represented activities, and the continuous alternation of close with long shots draws the viewer's attention to the unfolding of these activities more than to the persons themselves who participate in them. Verbally, the voiceovers accommodate brief statements which seem to have been made by the represented adults at a different time, presumably after the filming, and are given as answers to the question (posed to them presumably by a third person-imagined interviewer):*'what do I want for my children?'*. Arguably, the represented adults are addressed as parents and the represented kids as their children (indexical meaning); hence the Conservatives' testimonial comprises a documentary about *families*.

ND's testimonial, on the other hand, is not a documentary about happy family moments but about an unpleasant chore. Like the Conservatives' testimonial, ND's makes use of both close-up shots to its protagonist, a middle-aged man, and long shots which draw our attention to the activity he is engaged in – making photocopies in the corridor of a building, presumably outside his office. However, unlike the former, this documentary does not consist of bright and colourful images but of bleak and gloomy ones (there is not much natural light and the dominant colour is the greyish hue that the walls of poorly-maintained public buildings usually

have), emphasising the unpleasant nature of the activity/chore. The man himself looks distressed (tight lips, frowny face, fidgeting body) and the voiceover verbalises the tantalising thoughts that seemingly fill his mind: '*Is it possible to trust these men?*'; '*Why, thus, these big words?*'; '*with what money will they deliver on their promises*' – concerns about how a SYRIZA government would deal with the current situation in the country (as I will explain later on, the phrase 'these men' points to SYRIZA).

As in the talking head testimonial, sociological-class references are also downplayed in the documentary, but as a result of a different aesthetic regime this time. Instead of a prosopography of the layperson as a character of certain qualities, the documentary sketches out something like an iconography of the lay activity in the form of a melodramatic experience. It is therefore more of a 'docudrama', confronting the viewer, not with a popular vernacular conventionality that she can empathically identify with, but with what Susan Dever (2003) calls *banal sentimentality*; this voyeuristic realm where we can indulgingly reassure or relieve our own ordinariness (as viewers-voyeurs)[5]. As I shall demonstrate in what follows, the Conservatives' docudrama offers the banal sentimentality of *nurturing parenting* and ND's that of *misery syndrome*.

In the Conservatives' testimonial, although most of the footage is dominated by the representation of children, the vigilant eye of the parent is, explicitly or implicitly, always there, monitoring children's activities – the camera either includes, rendering visible, the parental figure in its long shots, or it employs the parents' point of view in its close-ups to the children (e.g. children's gaze towards a non-visible other). This parental monitoring, however, is not framed as restrictive and oppressive. Parents are rather implied to let their children freely experience and experiment with the world around them, as in the scene of the child, just beginning to walk, who stands on her toes on a chair trying to fill a cup with tap water by herself, and the one of a boy who runs around by himself in the playground. Parents maintain

therefore an assisting and enabling, rather than an authoritative and dynastic role, what Lakoff (2002) calls the 'nurturing parent' model.

The nurturing parents, as the voiceovers also elucidate, do not hold a dogmatic vision about what their children should become in life but express thoughts about what their children could do or avoid doing so as to become what they truly want to be ('*I want him to grow up in a Britain with opportunities, with the doors open to him, so he can go on to get a good job and* **make the most of his life**'; '*I want them to get the skills they need **to do whatever they want**'*; '*I want her to have the best education [...]**so that she can go forward in life and have the best start possible**'*). From this point of view, the documentarist dramatism in the representation of family moments confronts the viewer-voyeur with a caring but not over-caring parental style thanks to which she can indulgingly reassure her own parental ordinariness. It confronts her, in other words, with a banal sentimentality that comes to invest the signifier of family with the *iconic meaning of nurturing parenting*.

For Lakoff, the nurturing parent, more than a parenting model, is the epitome of anti-authoritarianism and moral inclusivity, a *non-patriarchal* and *tolerant* archetype of family-social life, or a politics of everyday life, inspired by *classical liberal* democratic thinking (ibid). Both these liberal lifestyle motifs, the non-patriarchal and tolerant/inclusive, can be traced in the Conservatives' documentary: in scenes, for example, where women participate in their children's activities without their husbands' presence (something that could also be taken to point to single-parent families), as well as in those where different ethnic (mixed-race little girl) and religious/cultural (a Muslim woman) backgrounds are represented. This liberal politics of everyday life, however, is no longer an idiom of everyday life, as we can infer from the juxtaposition of the individual 'I' in the parents' voiceovers (what parents want for their children) with the collective/institutional 'We' in the visual texts that appear in the end of each scene-family moment[6] (what the party's major economic and social policies are). In its

melodramatic banality, the documentary performs the institutional re-appropriation of the liberal politics of everyday life in the form of a banal politics of nurturing parenting, urging the viewer to *think* that the party enshrines, above all, the assisting and enabling role of families in individual self-fulfilment. It performs, in other words, the recontextualization of a classical liberal symbol, tremendously popular in the democratic republicanist tradition of the Conservative party (see chapter four): the symbol of *family-assisted self-fulfilment.*

Let me now move back to ND's docudrama and the middle-aged man who grapples with the dull chore of photocopying amid ominous thoughts (voiceover) about the post-election situation in his country. At a certain point, the photocopy machine gets jammed and this seems to be the drop that makes the glass overflow; an otherwise insignificant incident makes the man blatantly upset and nervous, revealing the misery in which he feels trapped. Projected onto the future, this misery is expected to be even more dreadful if SYRIZA gets elected and takes over negotiations with the European authorities on the Greek bailout programme. SYRIZA's negotiating tactic is strongly implied in the reference to the 'pentozali dance' ('*They say, we will dance pentozali to Europe and the markets, well…'),* as this is metaphor that has been used by Tsipras himself in the run-up to the election[7]. Pentozali is a folkloric war dance which has its origin in the Cretan struggle for independence from Ottoman rule (Kalogeropoulos, 2001); it alludes to a polemic defiance and resistance – the underdog culture (see chapter five). While, however, this polemic defiance is enshrined by Tsipras and his party as a stance of national pride, as we saw in the previous chapter, here is derided as an irresponsible ('*Is it possible to trust these men*'), unrealistic ('[…] *big words*') and risky ('*I can neither understand nor bear this risk*') diplomatic move. Therefore, with SYRIZA presented as no alternative, the misery of the present is re-dissected and reintroduced as a relief; more than an index of misery, the dramatised chore gives rise to an *icon of misery syndrome*, that is, a banal sentimentality thanks to which the viewer-voyeur is reassured that enduring the current misery is all she can do, and

that she cannot do better, not because she is incompetent but because there is no safer alternative.

As Mackridge (2009) has pointed out, such a misery syndrome lies at the heart of a 'national inferiority complex', latent but culturally pervasive in Greek society – a politics of everyday life which has Greece always a step behind the developed countries of the West, like a peripheral semi-colony in need of liberalisation and modernisation. This national inferiority complex is, indeed, prominent in the man's expository thought-voiceover: *'Even Italy, France, even Russia, face difficulties in dealing with their problems'.* If the World's Big cannot solve their problems, how do we expect small and disadvantaged Greece to do so all by herself?, he seems to wonder. Two different worldviews are therefore in an open clash here: on the one hand is the reckless and risky politics of defiance (culture of the underdog) and, on the other, the indulgingly reassuring banal politics of misery (culture of national inferiority). Arguably, as the visual text in the end of the testimonial reveals: '*On January 25th we vote for a strong Greece with a solid place in Europe and the world. We tell the truth. We guarantee the future*', ND capitalises on the second worldview, thereby re-institutionalising the everyday politics of national inferiority in the form of a banal politics of misery. The truth which ND tells us is that Greece does not have the potential to move on by herself, thus, there is no other future for the country than the European one. In this regard, the banal politics of misery comes to recontextualize the symbol of rearguard pro-Western nationalism from ND's past (see previous chapter and chapter four) as a *conservative* symbolism, a *symbol of surrender and inactivity*, of miserably accepting reality as it is.

In summary, the voyeuristic experiences offered by the documentarist melodrama unleash, aesthetically, certain banal sentimentalities – nurturing parenting and misery syndrome – which enable the re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life and, therewith, the recontextualization of symbolisms from the parties' past – family-assisted self-

fulfilment and rearguard pro-Western nationalism, respectively. Let me now reflect on the forms of agency and ordering these recontextualizations enact, considering also their implications in the ways the Conservatives and ND deal with their historical past and institutional present.

The banal as a recontextualizing practice of hopeful and fearful eternalisation

If the emotional differentiation of intimacy in the talking head testimonials was between the hope-anxiety dipole (Labour's demotic politics of elderly's wisdom and civil ethics) and anger (SYRIZA's demotic politics of passionate youth), in the documentary is between *hope* (the Conservatives' banal politics of nurturing parenting) and *fear* (ND's banal politics of misery). Hope emerges in the Conservatives' documentary alone this time, associated (like in Miliband's talking head broadcast, examined in the previous chapter) with the power of will and faith, instead of being juxtaposed with an uncertain future or unpleasant past/present that would generate anxiety. This anxiety-aversive hope is pervasive both visually, through the bright images of happy family moments/close-ups to children's smiling faces, and verbally (voiceover), through parents' wishful thinking (I want my child to have this or be able to do that). It does not, however, rest (empathically) with the faith in politics to change people's lives (the symbol of central planning in Miliband's broadcast) but (voyeuristically) with the faith in people to change their own lives by themselves (the liberal symbol of family-assisted self-fulfilment).

It is therefore a *voyeuristic hope* which contributes, through activating the emotiocognition of surveillance (see chapter four), to the enactment of *liberal agency*, speaking to the Conservatives' strenuous effort, even since Ian Duncan Smith's days, to 'decontaminate their brand' (Bale, 2010); to show they are not anymore the uncompassionate Tory party, which only cares about the privileged few, but a compassionate Conservative party committed to the support of families and of those left behind. Bale is right, however, in arguing that Cameron's

trademark, 'we do think there's such a thing as society, we just don't think it's the same thing as the state', marks an 'implied (*but only an implied*) break with Thatcherism' (2010, p.264, emphasis added). By putting forwards a liberal agency strictly confined to family-assisted self-fulfilment, the banal politics of nurturing parenting does not seem to differ much from Thatcher's notorious 'there's no such a thing as society. There are *individual* men and women and there are *families*'[8].

Countering the banal sentimentality of nurturing parenting, which mobilises an anxiety-aversive voyeuristic hope and enacts cross-partisan liberal agency, the banal sentimentality of misery syndrome mobilises a risk-aversive/self-preserving *voyeuristic fear*, thereby enacting cross-partisan *conservative agency*. The viewer-voyeur of ND's documentary is not just confronted with uncertainty about the future, as the viewer-witness of Labour's testimonial is instead, but with an unbearable risk ('*with all the sacrifices I've made, I can neither understand nor bear this risk*') and, even more, with a menace to the very existence of the future ('*with what money will they deliver on their promises?* **with people's deposits***?*'). Arguably, for middle-class voters in a country that faces an unprecedented economic meltdown, the emergency plan of a haircut in bank deposits, which an 'irresponsible' (SYRIZA) government would have to activate to avoid defaulting on its debts, does not simply pose an anxiety-causing uncertainty but a fear-causing existential threat (Keltner et al., 2013).

Fear is an intense and extreme form of anxiety and, together with hope, has been the most common emotional appeal in election campaigns (Castells, 2009). This is primarily because fear plays a substantial role in self-protection and survival by raising our vigilance for and redirecting our entire attention to an imminent danger, which in the realm of political communication usually refers to the opponent (Ridout and Searles, 2011), like the deposit-haircut threat refers to SYRIZA. Fear gives rise therefore to an emotiocognition of surveillance and, therewith, to informed/cross-partisan objection to and rejection of the subject who is

represented as the generator of fear. As Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou (2017) have noticed, analysing the campaign discourses by both SYRIZA and ND in the run-up to the 2015 election, those most vulnerable to ND's fear are an old generation of conservative voters, politically nurtured with the anti-communist national-mindedness of the post-war years (defended by ND's antecedents, such as the *Greek Rally* and *National Radical Union*), now spread across different parties of the Right, from ND to the Independent Greeks and Golden Dawn. Consequently, the fear-driven re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life enacts a cross-partisan 'conservative front' against SYRIZA's threatening radicalism which, paradoxically, confronts ND with its 'old' self (the stigma of the 'evil Right' – see chapter four), renounced throughout the post-dictatorship era (Vamvakas, 2006).

Both hope and fear emerge in these documentaries as 'deterrent' emotions, linked respectively to an anxiety-aversive (nurturing parent) and risk-aversive (misery syndrome) banality which, unlike the future-oriented or future-projected (from the past or present) fantasy of the talking head testimonial (the case of the hope-anxiety dipole), is not spatiotemporally specified. Contra to talking head naturalism which produces a determinate spacetime, traced back to the past (displacement) or confined to the present (temporalisation), documentary dramatism produces an *indeterminate* spacetime where past, present, and future are fused into an indivisible ahistorical whole. By this token, recontextualization acts, in the documentary, as *eternalisation*, establishing 'regimes of truth' (Foucault, 1977) in which what is otherwise a historically and socially contingent construction – such as the role of family in individual self-fulfilment and the peripheral place of Greece in the West – figures as an ahistorical and natural given.

Looking at the Conservative's testimonial, we realise that the symbol of family-assisted self-fulfilment is not recontextualized as a value or principle associated with a cherished tradition of the past (as Labour's ethical patriotism is, instead) or a necessity of the present

(like Labour's central planning). The spatiotemporal frame of the representation of family moments is indeterminate, both visually and verbally, creating the impression that what is portrayed (happy family moments) and said (parents' wishes for their children) is always and everywhere relevant, that the politics of nurturing parenting is not a politics but a general code of practice, a general truth: parents raise their children to be self-reliant and capable of pursuing their own self-fulfilment. From a philosophical point of view, general or axiomatic truths are relations of causation between discourses – like, 'John slipped. It had rained' (Asher, 1993). Such a causal link is established in the banal politics of nurturing parenting between the principle to support families and the party's (neoliberal) policies of clearing the deficit, backing businesses, and cutting taxes, on the basis that these policies will deliver a strong economy and therefore the good public services (more school places and apprenticeships, more house-buying schemes, and higher state pensions) that families need.

Both a strong economy and good public services are, indeed, necessary to support families, but delivering them by means of a neoliberal mix of policies is a choice rather than an axiom. It is a choice which claims legitimacy on the (liberal) assumption that families need to be supported because, and only to the extent that, they play an effective role in individual self-fulfilment. Under a different (socialist) assumption, that families, for example, need to be supported because, and only to the extent that, they play a role in the individual's social integration, the aforementioned discursive compound (neoliberal policies-family support) loses its axiomatic status. In other words, is the mystification of the sociohistorical contingency of the symbol of family-assisted self-fulfilment which reifies neoliberalism, or the eternalisation of an individualist and utilitarianist understanding of both economic strength (e.g. taxes need to be cut because they raise an obstacle to profit-making and, therewith, to individual self-fulfilment – '*we'll cut income tax so people keep more of their hard-earned money*') and public

services (pensions need to be increased for the elderly not to be a burden on their children's life/self-fulfilment – '*I don't want them to have to worry about us when we are older*').

In ND's documentary, on the other hand, the 'general truth' is the peripheral-inferior place of Greece in the EU-West bloc. As in the Conservatives' documentary, the performativity of banal sentimentality creates here the impression that what the viewer, voyeuristically, watches unfolding before him – the miserable work-life of a middle-aged man – is an eternal and universal reality (misery syndrome); there are no visual or verbal identifiers of a specific place or time. Greece's problems, and the misery that goes with them, are not presented as consequences of irresponsible governance in the past (which would include ND) or of the recent global financial crisis (which would raise questions about ND's crisis management), but as a permanent and unchanging situation, what Wallerstein would describe, rather simplistically, as a geopolitical division between developed/core and developing/semi-peripheral or peripheral countries (1989).

Although the reference to SYRIZA's negotiating tactics could be perceived as reference to the present, the very fact that it takes the form of a metaphor (pentozali) implies a threat that both includes and transcends SYRIZA's current tactics. As Thompson has argued, 'metaphorical expressions set up a tension within a sentence by combining terms drawn down from different semantic fields, a tension which, if successful, generates *a new and enduring sense*' (1990, p. 63, emphasis added). Hence, beyond the past-present differences between the two parties, there is, as I pointed out earlier on, a perennial battle between two worlds, the *defiant underdog* and *miserable lapdog*, and by drawing on the second, the banal politics of misery eternalises the conservative version of rearguard pro-Western nationalism – the national inferiority complex. In doing so, it establishes an axiomatic relationship between the European future of Greece and ND's obedient-responsible negotiating tactic: the place of the country in the EU is safe only insofar as the neoliberal policies included in the bailout agreement (see

previous chapter) are implemented. Such an axiom reifies not only neoliberalism but also the monolithic imaginary of geopolitics and international relations as a matrix of unilateral dependencies between 'peripheral and semi-peripheral' or 'underdeveloped/developing and core/developed' countries.

Summing up, the documentary-style testimonial establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy which rests with the dramatist iconography of the lay activity as a banal sentimentality. It is the voyeuristic, indulgently reassuring, banality of sentimentalities like the nurturing parenting and misery syndrome that allows for the unknown privacies of family moments and work-related chores, respectively, to be recast as intimate re-institutionalisations of the politics of everyday life, thereby giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the banal politics of (nurturing parenting and misery). This banal politics eternalises liberal symbolisms (family-assisted self-fulfilment) form the Conservatives' and conservative symbolisms (rearguard pro-Western nationalism as national inferiority complex) from ND's (distant) past in a voyeuristically hopeful and fearful manner, respectively, which appeals to liberal British and conservative Greek voters, reifying at the same time an individualist-utilitarian understanding of liberalism (neoliberalism) and a geopolitically monolithic understanding of conservatism (surrenderism).

The intimacy of self-disclosure and the confessional politics of everyday life

If the naturalism of the talking head testimonial confronts the viewer-witness with the demotic ordinariness of the layperson and the dramatism of the documentary confronts the viewer-voyeur with the banal ordinariness of the lay activity, the (idealist) mixing of these two modes of presentation in the celebrity testimonial confronts the viewer – now as confessor – with the confessional ordinariness of the celebrity. The celebrity persona, albeit both demotic (Turner, 2010) and banal (Skidelski, 2014) in its performativity, establishes its intimacy, and therefore

ordinariness, neither exclusively in terms of a demotic imaginary – as we shall see there are 'cracks of extraordinariness' in the celebrity performance which undermine its demotic status – nor exclusively in terms of a banal sentimentality – there are also 'cracks of self-reflexivity' in the celebrity performance which relativise its banal/reassuring effect. The intimacy-ordinariness of the celebrity is rather contingent upon the performative capacity of *self-disclosure/confession* to reconcile celebrity's public image as a *politically concerned person* (the empathy of the demotic) with her private profile as a successful, *extraordinary individual* (the voyeurism of the banal) or, as I have pointed out, the intimacy of the celebrity is inextricably interweaved with her performative construction as an authentic persona. Let me begin therefore by examining how the naturalism of empathic witnessing and the melodramatism of voyeurism are contradictorily but also transcendentally mixed in the celebrity testimonial.

The confessional as an aesthetic quality of intimacy

The celebrity testimonial I examine here, which is the only one among all party election broadcasts analysed in this thesis, could have had as a second title: 'an ordinary day with Steve Coogan'. The camera follows, in a documentarist filming style, the famous comedian in what seems to be a series of personal activities on an ordinary day of relaxation, such as having a cup of tea in a café and taking a walk by the seaside. The actual title of this testimonial, however, 'Steeve Coogan on the choice in this election', draws our attention to another aspect of Coogan's performance, not what he is doing as an individual person in his private life but what he is saying, in a talking-head-filming style, in public as a political advocate. On which of the two aspects should the viewer focus? How is she invited to attend to this testimonial, as a witness of Coogan's public/political contemplations or as a voyeur in Coogan's private activities? As I wish to argue, the viewer is openly confronted with the very antinomies between witnessing and voyeurism, manifested in the contradictory visual-verbal correspondences in

both the talking head and documentary sub-generic styles of this broadcast, being addressed neither as a 'witness' nor as a 'voyeur' but as a 'confessor'. Let me explain.

In the first part of his testimonial, Coogan is represented in a casual outfit having a cup of tea in a very basic café. He introduces himself like any ordinary man would do – '*Hello, My name is Steve Coogan*' – but he further describes his activity and himself in a way that an ordinary man would not do ('*I'm in an **ordinary** café. I have an **ordinary** cup of tea, because I'm an **ordinary** bloke*'), that is, by overemphasising ordinariness. In doing so, he exposes the staged-pretentious character of his ordinariness, soon to be amplified by an off-screen voice (seemingly coming from someone who works in the café) which mocks Coogan's choice to have an 'ordinary cup of tea' – '*Sorry we couldn't do a skinny soy latte, Steve*'. Arguably, the joke insinuates that his real celebrity life is not as basic and frugal as having a cup of tea in a self-service café indicates. As Coogan himself admits later on, '*I've been lucky. I'm successful and quite comfortably well off* […]'. Additionally, the representational choice in the second part of the broadcast, that is, the walk by the seaside – recognisable as near the Brighton Pavilion – harnesses the contrast between Coogan's privileged life and the political message he seeks to convey ('*Now a lot of people are very cynical about politics but it's easy to be cynical. Cynicism doesn't change anything. Cynicism never built a school or a hospital*'): a wealthy man sends a message against cynicism from a popular British seaside resort.

These representational contradictions, however, rather than the ending point of the celebrity's performativity, signal its starting point. They signal the transition from the perceptive realism of celebrity as an individual whose private life is not fully concordant with her public one, to the affective realism of celebrity as a persona who empathically manages and transcends the private-public inconsistencies, thereby standing (authentically) as an ordinary persona (Chouliaraki, 2012; Street, 2004). In order to understand therefore how the contradictions between Coogan's affluent-privileged private life and his politically concerned

public one are reconciled, we need to pay attention not only to what (indexically) is said but also to how (affectively) it is said. We need to consider, in other words, the broader *semantic context* of representation by virtue of which signifiers of extraordinariness are reloaded with certain transcendental-idealised (iconic and symbolic) meanings of ordinariness.

In this broadcast, the semantic context whereby the viewer is confronted with the private-public contradictions is not, for example, one of narcissism and exhibitionism – Coogan does not appear arrogant and unconcerned, bragging for and parading his wealth – but one of apologetic self-disclosure. Coogan appears serious and earthy, not obsessed with his image (e.g. he laughs at the sarcastic comment he receives in the café and he does not care if the wind dishevels him while walking by the seaside), attributing his prosperity just to luck. In a surprising-unexpected move of revealing and admitting his extraordinariness by himself – which is, at the same time, foreseeable as generic performance, an expected unexpectedness – Coogan shifts the viewer's attention from the public-private contradictions, which would probably trouble and alienate her, to the *authenticity of self-disclosure* itself, which she can empathically relate to. He shifts her attention therefore from extraordinariness to the intimate authenticity and authentic intimacy (ordinariness) of *confession*, what King describes as a '[…] performance-based version of the pietistic practice of keeping a diary' (2008, p.123).

Such a pietistic diary-keeping practice is evident in Coogan's confessional narrative – '*I was born in Manchester. I had a great childhood and my parents taught me to respect hard work, honesty and decency. We weren't rich but we had more than enough to go around and even though there were six of us, my parents decided to foster other children because for us, it wasn't just about looking after number one and to hell with everyone else. I've been lucky I'm successful and comfortably well off but I've never forgotten the values they gave me*' – reminding us that as a forgiveness-seeking/redemptive practice of self-disclosure, confession inevitably involves a justificatory logic. It juxtaposes and rearticulates the disclosed, ethically

questionable, deeds with certain moral values to which the confessee claims allegiance; it is always about a *politics of confession* in the end. Indeed, Coogan's confession draws on a communitarian ethos, implied in his reference to fostering ('*because for us, it wasn't just about looking after number one and to hell with everyone else*') and, *a contrario* (as a lack of this ethos), in his reference to the Conservatives' tax cuts ('*when we see the Conservatives **helping their rich friends** avoid paying taxes we know **that's not fair** because it means that decent hard-working people have to pay more*'),* as well as on a patriotic ethics, implied in his reference to the great British virtue of fairness ('*the **great thing about British** people is that they have a **sense of fairness**').*

Although this communitarian and patriotic modicum has a strong religious-Christian connotation, is played out in this broadcast in a rather secular-institutional context, wherein the redemption to which the confessional narrative looks forward is not to come in the afterlife from a caring God but in this life from a caring party and government; it is redemption as reconciliation of private success with public good ('*if we don't think that's fair, we need to change it and **the way to change it is to vote Labour** [...] I trust Labour with the NHS. I know **they will take care of it**. [...] if you want **a government** that believe in working families, in a better future for our kids, **that stands up for everyone**, then you can have it – but you need to go out and vote for it*').* By this token, 'it is better to refer to self-disclosing talk on television as a semi-institutional discourse or a para-confession' (2008, p.123), as King argues, or as the re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life in the form of a (para)*confessional politics of reconciliation*.

Coogan's celebrity testimonial is part of a series of election broadcasts in which other famous British actors, such as 'The Hobbit' star Martin Freeman, and comedian and former NHS nurse Jo Brand, appear endorsing the Labour party. These celebrity testimonials, along with the lay testimonials discussed earlier on, almost monopolised Labour's advertising

campaign for the 2015 general election. The only exception was the portrait of Ed Miliband, which, as noted in the previous chapter, was the only broadcast in which the party leader starred and mentioned at all, reinforcing the claims that Labour did not see in the face of their leader a competent and popular campaigner (see Dermody, 2016). However, the celebrity testimonial, thanks to its *idealising* dynamic of both *exposing* and *managing-transcending* the tensions between private success/profit-making and public good/social justice, begs a deeper symbolic affinity to what Drucker (1979) calls 'Labour ethos' than the strategic explanation of political marketing can grasp.

Ever since MacDonald's years, Labour has been committed to a social democratic principle according to which socialism would gradually emerge out of the growing success of capitalism rather than out of its ashes. This is a reconciliatory/redistributive principle that does not oppose privately produced wealth but seeks to assure that 'power, wealth and opportunity are in the hands of the many not the few' (Thorpe, 2001, p.296). Even the Third Way politics of overcoming the antinomies of social democracy and neoliberalism (Giddens, 1998) would reintroduce, through the Blairite New Labour project, a similar reconciliatory principle (see chapter one). From this viewpoint, the confessional politics of reconciliation recontextualizes, and at the same time co-articulates, core symbolisms from Labour's history, such as the democratic republicanist symbol of communitarianism (helping and sharing with each other), the Whig imperialist symbol of ethical patriotism (British fairness), and the democratic collectivist symbol of central planning (a government that cares for everyone). What forms of agency and ordering does the recontextualization of these symbolisms enact, by means of its emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal framing, and how does this agency-ordering matrix matter institutionally for the Labour party?

The confessional as a recontextualizing practice of hopeful-anxious displacement, temporalisation, and eternalisation

Distanced from an overwhelming hope (Conservative's documentary), or fear (ND's documentary) and anger (SYRIZA's talking head testimonial), the confessional politics reconciliation is invested with a *dipole of hope and anxiety* (like the other Labour (lay) testimonial discussed in this chapter). To some extent, both hope and anxiety can be said to be emotions closely associated with the confessional practice, deriving from this practice's duplicity, that is, its capacity to both expose and transcend/reconcile the contradictions between private and public life. It is anxiety about the exposure (self-disclosure) and hope for the redemption of our life's anomies and antinomies (reconciliation). In the secularised and mediatized context of celebrity's confession, the hope-anxiety dipole strikes at the heart of Coogan's idealistic modicum of a successful/well-off but fair and honest life which, as I have shown, also speaks to Labour's ethos.

As in Labour's talking head testimonial, here hope and anxiety are politically-institutionally played out with reference to images of the past which resolve or exacerbate the uncertainty about the future. For example, Coogan says that he trusts Labour with the NHS ('*I trust Labour with the NHS. I know they'll take care of it*') because Labour has a strong record of improving Britain's welfare ('*The Labour party gave this country the National Health Service; it gave us the minimum wage*') but he does not trust the Conservatives ('*And when the Conservatives say they will, I don't trust them*') because their legacy attests to the opposite ('*Imagine how we'll feel if we wake up on Friday with another five years of the Tories in Downing Street: more cuts, more privatization and the dismantling of the NHS*'). As has been repeatedly argued in this and the previous chapter, hope and anxiety are moderate emotions and encourage the viewer to seek for more information about the subject(s) which generates them, in this case, about the '*Tories' failing plan*' (anxiety) and '*Labour's better plan*' (hope) – as a voiceover towards the end of the broadcast puts it. In so doing, it gives rise to the

emotiocognition of surveillance which calls for informed/cross-partisan agency. Labour's better plan, underlain by the recontextualization of symbols of communitarianism, ethical patriotism, and central planning, is a conciliatory and inclusive (centrist) plan. It points to Labour as an idealistic *centrist agent* which aims at harmonising private success with social justice, instead of one-sidedly and dogmatically standing for the former (as the Conservatives are accused of doing) or the latter (as the hardliner Left does – see previous chapter for more about Labour's tacit response to criticisms that the party had gone too Left).

As an emotional repercussion of the duplicity of confession, the hope-anxiety dipole reflects back on the contradictory overlap between talking head naturalism, which encourages spatiotemporal determinacy, and therefore the displacement and/or temporalisation of recontextualized symbolisms, and documentarist dramatism, which creates spatiotemporal indeterminacy eternalising recontextualized symbolisms. This overlap makes possible that certain symbolic meanings may be reconstituted as products of a specific sociohistorical context in the past (communitarianism), others as rationalities of the present (ethical patriotism), and others as general incontestable truths (central planning). Let me discuss these multiple *ordering effects* of the recontextualizing dynamic of the confessional politics of reconciliation at some length.

The café-scene, in the first part of the celebrity testimonial, can be said to be reminiscent of an *older Britain*; Coogan enjoys his traditional cup of tea, not a fancy modern skinny soy latte, in a café the decoration of which must not have significantly changed since the late 1970s-80s, a period to which Coogan also implicitly refers while talking to the viewer about his childhood in Manchester. Coogan's audio-visual representation takes us back therefore to an age where Britain was fractured by the individualist and avaristic culture of Thatcherite neoliberalism. It does so, however, not to mourn for its victims but rather to proudly remind us that Thatcherism did not manage to bend and extinguish the communitarian ethos of working

people, thanks to Labour strongholds like Manchester which preserved and protected it ('*my parents taught me to respect hard work, honesty and decency* [...] *because for us, it wasn't just about looking after number one and to hell with everyone else*'). Recontextualization acts, here, as *displacement* (it transfers to the present the positive connotations of the 1980s Left communitarianism), cultivating the dissimulative sense of an unbroken continuity of communitarianism in the heart of Labour politics. This ordering effect is dissimulative as it fails to acknowledge the striking differences-discontinuities between, for example, the market-hostile and Eurosceptic communitarianism of the Foot era and the market-friendly and Europhile communitarianism of the Blair-Brown era (Leach, 2009); it mystifies what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) would call the radical contingency of communitarianism.

In contrast to the café-scene which takes us back to 1980s Britain, the initial shots of the seaside-scene reground representation in *today's Britain*. The opening of this scene allows us to see, in the background, Brighton's West Pier, not in its erstwhile grandeur but in its current derelict form – just the metal skeleton left behind by the multiple damages it has suffered in the last decade or so – before the camera turns to Coogan and his concerns about the current cynicism in politics ('*They taught me that politics matter.* **Now** *a lot of people are very cynical about politics*'). This audio-visual juxtaposition of the destroyed Pier with cynicism sketches out a gloomy picture of *Britain in moral decline* – impoverished public infrastructure and corroded political ethics – calling the British people to put an end to it by restoring ethical patriotism ('*the great thing about British people is that they have a sense of fairness and when we see the Conservatives helping their rich friends we know that's not fair* [...] *and if we don't think that's fair, we need to change it*'). Recontextualization acts, here, as *temporalisation*, that is, it construes ethical patriotism as the necessary rational reaction-remedy to the current moral decline. In doing so, it implies a discontinuity between previous Labour and the current Conservative governance (framed as responsible for this decline) which silences the ethically

questionable practices of the former regarding, for instance, the involvement in Iraq war, migrants' deportations, and extensive public surveillance (Hall, 2011); recontextualization qua temporalisation mystifies the radical contingency of ethical patriotism.

Finally, in the last scenes of the celebrity testimonial, as Coogan continues his walk, the background gets blurred while the camera zooms in on his face. Suddenly, representation seems like it enters a chronotopic *vacuum*; there are neither visual nor verbal cues acting as identifiers of a specific spacetime. Coogan refers to Labour's democratic collectivist legacy that makes him trust the party (*'The Labour party gave this country the National Health Service; it gave us the minimum wage'*) and to the Conservatives' neoliberal one, that makes him distrust them (*'more cuts, more privatization and the dismantling of the NHS*), without specifying the historical, socio-political, and economic conditions with which these legacies have been associated. Labour's and the Conservatives' records in office are therefore construed, in this spatiotemporally indeterminate part of the celebrity testimonial, as homogenous and indissoluble (ahistorical) totalities which stand in sharp opposition to each other, like the perennial battle between good and evil. Recontextualization acts, here, as *eternalisation* of the symbol of central planning, reproducing the ahistorical view that Labour has always been committed to a state-monitored market economy and the Conservatives to a privatised and uncontrolled one; a view which treats as general truths what, otherwise, are socio-historically contingent and, as I argued earlier on, not mutually exclusive political choices.

Summing up, the celebrity testimonial establishes an aesthetic regime of intimacy which operates through simultaneously exposing and transcending the contradictions between the demotic and the banal in an idealistic moment of self-disclosure. It is this empathic, reconciliatory act of self-disclosure which allows for the extraordinary individuality of the celebrity to be authentically recast as a considerate political advocate and, therewith, an

intimate re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life, giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the confessional politics of reconciliation. This confessional politics recontextualizes symbols of communitarianism, ethical patriotism, and central planning from Labour's past in a bipolar frame of hope and anxiety which contributes to the enactment of a centrist – socially just capitalist – agency. However, while the recontextualization of communitarianism takes the form of displacement, forging a dissimulative continuity with Labour's short leftist relapse in the 1980s, that of ethical patriotism takes the form of temporalisation, cultivating a dissimulative sense of discontinuity with the party's ethically compromised past. Finally, the recontextualization of central planning is spatiotemporally framed as eternalisation, thereby reifying Labour's (socio-historically eclectic) affinity to state-monitored market economy.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to shed light on the discursive construction of political ordinariness as it is carried out in the testimonial genre of political advertising. On the one hand, the testimonial invites the viewer to assess the political endorsement given by laypersons and celebrities in terms of their recognisability as representatives of everydayness. On the other, it disarticulates this recognisability from the possession of essentially ordinary characteristics, re-articulating it with the performative potential of a personality and/or activity to make a compelling claim to intimacy. This performative potential, beyond the circumstantial conditions of an individual performance, is regulated by different aesthetic regimes of intimacy – such as the intimacy of the demotic imaginary, banal sentimentality, and self-disclosure/confession – each of which serves to meaningfully re-inscribe into the public-institutional domain an, otherwise meaningless (unknown or known but remote), private individuality and/or moment.

The intimacy of the demotic imaginary, for example, is established by means of a naturalistic prosopography (talking head testimonial) which re-signifies the layperson as embodiment of certain popular vernacular conventionalities, inviting the viewer to empathically identify with her. The intimacy of the banal sentimentality, on the other hand, is established by means of a dramatic iconography (documentary-style testimonial) which recasts the lay activity as a voyeuristic experience and therefore allows the viewer to indulgingly reassure herself. Finally, the intimacy of the confession is established through idealistically exposing and transcending the contradictions between the demotic and the banal (celebrity testimonial), achieved by the self-disclosing persona of the celebrity to which the viewer can empathically relate.

Consequently, the testimonial conversationalises politics but not in the sense of reducing it to a trivial individualistic routine, just for the sake of the aesthetic pleasure of intimacy. The different examples of ordinariness I have discussed in this chapter do not look intimate as long as they only remain pertinent to a private individuality and activity, which are meaningless in the sense that they are either unknown (as individual laypersons), too particular (as activities), or remote/extraordinary (as famous individuals). They become intimate when they are re-institutionalised as performances which are affectively (performances with which we can empathise or indulge ourselves) and, by extension, symbolically (performances which carry with them certain symbolic meanings) meaningful to their audiences (e.g. Smith, Charlotte, and the seven first-time voters as realistic embodiments of the elderly's wisdom, civil ethics, and passionate youth, respectively; Coogan as idealistic embodiment of the para-confessional persona; family moments and work-related chores as dramatic manifestations of the nurturing parenting and misery syndrome, respectively). In this regard, by becoming publically/institutionally meaningful, the layperson, the lay activity, and the celebrity are also

invested with their own recontextualizing dynamics – what I have called demotic, banal, and confessional politics of everyday life, respectively.

Each of these performative re-institutionalisations of the politics of everyday life brings to the present a variety of symbolic fragments from the past: social-patriotic and leftist symbols in the demotic, liberal and conservative symbols in the banal, and social-patriotic together with communitarian symbols in the confessional politics of everyday life. In doing so, they prompt us to recognise parties either as cross-partisan – centrist-reconciliatory (Labour's hope and anxiety), liberal (the Conservatives' hope), and conservative (ND's fear) – agents or as partisan, left-wing (SYRIZA's anger) ones. At the same time, the recontextualizing dynamic of the (re-institutionalised) politics of everyday life entails misrecognition of parties' continuity (e.g. with Labour's post-war achievements and the 1980s Left turn) and discontinuity (e.g. with New Labour's pro-market reforms and SYRIZA's Eurocommunist pre-history) over time, as well as misrecognition of the historicality of all their decisions-choices (e.g. in the Conservatives' protection and support of family, ND's compliant pro-Europeanism, and Labour's state-monitored economy). Together these symbolic displacements, temporalisations, and eternalisations ontologically mystify the neoliberal loopholes of state interventionism (Labour) and reify an (neoliberal) individualist and utilitarianist caricature of liberalism (Conservatives) in British politics. They also mystify the reactionary repercussions of a pseudo-radicalism (SYRIZA) and reify a submissive and relenting caricature of conservatism (ND) in Greek politics.

The performative repertoire of political communication, as it is generically-paradigmatically manifested in political advertising, reaches its completion with a mediatic performance which exceeds both the authentic persona of charismatic leaders and the intimate persona/experience of ordinary persons/activities. It is a performance attributed to the ritualistic interactivity or impersonality of the spectacle, taking us from the politics of mission and

everyday life to the *politics of belonging*. This performativity of mediatized spectacle is the focus of the next and final empirical chapter of this thesis.

7. Dramatisation in the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter
Mediatized spectacle and the politics of belonging

'The megaspectacle has come, too, to dominate party politics, as its heavily dramatized presentations implode into the political battles of the day, such as the Clinton sex scandals and impeachment, the thirty-six-day battle for the White House after the election in 2000, and the September 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent Terror War. [...] These dramatic media passion plays define the politics and culture of the time'

(Kellner, 2003, p.vii-viii)

Politics in the age of mediatization is largely communicated not only as a personal matter of charismatic leaders and a conversational activity of laypersons and celebrities but also as a phantasmagorical drama. Of course, part of this phantasmagoria may be the charismatic leader and the ordinary person; quite often both appear making dramatic appeals to the public, like Cameron in his warning that Britain's recovery could be 'stopped dead in its tracks' (see chapter five) and the middle-aged man with his fearful thoughts about Greek people's bank deposits (see chapter six). In other words, dramatisation is in an open dialectic with the other two mediatic practices of political communication, personalisation and conversationalisation. It has, however, its own distinctive performative character, its own generic-aesthetic and, ultimately, recontextualizing mechanisms by means of which leaders and laypersons, but also impersonal imageries, come to form spectacular private-public coagulations in a way that exceeds the circumstantial dramatism of the leader's talking head and documentary-style testimonial. In this chapter, I would like to focus on this distinctive performativity of dramatisation, which, as Kellner stresses in the opening quote, lies exactly in the construction of the political spectacle, exploring its ideological potential.

Spectacle has a long history in terms of its cultural and political uses in the Western world, from Roman circuses (Köhne et al., 2000) and medieval public executions (Foucault, 1977) to the masterfully choreographed rallies of the Fascists (Berezin, 1997) and the Nazis

(Kertzer, 1988) in the twentieth century. Motivated by these historical examples, Debord reintroduced spectacle into scholarly research as a holistic concept that grasps the major developments in the post-industrial and post-war societies of the West (e.g. commercialisation and commodification of culture, globalisation, etc.). He called them 'societies of spectacle', provocatively declaring the end of authentic social experience and its substitution for hollow, dazing, and therefore conformist and order-preserving representations (1983).

Debord's work has substantially influenced analyses of what is often referred to as *media spectacle* or *mediatized spectacle*, especially in understanding its politically pertinent constructedness, not as necessarily inauthentic/distortive though – an epitome of 'false consciousness' as his Marxist epistemology would have it. His critical insightfulness has rather informed a, post-Marxist/post-structuralist, understanding of mediatized spectacle as an institutionally and technologically staged, and orchestrated, phantasmagorical performance which has the subjectifying power of binding people to the social order (Bennett, 2003; Edelman, 1988; Giroux, 2006; Kellner, 2003). In this regard, the spectacular is not a quality immanent to certain exceptional events, such as natural disasters and national ceremonies, but the construction of events in a way that seeks to bring people together, create strong affective bonds, and galvanise collective identities; to cultivate, in the end, a sense of belonging which serves power relations, or what Crowley (1999) has called the *politics of belonging*. Mediatized spectacle is not therefore a self-existing entity, but, like charisma and ordinariness, a discursive construct in the generic performativity of the mediatic practices of political communication.

The two most popular genres of political advertising in which spectacle is discursively constructed as a mediatic performance of the politics of belonging are the *cinéma-vérité* and the *neutral reporter* genres. The cinéma-vérité represents 'candidates in "real life settings interacting with people" […] or in more informal settings such as the meet-the-people walkabouts, or in depicting scenes from a candidate's home or work life' (McNair, 2007, p.96-

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97); it is the interaction between the charismatic leader and the ordinary person which produces the spectacle here. By contrast, the neutral reporter genre is not about personal interaction but about impersonalised factual observations and statements (ibid), an ecstatic view of reality communicated through the eyes and words of an invisible observer-reporter; it is the ecstatic impersonalisation, rather than the authentic and intimate interaction, which produces the spectacle here.

In both generic rubrics, however, central to the spectacular effect, and therefore constitutive of it, is the gradual absorption by and loss within the spectacle of the individual self and its 'rediscovery' as a possibility of a collective self, or what Foucault has called the 'tricky combination in the same political structures of individualization techniques and of totalization procedures' (1982, p.782). Both interactivity (cinéma-vérité genre) and impersonalisation (neutral reporter genre) create a 'meaning surplus' – the former by re-signifying the relationship between the leader and the layperson (e.g. as a pedagogue-learner or celebrity-fan relationship) and the latter by substituting this relationship altogether for ecstatic imageries – which exceeds not only the person (leader and layperson) but also its persona (authentic and intimate). More than identification with a specific persona, spectacle involves the sublimation of a collective body and the reconstitution of 'self' as an individual manifestation of this collectiveness-totality. I shall refer to these sublimating structures of simultaneous *individualisation* and *totalisation* as rituals, or, given the context of this thesis, 'media rituals' (Couldry, 2003b) or 'mediatized rituals' (Cottle, 2006), suggesting that the aesthetic quality that lies at the heart of mediatized spectacle is that of *ritualism*.

Cottle is right in arguing that mediatized rituals need to be critically examined against Durkheimian functionalism that often underlies the sociology of rituals, particularly the view that wants rituals to cement solidarity and integration in society as an indivisible and undifferentiated whole. However, Durkheim's early insight into ritualism as 'collective

"effervescence" – or transcendence through identification with a collective being beyond the everyday world […]' (Cottle, 2006, p. 414) might be quite illustrative of the (de)individualising-collectivising immersion that the spectacle offers[1]. Rituals are, indeed, as Cottle has them, exceptional performances which 'periodically crash though routine media conventions' (2006, p.416), thereby distancing us from the politics of everyday life. At the same time, however, rituals are invested with their own conventionality and repetitiveness – as all performances are – which allow us to imaginarily trace in their exceptionality a transcendental collective body, be it a society and nation as a whole or any other minor or major collectivity (Kertzer, 1988).

In this regard, the spectacular politics of belonging is not entirely alien to the ordinary politics of everyday life[2] and the charismatic politics of mission[3]; constitutive of all these is the fusion of the private, individual and partial, with the public, collective and total. The performativity of charisma accomplishes this fusion in an aesthetic moment of authenticity (the seamless private-public continuum in the construction of charismatic self) and the performativity of ordinariness in a corresponding moment of intimacy (the re-institutionalisation of a private individuality in a way that is meaningful to the many altogether and to each one separately). In its turn, the performativity of spectacle accomplishes the private-public fusion in an aesthetic moment of ritualism, the double move of exceptional suspension of individuality and its conventional re-invention as a manifestation of a totality.

While the Debord-inspired studies to which I referred earlier on have acknowledged this individualising-totalising dynamic of spectacle – its ritualism – they often treat it as a taken-for-granted homogenising effect of media representations by and large, the reproduction of the socio-political order, rather than an effect contingent upon the aesthetically multimodal and socially multifunctional performativity of media genres. By this token, if we are to understand the ideological potential of mediatized spectacle we need to explore both the

multimodal articulation of ritualism into different aesthetic regimes (forms of realism and meaning as established by the modes of presentation and visual-verbal correspondences, respectively, in the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter broadcasts) and the multifunctional articulation of ritualism in different recontextualizing practices, or different politics of belonging (forms of agency and ordering as enacted through the emotiocognition and spacetime, respectively, of the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter broadcasts).

Unlike the leader's talking head and the testimonial, the cinéma-vérité genre does not focus on leaders and laypersons or celebrities addressing the viewer directly or indirectly, but, as has already been noted, on the interaction between leaders and laypersons. There are two types of this interaction in the cinéma-vérité broadcasts of the four parties that concern me in this study: *interpersonal* and *mass interactivity*. In the first one, interaction takes place in a small-scale, dialogically structured context, a context which implies that a chat or conversation is going on between the leader and a limited number of laypersons, as in Cameron's visit to a state school ('What type of country we want to be') or in Samaras' encounter with a bunch of boys who play football in a public square ('We make the pitch'). This dialogical interpersonality attributes to the interactors asymmetric but mutually interdependent roles-collective subjectivities, such as teacher-pupils (Conservative) and coach-players (ND), which, as I shall demonstrate in the first part of this chapter, comprise different aesthetic regimes of the *ritualism of pedagogy*, football-playing and schooling ritualism respectively, giving rise to a pedagogical politics of belonging.

In the second variation of the cinéma-vérité, interaction takes place in a large-scale non-dialogically structured context, a context in which interpersonal conversation gives its place to mass celebration, as in Miliband's canvassing moments ('Ed Miliband: A portrait') and in Tsipras' encounters with crowds of supporters ('Hope'). This non-dialogical mass interactivity, actually operating as a matrix of overlapping interactivities, embeds the leader and the

layperson in a narcissistic relationship of celebrity-fan which, as I shall show in the second part of this chapter, comprises an aesthetic regime of *rally ritualism*, giving rise to the ironic politics of belonging.

Other than the cinéma-vérité genre, mediatized spectacle, as already noted, also enters the realm of political advertising through the neutral reporter one, not in the form of interpersonal or mass interactivity this time but in that of *ecstatic impersonality*. Either by completely 'dehumanising' the scenery, like in the Conservatives' broadcast ('It's working. Don't let them wreck it') or by fleetingly representing people from a panoramic point of view, like in SYRIZA's broadcast ('Hope'), the neutral-reporter genre, as I shall show in the third part of this chapter, confronts the viewer with the ecstatic vision of 'historic' reality, in what comprises an aesthetic regime of (imminent or avoided) *disaster ritualism*, giving rise to the apocalyptic politics of belonging. Let me discuss these three aesthetic regimes of ritualism and their different recontextualizing principles in turn.

The ritualism of (schooling and football-playing) public pedagogy and the pedagogical politics of belonging

The pedagogical as an aesthetic quality of ritualism

The Conservatives' and ND's cinéma-vérité broadcasts are organised around a motif of interpersonal interactivity: the leader meets with a group of laypersons with whom he spends some time, chatting and engaging in their activities. Cameron meets with a class-size group of kids, predominately little girls, at a primary school, and Samaras meets with a team-size group of kids, boys in their early teens, who play football in a public square. These two interactive contexts visually match, and therefore authenticate, the corresponding verbal references – brief descriptions (indexical meaning) of what the party's message is in each case: about *education* (Cameron: '[…] *making sure that everyone can get a great education*') and *training* (Samaras; '*keep training and we'll keep working*'), respectively.

Such an interpersonal interactivity carries both the 'exceptionality' and 'conventionality' of a media event (Dayan and Katz, 1992). On the one hand, people do not have the chance to meet and chat with the PM on a daily basis but, on the other, they are used to reading about and/or watching leaders' visits to schools and other public spaces. In its exceptionality, the interactive motif of the cinéma-vérité addresses the viewer as an 'imagined participant', a person who would like to have the same experience as the represented laypersons, while in its conventionality, it addresses her as a 'spectator', a person who is exposed to the staged performance of interactivity. In order to understand how these two ostensibly incongruent aesthetic qualities – exceptionality and conventionality – are harmonically integrated in the cinéma-vérité, we need to carefully examine the (modes of presentation of and visual-verbal correspondences in) the (ritualistic) structure of the leader-kids interaction.

In the Conservatives' case, this interaction is presented to the viewer in a similar mode to the one that family activities were presented in the party's testimonial: as a documentary. Instead of footage from laypersons' family moments, however, the viewer is now exposed to footage from Cameron's visit to a primary school, with the leader's voice speaking over it. Notably, in all this footage, the children's attention is concentrated to the leader – they look at him with smiling faces while they are listening to what he says to them – and so it is his point of view that is given prominence in representation, both visually and verbally. In the visual plane, we see the little girls gathering around Cameron in the schoolyard and, later on, sharing activities with him in the classroom, as if he was their teacher – the actual teachers are rather peripheral figures, almost excluded from representation. This teaching allegory is amplified in the verbal plane, through the leader's voiceover, enshrining the *pedagogical value* of education: '*I want every child in our country to have a great start in life, and have opportunities*

and security as they grow older; that means making sure that everyone can get a great education.'

Unlike the 'family documentary', the 'school documentary' carries with it not the banal sentimentality of voyeurism but that of ritualism. Here, the viewer is not invited to intrude into the leader's or kids' private moments but is given access to a semi-public space, the schoolyard and classroom, where the formal-mainstream realm of the pedagogical encounter unfolds as a 'schooling ritual' (McLaren, 1999), thereby re-signifying the (disciplined) leader's persona as an icon of the *leader-public pedagogue* and the (banal) layperson-pupil's as an icon of *learner*. The schooling ritual does not merely describe-indexicalise and narrate-iconise the pedagogic encounter, but also inscribes it into a symbolic matrix of normativity which shapes the way we think about pedagogy in general; it involves what Giroux (2004) calls a 'politics of public pedagogy'.

Indeed, the pedagogical value of education is ascribed, in Cameron's voiceover, the normative exposition that good pedagogy gives rise to a society which protects the vulnerable and rewards working-hard and doing-the-right-thing ('*making sure that in our country we protect the vulnerable and reward those who work hard and do the right thing*'). As Cameron put it years ago, when he decided to run for the leadership of the Conservative Party, outlining his vision of a *one-nation Conservatism*, 'we are all in it together, together with mutual responsibility to care for those who would otherwise get left behind' (in Bale, 2011, p.264). Hence, Cameron's mission as a leader-pedagogue is broader than his mission as a disciplined leader – not just safeguarding security and stability through a working plan (see chapter five) but building an inclusive and moral nation through public pedagogy. Children's goals as learners exceed too those set by the banality of nurturing parenting – not just family-assisted self-fulfilment (see chapter six) but public pedagogy of how to become hard-working and right-acting citizens. In other words, the politics of schooling ritualism both integrates and transcends

the disciplinary politics of mission and the banal politics of everyday life, culminating in a *pedagogical politics of belonging* to one nation Conservatism; a national imaginary which embraces symbols of communitarian solidarity (protection of the vulnerable), from the democratic republicanist tradition, and moral sovereignty (a nation based on hard work and doing-the-right-thing), from the Tory nationalist tradition of the party (see Heppell, 2014 and chapter four).

In ND's cinéma-vérité broadcast, the leader-kids interaction is presented to the viewer not in the form of a docudrama (edited footages) but through the naturalistic mode of a lively unfolding drama. The opening scene shows a group of young boys playing football in a public square when, suddenly, after a strong hit, the ball flies away tills it gets finally under control by the foot of a passer-by who is, as camera in its tilting-up movement reveals, the leader. Thereafter, one of the boys approaches the leader and they have the following brief conversation:

- Samaras: What's your name?

- Boy: Nicolas. Can I tell you something? My father says that things are difficult…

- Samaras: Come here Nicolas, sit down and let's have a talk.

In what follows, Nicolas and the rest of the boys gather around Samaras, who sits on a bench with the ball still in his hands, carefully listening to what the leader says. Football-playing is not irrelevant to this conversation. Quite the contrary, it metaphorically structures the interactive event (Samaras: '*for a country to pay ball, **as for a team**,* […]) in what Light and Harvey (2017) call 'game-based pedagogy'; a pedagogical ritual which instead of following the school-based method of teaching, follows the game-based method of *coaching*. This football-playing ritual of pedagogy allows for the leader to embody the demotic imaginary of the *leader-coach* – a leader must act as a coach, guiding and training a country to succeed (leader: '*today we've taken Greece where it should be'*) – and the boys-players to embody the

demotic imaginary of *citizens-trainees* – like football players, citizens need to get the right training so as to be able to overcome difficulties and succeed in life (Samaras: '*Sometimes you have to pass through difficulties to do something right, don't you*?; Nicolas: '*Yes you do*'; Samaras: '*The point is to know where you want to go and go with a plan, go with knowledge without stopping for a moment*').

Football-playing rituals are quite popular in political communication. Some even talk about the 'footbalization of politics', especially in Southern European countries, like Italy (Kassimeris, 2011) and Greece (Demertzis, 2002), the political cultures of which are characterised by great polarisation. At the same time, however, such rituals are closely linked, by virtue of their capacity to bind a whole country together in support of a team, to the building of national identities (see Gibbons, 2014; Street, 2001). Consequently, along with the footbalisation of politics goes a pedagogical politics of football-playing ritualism which, in ND's broadcast, is exemplified in Samaras' exposition, '*for a country to play ball, as for a team, it needs a pitch; and we make the pitch for her, a new* one'. What is metaphorically emboldened in this exposition is that Samaras' mission as a leader-coach goes beyond his mission as a disciplined leader. It is not only about safeguarding security and stability by keeping Greece in the EU (see chapter five) but also about nation-rebuilding based on the effective pedagogy of coaching. It is about overcoming the everyday politics of misery too; not just fatalistically accepting that a small country like Greece has limited capacities (see chapter six), but training hard to overcome difficulties and make Greece great again ('*Today we've almost taken Greece where it should be, to become again a normal, a serious, a **great country**, for you, for all the kids, so that today's difficulties, that your father is talking about, will not be your own difficulties tomorrow. So don't worry, keep training and we'll keep working*'). In other words, the politics of football-playing ritualism both integrates and transcends the disciplinary politics of mission and the banal politics of everyday life, culminating in a

pedagogical politics of belonging to a *reborn Greece*; a national imaginary which foregrounds the wisely instructed and tirelessly worked radical reconstruction of a country, thereby speaking directly to the paternalist modernisation discourse on which Karamanlis founded ND after the collapse of the junta (see chapter four).

In summary, the schooling and football-playing rituals forge a pedagogical politics of belonging to a collective body – one nation Conservatism and reborn Greece, respectively – recontextualizing symbolisms of communitarian moralism (Conservatives) and paternalist modernisation (ND) from the parties' past. I should now explore this recontextualization in greater depth, focusing on the emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal frames in which it occurs, and which are illustrative of the forms of agency and ordering enacted by the pedagogical politics of belonging.

The pedagogical as a recontextualizing practice of anxiety-aversive and anxiety-vulnerable hope, and eternalisation

Both the schooling and football-playing rituals involve, in one way (as pupils-learners) or another (as players-hard training people), children. Children as a political spectacle have a long history in political advertising, primarily a history of multiple emotional uses, as Sherr's (1999) study of presidential campaign advertising in the US has shown. Children are often – though not exclusively – used to convey an image of hope for the future, either because they are 'symbolic of a future characterized by the nostalgic innocence of the past' or because they are 'symbolic of the unimagined possibilities awaiting the nation' (Sherr, 1999, p.57). As I wish to argue, the former symbolic articulation of hope, as *nostalgic innocence*, can be found here in the Conservatives' cinéma-vérité while the latter, as *unimagined prospect*, in ND's.

Nostalgic innocence is abundant in the documentary dramatism of the schooling ritual. The footage from Cameron's school visit, playing along with a blithe music, is full of bright images of little girls who smile and enjoy happy-carefree moments with him in the schoolyard

and in class. In conjunction with the leader's voiceover, which inserts the aforementioned images into a semantic context of vulnerability and protection ('*protect the vulnerable*'), this imagery romanticises the banal sentimentality of the pupil-in-class, morphing it into the nostalgic ideal of the *ingénue*: the young virginal girl whose enchanting innocence can put her in danger and who is therefore in need of protection (Singer, 2004).

Contrarily, such a nostalgic innocence is absent from ND's cinéma-vérité, not only because the kids in this case are all boys in their early teens, but also because the football-playing ritual involves a toughness and aggressiveness which alludes to masculinist strength instead of feminine vulnerability. The opening scene is typical in this regard: loud voices and thud sounds accompany the boys' vehement running and ball-tackling. Even in what follows, this excessive energy is not lost; it is rather redirected and channelled, imaginarily – by virtue of the leader's coaching-pedagogical mediation – into the thoughtful practice of hard training, which turns a 'boy' into a 'man', guaranteeing a secure and hopeful future. While in the beginning Nicolas stands before Samaras with a worried look on his face, after the end of their conversation, he stands by Samaras' side looking forward with a confident smile. At the same time, an independent voiceover adds the closing remark: '*We tell the truth, we guarantee the future*'. Consequently, leader's coaching mediation has effected the transition from boyish anxiety to *masculinist hope*.

If masculinist hope is an anxiety-managing and even anxiety-aversive hope ('*So don't worry, keep training and we'll keep working*'), as it is grounded on the strength and confidence of the well-trained, the hope of nostalgic innocence is fragile and vulnerable to anxiety ('*Now Labour would put all these at risk with their plans for more borrowing, more debt and more taxes*') as the ingénue who generates it is potentially exposed to multiple dangers. This *anxiety-vulnerable hope*, or what I have previously referred to as the hope-anxiety dipole, is part of the emotiocognition of surveillance, a system of appraisal which propels the viewer to seek more-

new information about the national imaginary of one-nation Conservatism, to seriously consider the prospects and security that it promises, as well as the risks and uncertainties that lurk in the alternatives (e.g. Labour's plans). It enacts, in other words, informed, cross-partisan agency making room 'for both liberals with a small "L" as well as for Conservatives with a big "C"', as Marquand has put it (2008, p.398), that is, for both liberal voters, disillusioned with Labour, who may be pleased by the communitarian ethos of Cameron's one-nation Conservatism, and traditional Conservative voters who would rejoice at the renewed commitment to the moralistic principles of working-hard and doing-the-right-thing.

On the other hand, the anxiety-managing masculinist hope draws the viewer's attention exclusively to the national imaginary of reborn Greece, as if alternatives were not risky (like in Samaras' talking head [chapter five]) or perilous (like in the middle-aged man's testimonial [chapter six]) but primarily unworthy of our attention. There is only one 'recipe for success', for the 'ingredients' of which – coaching and hard training – the viewer is invited to seek information. What this emotiocognition of surveillance encourages the viewer to appraise or reappraise is nothing else than a *patriarchal agency* of national palingenesis, at the heart of which lies the parochial idea that the well-trained boy will eventually become a man-father able to provide for his family and the country (Hadjikyriacou, 2009). It is therefore a form of agency that appeals to these (conservative) voters who may still recognise themselves as, what a former leader of ND used to call, 'the Greek householders', referring to the Greek people (men) who were committed to the values of family, Orthodox Christianity, and nation (see Voulgaris, 2008). In other words, the patriarchal agency of national palingenesis opens a second door (after the agency of national inferiority we encountered in the previous chapter) to ND's 'forgotten' conservative self.

Beyond an emotive-cognitive template of agency, this patriarchal archetype also functions as a discursive mantra of ordering, structured by the spatiotemporal framing of

recontextualization, in the pedagogical politics of *both* the schooling and football-playing ritualism. Symbols of paternalist modernisation from ND's past, to begin with, are recontextualized through the chronotopic indeterminacy of the football-playing ritualism. There is nothing temporal or historical about a bunch of young boys who play football in a public square – kids always used to do it and they will probably keep doing it – as there is nothing temporal or historical about a coach who stresses the importance of training to his team. Although Nicolas' concern is directly associated with the temporal reality his family faces – '*my father says that things are difficult*' – the leader's response de-temporalises and de-historicises this reality – '*Your father is right, but sometimes you have to pass through difficulties to do something right*'. Drawing upon the popular demotic wisdom, the dictum that the right decisions are often difficult decisions, which also invokes what Anstead (2017) refers to as the 'moral overtone' of austerity (the difficulties are the measures of austerity his government had to implement) Samaras ascribes paternalist modernisation, and the reborn Greece it promises, an eternal and universal validity. Hence, recontextualization acts here as *eternalisation*, reifying the patriarchal and neoliberal contingencies of paternalist modernisation[4].

First, eternalisation leaves unquestioned the mutation and exclusion of women from the pedagogy of coaching-training. Evidently, Nicolas' reference to the current difficult situation in Greece does not reflect his mother's view but only his father's ('*my father says…*'). The (adult) male's voice is therefore naturalised and normalised as the official voice of the family, especially as far as public affairs are concerned, while the female's voice is non-existent; the female is here a gender in mutation, as Simone de Beauvoir would contend (see Butler, 1990). Second, eternalisation naturalises and normalises, through the euphemisation of 'difficult but right decisions', the neoliberal policies of austerity and their severe social impact, such as the dramatic fall in people's income, cuts in pensions, and galloping unemployment (see Cavero,

2013). At the same time, however, by reducing neoliberalism to austerity qua necessary difficulties, eternalisation leaves unquestioned the other aspect in the neoliberal agenda of Samaras' government: the commitment to structural reforms in the public sector and labour market as a way out from the clientelist pathogenies of the Greek state, on which the government did not deliver with the same promptness as it did on austerity (Trantidis, 2016).

The Conservatives' symbols of communitarianism and moral sovereignty, on the other hand, are recontextualized through the spatiotemporal indeterminacy of schooling ritualism. As with the young boys who play football in a public square, there is nothing temporal or historical about young girls attending school. Moreover, the documentary dramatism as mode of presentation (in the leader-girls interaction) tends by itself, as noted in the previous chapter, to produce an indeterminate spacetime. Hence, the pedagogical politics of belonging to one-nation Conservatism is given an eternal, universal-axiomatic status. Indeed, Cameron refers to the protection of the vulnerable and the rewarding of hard work and doing-the-right-thing as the *sine qua non* of a good individual life ('*I want every child in our country to have a great start in life* [and that] *means making sure that in our country we protect the vulnerable and reward those who work hard and do the right thing*'), construing the link between communitarian moralism and self-fulfilment as an always-existing and everlasting one. Consequently, recontextualization acts as *eternalisation*, reifying the patriarchal and neoliberal contingencies of one-nation Conservatism.

Eternalisation entails the reification of a masculinist-patriarchal archetype of morality not by excluding and silencing women's voice, as it does in ND's broadcast, but by romanticising femininity – the nostalgic innocence of the ingénue – in a way that renders masculinity, what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) would call, femininity's 'constitutive outside'. As I have already pointed out, nostalgic innocence, in its personification by the pretty little girls, points to a feminine fragility and vulnerability which is in urgent need of protection

(Cameron's verbal reference to the protection of the vulnerable is visually combined with close-ups to the smiling faces of the girls) – the protection that the (unnamed) strength and knowledge of a grown-up man can offer. The patriarchal theme is not alien to imaginaries of one-nation Conservatism; it has rather been a prominent feature since the time of Disraeli and Salisbury (Ramsden, 1998). The paradox is that it is Cameron's re-invention of one-nation Conservatism which has attempted a disengagement from this theme, thanks to some progressive initiatives, as for instance with respect to gay rights. What has been at odds with earlier visions of one-nation Conservatism is neoliberalism – installed as one of its pillars only under Thatcher (Marquand, 2008) – the silencing/a-historicisation of which, in this broadcast, serves to effectively reproduce a certain neoliberal order. By establishing an axiomatic relationship between communitarian moralism and individual self-fulfilment, recontextualization qua eternalisation entails what Giroux has described as the reduction of public pedagogy to an 'ensemble of […] forces whose aim is to produce competitive, self-interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain' (2004, p.497), and, in so doing, it contributes to reifying the neoliberal logic of individualism and utilitarianism.

Summing up, in its (quasi) dialogicality, the cinéma-vérité establishes an aesthetic regime of ritualism which rests with the school-based (Conservative) and game-based (ND) pedagogy, as it is exercised in the personal interaction between the leader and the layperson. It is this pedagogical interpersonality which both suspends the charismatic and ordinary selves of the (disciplined) leader and layperson (pupil and player), respectively, and recasts them as manifestations (leader-coach and layperson-learner/trainee) of a transcendental collective self (one-nation Conservatism and reborn Greece), thereby giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the pedagogical politics of belonging. This pedagogical politics eternalises symbols of communitarian solidarity and moral sovereignty from the Conservatives' past and symbols of paternalist modernisation from ND's, in the frame of an anxiety-vulnerable hope

of nostalgic innocence and an anxiety-aversive masculinist hope, respectively. In doing so, it enacts a liberal-conservative agency of communitarian moralism and a conservative agency of national palingenesis which serve to reify patriarchy – as either necessary protection of vulnerable femininity (Conservative) or the only voice that matters in the public debate (ND) – and neoliberalism – as either the individualism and utilitarianism of self-fulfilment (Conservative) or the difficult but right decision of fiscal austerity (ND).

The ritualism of the political rally and the ironic politics of belonging

The ironic as an aesthetic quality of (rally) ritualism

Unlike the interpersonal interactivity in the Conservatives' and ND's cinéma-vérité broadcasts, Labour's and SYRIZA's are structured by the non-dialogicality of mass interactivity. Here the focus is not the interaction between the leader and a relatively small-sized *group* of laypersons but between the leader and a large-scale *mass* of laypersons-supporters. The difference is not only one of size but, primarily, one of multi-layered dynamics of interactivity. In the 'interpersonal' context of cinéma-vérité, the leader interacts with the whole group as a self-existing entity, a collectivity which existed as such prior to its interaction with the leader and will continue to exist after this interaction – like the class group in the Conservatives' broadcast and the football-playing group in ND's. In the 'mass' context of cinéma-vérité, on the contrary, the leader not only does not he always interact with a collectivity as a whole, but also when he does, it is not with a collectivity as a self-existing entity. As I wish to argue, within what we loosely call 'mass interaction' there are interwoven three distinct but overlapping 'layers' of interactivity: the *mass*, *mass-self*, and *self* interactivity.

Mass interactivity appertains to the interaction between the leader and the layperson as an audience in its entirety, which is rendered possible only on the basis of content produced for the many and circulated to the many (McQuail, 2010), such as Miliband's speech to Labour

campaign activists or party supporters and Tsipras' speech to a convention of the European Left (footage displayed on TV monitors) or his address to SYRIZA supporters. In all these cases, the layperson as a mass does not exist prior to the interaction with the leader and will not exist as such thereafter; it is constituted as a mass by virtue of, and only within the context of, an interactivity which is structured by and organised around 'the institutionalized production and generalized diffusion of symbolic goods via fixation and transmission of information or symbolic content' (Thompson, 1995, p.26).

Mass interactivity, however, is only one layer, and a rather superficial one, of what I understand here as leader-layperson mass interaction. The people's passion, the cheers and applause with which they welcome the leader, as when Miliband gets off the campaign bus or when he enters the convention venue and when Tsipras walks amid crowds of supporters, cannot be adequately understood as aspects of the distant, pre-structured and fixated, mass interactivity. Beyond the scripted speech and edited audio-visual material of public address, there is the 'unscripted' conversation and 'unedited' contact with the leader, such as the handshaking-hugging (while Miliband and Tsipras make their way to the podium) and the self-generated photo/video-opportunities (as when people take pictures of Miliband on their mobile phones), before he assumes the role of the speaker or after that. Rather than being produced for and circulated to the many, the content of such this mass-self interactivity is produced by and for each one separately while is circulated to the many (Castells, 2009).

Finally, both the content produced for/circulated to the many of mass interactivity and the content produced by/for the one and circulated to the many of mass-self interactivity provide the basis for deliberation and reflexive re-organisation of the self (Thompson, 1995). Moments of reflection are possible for both the layperson, as in Labour's cinéma-vérité when camera zooms in on the nodding head of one of the people in Miliband's audience[5], and the leader, as in the scenes where Miliband appears alone in his Westminster office, in a car looking

out through the window, and in the backstage area of the convention just before he enters the stage; as well as in the close-ups to Tsipras' upward-looking face while he walks in the street, just before he is surrounded by the people. Arguably, this self-interactivity gives the impression that the leader reflects back on his contact-interaction with ordinary people, on what he has learnt from it for instance, or that he prepares himself for this contact, e.g. for how to address people's concerns and expectations.

All these three overlapping layers of interactivity can be said to grasp, in their perceptive realism, different moments of a *political rally*: mass interactivity refers to the moment of staged performance, when the leader is on stage and/or audio-visual material is played out on TV monitors; mass-self interactivity refers to the moments before or after the performance, when rally-participants have the chance to come closer to the leader, shake his hand and take a photo with him; self-interactivity refers to these pre-or-post-performance moments and those during the performance when both the leader and his supporters engage in a process of self-reflection triggered by the staged performance and their off-stage contact. Along with the verbal descriptions that correspond to them ('*We are the optimists in this campaign* […] *everyone could hope onto victory*' – Miliband's address to Labour activists; '*Can we count on your support in the election?/Sure, you can sir*' – Miliband's chat with a person in the street; '*We've developed the policies, the programme, and now I feel ready, I feel ready to offer myself as Prime Minister*' – Miliband's voice playing over 'Westminster scenes'; '*On January 26th, Greece...*' – independent voice playing over Tsipras' 'walking scenes'), these imageries-rally moments establish the indexical meaning of the leader-layperson mass interaction which is none other than: *an election campaign is underway*.

At the same time, in their co-articulation as affective dynamics of the same performative continuum-genre, the three layers of interactivity bring together and integrate distinct aesthetic regimes of authenticity/charisma (the ordinary and defiant personae) and

intimacy/ordinariness (the celebrity persona) in a rally ritualism, the collectivising dynamic of which is no longer the pedagogy but the *narcissistic irony*. Let me explain. In their juxtaposition, the scenes of mass and self-interactivity create the impression of an uninterrupted continuity between the leader's public and private moments, thereby reintroducing the viewer-spectator to the authentic personae of the realistically similar to us Miliband and the idealistically similar to us Tsipras. Miliband appears onstage, in his address to Labour activists and party supporters, as he appears offstage, in his moments of self-reflection, that is, with this 'clumsiness and geekiness' that comprise his imperfect ordinariness (see chapter five), and in both cases he refers, more or less, to the same thing: his readiness to fight for the people who need it (address to party supporters: '*and when people ask who will **fight for the future of our country**, say 'call on me', call on me **to restore hope for our young people**, call on me **to fight for the national health service**';* in car: '*It's been a hard road to shape a new plan but **we are ready** and the issues are clear*'; in the convention backstage: '*I'm not on the side of the richest and most powerful, **I'm on the side of the people who don't have it easy** in this country. For the people who don't have it easy, I want a fair shake*').

A similar onstage-offstage congruence can be observed in Tsipras' performance; always without a tie, his stylistic act of defiance – not only during his walk in the city but also in the formal address to the convention of the European Left and the meeting with the president of the European parliament, Martin Schulz – Tsipras looks exuberantly determined and optimistic as usual (see chapter five), whether this is his erect posture and intense gesturing in the footage from the convention address or his slightly raised head and smile of confidence in the shots from the city walk.

If the juxtaposition of mass with self-interactivity reintroduces the charismatic personae of the ordinary and defiant leader, the juxtaposition of mass-self with self-interactivity reintroduces the ordinary persona of the celebrity, as authentically intimate – the affective

effect of the performativity of confession (see chapter six) – but also *narcissistic* – the affective effect of the *performativity of photojournalism*. The performativity of confession is more pertinent to Labour's than SYRIZA's cinéma-vérité, mainly because the leader's personal voice (central to the act of self-disclosure) is absent from the latter. Miliband's confession is concerned with the alienation of traditional political institutions and politicians themselves from the politics of everyday life – while the viewer is watching footage from Miliband's canvassing moments around the country (his visits to people's homes and his brief chats with passers-by in the street), she also listens to him saying in voiceover: '*If you escape from Westminster, you get such a different picture; so often the House of Commons just does not speak to the reality of people's lives'*. A bit later, when he is in the car on the way back from canvassing, Miliband critically reflects, in another confessional moment, particularly on his party's alienation: '*I ran for the leadership cause I believed I was the best person to move us on from New Labour. I knew we had to get back in touch with the concerns of the working people'*.

Beyond the intimacy of confession, however, there is the glamour of public apotheosis that both Miliband and Tsipras enjoy during the contact with their supporters. Instrumental to the aesthetic amplification of this apotheosis is the banal frenzy of photographers and photo-reporters in capturing the perfect shot of the unfolding rally-drama, or what Borges-Rey (2017) calls the 'performativity of photojournalism', which here inserts the leader-layperson mass interaction into the realm of paparazzi celebritism. In doing so, the performativity of photojournalism re-signifies the leader-supporter relationship as a relationship between the celebrity and his fan, at the very time that it re-signifies the celebrity performance itself. From an individualised performance of self-disclosure, to which the viewer can empathically relate (see chapter six), the celebrity is now turned into a totalised performance of self-apotheosis; a rally ritual in which the viewer is narcissistically immersed[6].

What I mean here is that the leader/celebrity-layperson/fan relationship re-emerges, through the rally ritual, as a self-directed and self-interested one, a relationship from which the former gains the reaffirmation of himself as likable and popular figure and the latter the satisfaction of demystifying the leader, and therefore reaffirming her likeness to him. In other words, rally ritualism foregrounds a sense of belonging which is not predicated on shared and unifying high values or beliefs – the erstwhile grand narratives of an allegedly pure ideological politics (see chapter one) – but on a narcissist emotionality (of melancholy and enthusiasm, as I shall show later on) and the ironic rejection of 'grand narratives' this narcissism entails (Chouliaraki, 2013). Hence, rally ritualism, in its photojournalistic performativity, takes us from the confessional-reconciliatory celebrity politics of everyday life to the *narcissistic-ironic celebrity politics of belonging*.

To be more specific, rally ritualism, in Labour's and SYRIZA's cinéma-vérité broadcasts, integrates both the leaders' missions of changing people's lives (Miliband) and vindicating the non-privileged (Tsipras), and the ordinary people's everyday concerns (e.g. about the NHS in Britain) and claims (e.g. employment and dignity in Greece), envisaging a mass movement in which leader and laypersons join forces to fight for an overarching goal, such as a 'fair shake' in British society and the 'return of hope' to Greek society (Miliband's address to Labour supporters: *'Today **I call on you**, let's go out and build the future **together**';* independent voice playing over scenes of Tsipras-crowd interaction: *'On January 26th, Greece will be **a country of hope for everyone'**).* More than a means of election campaigning, the rally has now become an icon of *an insurgent mass movement*. It is about a self-motivated and largely self-referential movement, though.

What encourages the viewer to trust Miliband's and Tsipras' readiness to fight for the people is not a commitment to a socialist manifesto, for example (even Miliband's implied redistribution of wealth – the fair shake – is far from this), nor even a broad claim of allegiance

to Labourism and radical leftism, respectively. It is, instead, Miliband's personal record of opposing organised corporate interests ('*When you've got Rupert Murdoch against you or you've got the energy companies on your tail or you've got the banks against you, the question is: can you **stand up** and say this is the right thing to do?*') and Tsipras' personal influence on European institutions and officials (by exposing the viewer to a televised form of the footage form Tsipras' address to the convention of the European Left and his meeting with Martin Schulz – to footage as it is displayed on TV monitors rather than directly to the footage itself –, thereby presenting these activities as 'media events', SYRIZA's broadcast amplifies the appeal and gravity of Tsipras' European presence, which is further crystallised by the independent voiceover: '*we start the **real** negotiation, we set a **new** course together with Europe*'). The mass movements owe their dynamic, in other words, to Miliband's courage of standing up against big business, what a Huffington post reporter has titled as 'six wars waged by the Labour leader' (Bennett, 2014), and to Tsipras' elevated status in Europe, especially after his nomination by the European Left as its candidate for president of the European Commission (Horvat, 2014).

Anti-foundational/ant-essentialist and narcissistic as it is, the ironic politics of rally ritualism may not invite the viewer to think about belonging in terms of shared grand narratives, but it does invite her to do so in terms of institutional symbolisms, particularly symbols of *populism*. If the construction of the 'people' as an (socially) undifferentiated and indivisible ensemble of non-privileged/oppressed, and in an antagonistic relationship with a vilified establishment, is the ineliminable core of populist discourse (Freeden, 2017; Laclau, 2005), then both Miliband's and Tsipras' ironic politics of belonging can be said to recontextualize populist symbolisms from their parties' past.

Labour's rally ritualism envisages a movement that overruns the parliamentary establishment (see above on the critique of party alienation), becoming movement of the people

(not of the 'working class', for example, but abstractly and loosely of the '*working people',* the '*people who don't have it easy*') against the '*richest and most powerful*' (e.g. Murdoch, energy companies and banks) – the establishment. It envisages a movement of insurgent populism built up on symbolisms of anti-establishment and anti-parliamentarianism from the party's tradition of democratic republicanism (see chapter four).

SYRIZA's rally ritualism, on the other hand, envisages a movement which not only stands, indiscriminately, for all Greek people ('*Greece will be a country of hope for everyone*') but is also set to 'shake up' the European establishment. SYRIZA's broadcast gives visual salience to the European parliament (full-screen shots of the relevant TV-displayed footage) while it starkly ignores (visually and verbally) the 'Troika' of the European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund, with which previous Greek governments had to negotiate (and with which Tsipras' government will eventually do). More than authenticating the verbal reference to the 'real negotiation' (see above), this visual choice of inclusion (European parliament)-exclusion (Troika) comes to interpret it in a very specific way: a real post-election negotiation would not include the unelected technocratic elites of Brussels, denounced as undemocratic and even 'dictatorial' by some in the party, but only the democratically elected European institutions (see also Keating, 2015). Hence, SYRIZA's rally ritualism envisages a mass movement of Eurosceptic populism which recalls, once again, the ethno-populist symbol of resistance from the party's re-invented past (see chapter four). Let me now examine this recontextualizing dynamic of the ironic politics of belonging in more depth, considering the forms of agency and ordering it enacts within a broader context of socio-institutional arrangements.

The ironic as a recontextualizing practice of melancholic and enthusiastic temporalisation

As I noted in chapter four, both the populist strand of democratic republicanism (anti-establishment) and ethno-populism of resistance (vindication of non-privileged) have played

their parts in shaping modern British and Greek politics, respectively. However, it is only in SYRIZA's case that the overwhelming capitalisation on and extensive appropriation of populist symbolisms has been the key (as I have tried to show so far in this thesis) to a tremendous electoral success and political consolidation (in the Left). By contrast, the Labour party gained electoral and broader political prominence only after it was clear that anti-establishment/anti-parliamentarian radicalism was peripheral to its ideational mantra; after Labour had embraced parliamentarianism as a means of pursuing change within the limits of liberal democracy (Thorpe, 2001). This historical-institutional caveat is important if we are to understand, the analytical argument I make below, that while in SYRIZA's case the recontextualization of populist symbolisms is emotionally channelled into enthusiasm, in Labour's is channelled into melancholy.

Although Tsipras as PM would have to deal with a formidably difficult post-election reality in Greece – galloping unemployment and poverty on the one hand, and a hard negotiation with Europe on the other – his job is not envisioned as at all difficult in SYRIZA's cinéma-vérité broadcast. It seems, on the contrary, that everything is on track, planned, and ready to be set in motion, that the new era has already begun, as the use of the present tense in the independent voiceover implies ('*We **start** the real negotiation, we **set** a new course together with Europe'*). It also seems that only one more step is left before hope makes history, as Tsipras himself put it in his personal address to the Greek people (see chapter five). In line with this unbridled optimism, the rally ritual, in all its three overlapping moments of interactivity – the mass, mass-self and self-interactivity – is completely freed from any sign of anxiety. Images are dazzlingly bright (in the outdoor scenes because of the natural light of the sun that almost blurs the close-ups to Tsipras' face and in the indoor scenes because of the camera flashes) and Tsipras himself appears progressively happier in each new scene (from the slight smile in his self-reflective moments, to the wide one when he is surrounded by people, to the huge little-

kid-smile in the last scene of the ad when he has managed to reach the podium). After all, the claim that '*Greece will be a country of hope for everyone*' is not a future-oriented hope, with some level of uncertainty, but an already-celebrated narcissistic certainty (thanks to Tsipras' status in Europe) which therefore generates *enthusiasm*.

Such certainty is absent from Labour's rally ritual, not only because Miliband's smiling moments are fewer and less intense than Tsipras', but also because Miliband remains until the end a *lonely* figure. Miliband's portrait-broadcast is, as Bradshaw has insightfully written in the Guardian (2015), 'on Ed Miliband's loneliness, the solitude of power and responsibility'. While a portrait is usually the projection of a third person's perception of the protagonist, this one does not involve anyone else – relative (only his wife appears in a few shots) or colleague – who could shed light on the leader's personality. It is more of a self-portrait, as actually Miliband talks about himself, giving the impression that the leader is in it all alone, as if nobody else, not even his brother (against whom he ran for the party leadership), could inspire a movement that would help Labour find its *lost* true self again. '*I ran for the leadership cause I believed I was the best person to* **move us on** *from New Labour. I knew we had to* **get back in touch** *with the concerns of the working people*'. The sense of loss is clear in this self-reflection; the moving on from New Labour is interpreted as getting back to something that has been lost, such as the touch with the people, or the everyday politics outside Westminster and other elite sites of power. What is not clear is why this 'politics' has been lost and how important it was before it got lost.

This unjustified and unevaluated, therefore unprocessed and repressed (unmourned), loss generates *melancholy,* a 'Left melancholy' as Walter Benjamin has called it, signalling

> not only a refusal to come to terms with the particular character of the present, that is, a failure to understand history in terms other than "empty time" or "progress". It signifies as well a certain narcissism with regard to one's past political attachments and identity that exceeds any contemporary investment in particular mobilization, alliance, or transformation (Brown, 1999, p.20).

From this viewpoint, Labour's rally ritualism is narcissistically melancholic. It imagines a loss which reflects more the leader's personal attachments (e.g. his opposition to the privileged few), and therefore his ability to offer to the party nothing but what these attachments allow him to offer (a movement of insurgent populism), rather than what the party has actually 'lost' (if anything). The lost object (touch with the people, extra-institutional politics) is prevented from being traced in the institutional past (on the contrary, is located in the institutional present as we shall see below), as it had a rather peripheral and marginal place in the party's history (see earlier on about populist anti-establishment/anti-parliamentarianism), and this is the reason it has remained largely unmourned.

Enthusiasm and melancholy are two antithetic emotions in the same system of appraisal – 'this system generates moods of enthusiasm or elation as our personal tasks and social activity succeed and generates moods of melancholy or depression as we experience failure' (Marcus and Mackuen, 1993, p.673) – the emotiocognition of disposition which gives rise to partisan agency (see chapter three). Enthusiasm is the emotion of acceleration, it does not allow time for careful consideration of the different options but calls for immediate action sutured to the party line (Marcus, 2013). It urges therefore the centre-Left, mainly former PASOK voters, who believe that a substantially better re-negotiation with Europe is possible, to embrace Tsipras' Eurosceptic populism without hesitation. Melancholy, on the other hand, is the emotion of obsession, it does not allow forward-moving but ensnares in backward-looking (Brown, 1999), thereby urging the disillusioned (with New Labour) Left hardliner voters to unconditionally join Miliband's insurgent populism.

Unlike the Conservatives' and ND's hope, which is attuned to a spatiotemporally indeterminate mode of recontextualization, bearing the ordering effect of eternalisation, Labour's melancholy and SYRIZA's enthusiasm are caught up in a spatiotemporal determinacy which bears the ordering effect of temporalisation. While the visual plane, in both parties'

broadcasts, does not contain any specific spatiotemporal registers – in Labour's banners, for example, someone can see only the party logo and the slogan 'better plan, better future' and in SYRIZA's 'mediations' only the figure of Martin Schulz could be said to involve a temporal reference – the verbal one, Miliband's voiceover and direct address and the independent voiceover in SYRIZA's broadcast, comes to delimit imagery to the *national present*. The very first phrase spoken by Miliband in the opening of his broadcast-portrait (his self-reflective moments in the House of Commons), which acts like a lead-in to the main part of the portrait, sets the temporal dimension of the rally ritual – '*I feel that the **last four and a half years** have been leading up to this moment*'. Additionally, the verbal references to Britain ('*when working people succeed, **Britain succeeds***'; '*We know **Britain can do better** than this*'), against a visual backdrop of mass-self and mass interactivity (crowds of supporters-fans and photo-reporters surround the leader as he gets off the campaign bus; Miliband at the podium addressing Labour voters), set the spatial dimension of the rally ritual. This spacetime of national present gives the impression that Miliband's movement of insurgent populism is a movement that has been 'incubated' in Britain for the last four and a half years.

Recontextualization therefore acts as *temporalisation* here; it reconstitutes symbols of anti-establishment/ant-parliamentarianism as products of Miliband's recent, personal, and lonely fight against Britain's big interests, misrecognising that similar reanimations of populism have been attempted in the past without success, as during the short turn to the Eurosceptic Left in the early 1980s (Thorpe, 2001). In doing so, temporalisation throws into relief the very ambivalence that characterises Labour's ironic politics of belonging. On the one hand, the melancholic reference to the loss of contact with ordinary people speaks to the popular critique of over-centralisation of political power under the New Labour administrations (see Atkins, 2011; Marquand, 2008). On the other hand, the narcissistic 'crusade' against big interests, by being self-centred and present-bounded, removes the necessary socio-historical

marks that would differentiate Miliband's movement of insurgent populism from other left-and-right-wing populisms, particularly the rising xenophobic populism (spearheaded by UKIP at that time). Arguably, the fact that non-white backgrounds are conspicuous by their absence in Labour's rally ritual is a worrying sign of this failure to differentiate (or success in non-differentiating) populisms.

In SYRIZA's broadcast, a similar spatiotemporal frame of national present is set by the independent voiceover which plays on the scenes of mass-self (Tsipras among the crowd of supporters) and mass (Tsipras at the podium ready to address SYRIZA supporters) interactivity: '*On **January 26ᵗʰ**, **Greece** will be a country of hope for everyone*'. The rally ritual prepares the viewer for a historic and long-awaited moment in the near future, the moment Tsipras' movement of Eurosceptic populism will triumph, bringing hope back to the Greek people. Recontextualization also acts here as *temporalisation* construing ethno-populist resistance as a sign of Tsipras' recently rising star in Europe. In doing so, it misrecognises that Eurosceptic populism was extensively employed in the past, initially by PASOK in the late 1970s and 1980s (as an unapologetic anti-European/anti-Western and anti-Right movement, see Pappas, 2014), and, unlike Labour's unsuccessful attempt almost at the same time (in the erly 1980s), it was employed with great electoral-political success.

The ambivalence of the ironic politics of belonging is also pertinent to SYRIZA's rally ritualism. On the one hand, the enthusiastic call for shaking up the European establishment joins a broader critique of lack of political integration in the EU, pictured in the widening gap between the Berlin-Brussels axis and the European South, as well as of the power imbalance between the (technocratic/non-directly elected) European Commission and the (directly elected) European Parliament (Landesmann, 2015). On the other hand, the narcissistic renegotiating potential of Eurosceptic populism deprives Tsipras' movement of these sociohistorical referents, particularly anti-Rightism, which – albeit polarising and reminiscent

of PASOK – could have borne witness to those who suggest that SYRIZA's (allegedly) 'inclusive and democratic' populism must not be conflated with the 'undemocratic and authoritarian' populisms of other (far) right-wing parties (see Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014). Ironically for them, SYRIZA has chosen one of these parties (the ultra-traditionalist/socially conservative and deeply anti-immigration ANEL – see Dearden, 2015) as its governmental partner twice (after both the January and September 2015 elections).

To sum up, the cinéma-vérité establishes, in its non-dialogicality, an aesthetic regime of ritualism which rests with the various interactive dynamics of the political rally. It is this rally ritualism which both recasts the leader-layperson mass interaction as celebrity-fan interaction and reconstitutes the latter as a manifestation of the totalised narcissistic experience of joining a mass movement (Labour's insurgent populism and SYRIZA's Eurosceptic populism), thereby giving rise to a private-public coagulation: the ironic politics of belonging. Ironic politics temporalises populist symbolisms from both Labour's (anti-parliamentarianism/anti-establishment) and SYRIZA's (ethno-populism of resistance) pasts in a narcissistically melancholic and enthusiastic frame, respectively. By virtue of this recontextualzing dynamic, the ironic politics of belonging is able to make a partisan call to disillusioned British (melancholy) and Eurosceptic Greek (enthusiasm) voters of the Left, acting, on the one hand, as a critique against liberal technocratic politics but failing to address the authoritarian propensities of populism, on the other.

The ritualism of the (imminent and avoided) disaster and the apocalyptic politics of belonging

The neutral reporter genre of political advertising differs significantly from the other three generic rubrics I have examined so far in this thesis, in the sense that neither the leader nor a celebrity are the protagonists of the spectacle anymore, as they were in the leader's talking head and the celebrity testimonial, respectively, and the layperson, if present, has a peripheral

and tangential performative presence, rather than the 'structural' one she had in the lay testimonial and the cinéma-vérité. Beyond the authenticity of charisma, the intimacy of ordinariness, and their interplay, the neutral reporter introduces to the performativity of political advertising an *ecstatic impersonalisation*. Let me explain in some more detail what I mean by *ecstatic* and *impersonalisation* with reference to the two neutral reporter broadcasts that are available in the election advertising campaigns examined in this thesis, one by the Conservative Party and one by SYRIZA.

The apocalyptic as an aesthetic quality of (disaster) ritualism

Beginning with impersonalisation, the neutral reporter genre confronts the viewer with an imagery in which humans are absent or marginally present. In the case of absence, humans are replaced by representations of material things, like the clock mechanism in the Conservatives' broadcast, or images of the universe and other extra-terrestrial activities, like the image of an asteroid passing close by the earth in SYRIZA's. In the case of marginal presence, humans stand just as random individuals – not empathetic or sympathetic personae – whom the viewer can distantly observe, as is the case with the panoramic or long shots of people walking in the city streets, travelling to work or going to school, etc. in SYRIZA's broadcast.

Overall, in the neutral reporter, both humans/human activities and things/unhuman entities matter as visual observations and verbal descriptions (voiceover) made by a third-independent observer/reporter. Contra to the leader's voiceover, which involves the personal description of a mission (see chapter five) and the layperson's voiceover, which involves the personal description of everyday life (see chapter six), the independent observer's voiceover involves the impersonal description of 'facts', such as the facts related to the economic achievements under the Conservative administration ('*We now have an economy where every day there are 500 more businesses. A thousand jobs are created. We have more people in work than ever before, wages are rising faster than prices, and last year, ours was Europe's fastest-*

growing major economy’) and those related to the post-election life in Greece (‘*On January 26th, an asteroid will pass close by the earth, the sun will rise at 7.34, shops and banks will open after 8. Parents will continue to worry about their children’s grades*’). Here, ‘the intended *impression* is one of neutrality’, as McNair puts it (2007, p.97, emphasis original): the impression that the independent observer simply conveys factual descriptions, that she is a *neutral* reporter. This descriptive neutrality of impersonalisation invites the viewer to perceive what she sees represented, that is, a clock mechanism (Conservatives) and different aspects of city life (SYRIZA), as indexes of the British working economy (economy works like a finely tuned clock) and Greek post-election normality (business as usual in the day after the election), respectively.

If the perceptive realism of impersonalisation appertains to the performative neutrality of the independent reporter’s observations, its affective realism appertains to the *ecstatic* character of these observations. Impersonalisation constitutes an ecstatic performance ‘in the sense that it breaks with our ordinary conception of time as a swift flow of “now” moments and presents us with *truly historic* time, “moments when a minute lasts a lifetime, or when a week seems to fly by in next to no time”’ (Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 377). What is ecstatic about the impersonalising performance of the clock mechanism, in the Conservatives’ broadcast, is this sense of the ‘lifetime-lasting minute’; a sense of prolonged time created by the slow-motion technique of visual editing, in conjunction with a music of agony, allowing the viewer to closely observe the micro-functions of the cogs in the clock mechanism (an activity that normally is too fast-running to be carefully observed). ‘Slow motion [relay] not only alters our perceptions of the action [it reviews], but also establishes our expectations’, as Whannel has noted (1992, p.98). In this case, it establishes the expectation of something bad (music of agony) which, indeed, happens in the end: the clock is smashed by a hammer.

In SYRIZA's broadcast, on the other hand, what is ecstatic about the impersonalising performance of the panoramic city views is not a sense of prolonged but of fast-forwarded time, as a result of the accelerated-motion editing technique, which makes it possible for a whole day, from night to sunrise to sunset, to pass before our eyes in a few seconds. Accelerated motion may represent action as jumpier, more erratic or even more comic than usual, as Zettl (2015) has noted, giving the impression, in conjunction with the quick shift (within the first two seconds of the ad) from a music of agony to a milder, more calming, eventually uplifting music, that something has happened but left behind no consequences: an asteroid approached the earth but passed without crashing into it.

Ecstatic is therefore the agonising anticipation of a catastrophic event (the smashing of the clock in slow motion) in the Conservatives' neutral reporter broadcast and the relieving return to normality after such an event has been narrowly avoided (the sequence of panoramic city shots, following the pass of the asteroid, in accelerated motion) in SYRIZA's. Overall, ecstatic impersonalisation constitutes the communicative mode of what Cottle (2006) calls 'disaster rituals'. 'Traumatic' and 'historically momentous' as they are (ibid), disasters comprise mediatized rituals not only because of their exceptionality but also because of their conventionalised performativity. As Baudrillard (2003) argued regarding the 9/11 terrorist attacks, they were historic and formidable disasters not only because something like that had not happened before in the most powerful country in the world, but also because the attacks as staged performances invoked a classic cinematic imagery and imaginary of 'World's End' and 'apocalypse', like those we encounter in disaster films, thereby amplifying the affective effect of the disaster.

SYRIZA's broadcast overtly draws on the performativity of the disaster film, especially in its opening 'Armageddonean scenes' – with the asteroid heading towards Earth – not to raise the danger of an impending disaster but to mock the 'false alarm' of the opponents'

catastrophism, the warning that SYRIZA's victory would be a disaster, a 'real Armageddon' for Greece (default, exit from EU, impoverishment of the country) (Smith, 2015b). Such a mockery can be traced in the observer's narration of the avoided disaster: '*on January 26th an asteroid will pass close by the earth* […] *but no family will have to worry about ending up on the streets*'. What is implied here is that the disaster would not come if SYRIZA won the election (the threat of the asteroid) as it is already happening due to the policies of austerity that fracture the country (people in danger of losing their homes); on the contrary, SYRIZA will terminate the 'real' disaster.

The Conservative's neutral reporter, on the other hand, establishes its disaster ritualism not by drawing on the conventionalities of the disaster film but on the party's own repertoire of disaster rituals from the past. The smashed clock is, arguably, reminiscent of the 1979 'queues of unemployed' and, even more, the 1992 'tax bombshell'; both negative ads with titles-slogans ('Labour isn't working' and 'Don't let Labour wreck it', respectively) similar to the one of the broadcast I examine here ('It's working, don't let them wreck it'). In opposition to SYRIZA's mockery of the (avoided) disaster, the Conservatives' broadcast warns about the threat of the (imminent) disaster that Labour's policies pose for Britain ('*In just a little time now you can decide who's going to run the country for the next five years* […] *on Thursday you can vote for all these to continue or on Friday morning wake up to Ed Miliband propped up by the SNP and find this…*'; the smashing of the clock follows). Consequently, by virtue of their implicit intertextuality-interdiscursivity, the smashing of the clock mechanism (intertextuality as activation of performative conventions from the disaster campaign repertoire) and the normality of city life in the aftermaths of the asteroid's pass (intertextuality as activation of performative conventions from the disaster film genre), more than neutral observations, operate as performances of a disaster ritualism each of which bears its own iconic meaning: the *imminent disaster* and the *avoided disaster*, respectively.

Interdiscursivity also allows for the 'major, often traumatic and, on occasion, historically momentous happenings' of disaster rituals to operate as imaginaries that 'circulate potent symbols, and invoke and/or mobilize solidarities' (Cottle, 2006, p.421). By this token, disaster ritualism is always imbricated with a politics of disaster, what Lilley et al. (2012) call 'catastrophism', which capitalises either on the threat of an imminent disaster, stressing the need to unite against a common enemy, or on the relief of a mocked, avoided disaster, stressing the need to unite against the real disaster that is going on. In a nutshell, disaster ritualism gives rise to an *apocalyptic politics of belonging*.

The Conservatives' apocalyptic politics unites people by inviting them to think of themselves as organic parts of a finely working system, like cogs in a clock mechanism – while the observer-reporter refers to the British people's hard work ('*thanks to the British people's hard work*') the camera zooms in on the cogs. At the same time, it invites them to think of the party as the safeguard of this system, like a handle that is necessary for the clock mechanism to be set in motion – while the observer-reporter refers to the Conservatives' mending role in the economy ('*Over the past five years, the Conservatives have taken on an economy that Labour left in ruins and started to mend it*'), the camera focuses on a human hand which attaches a handle to the mechanism. As in the leader's talking head discussed in chapter five (which actually comprises the second part of this election broadcast), the Conservatives' political duty is confined here to mending and fixing the broken socio-economic order when necessary, and preserving and conserving the fixed order for the rest of time. The clock mechanism stands, in other words, as a symbol of *organic order*, one of the most influential Tory nationalist symbolisms in the history of the Conservative party (see chapters four and five).

Turning to SYRIZA's ritualism of avoided disaster, here the apocalyptic politics unites people by inviting them to think of themselves as deceived by the Sirens of catastrophism, to

realise that they are being intimidated with the threat of a disaster that will never happen (default, Grexit, etc. – consequences of the anti-Memorandum policy) so as not to react and resist against the disaster that is already happening (loss of properties, poverty, etc. – consequences of the austerity policies of the Memorandum). It also unites them by urging them to think of this real disaster as affecting them all equally, and therefore of post-election normality as a vindication for all ('*society stands up straight*'): from factory workers (image of a gloved hand bottling olives) and farmers (image of a tractor ploughing the earth), to construction workers (image of a building under construction) and scientists (image of a medical laboratory). SYRIZA's post-election normality stands therefore as a symbol of the all-inclusive, undifferentiated and indivisible, *non-privileged who await their vindication*, the most prominent symbol of the ethno-populism of resistance (see chapters four and five).

In summary, the apocalyptic politics of belonging recontextualizes the Tory nationalist symbol of organic order (a sense of belonging to an organic system fostered by the threat of an imminent disaster) from the Conservatives' past and the ethno-populist symbol of vindication of the non-privileged (a sense of belonging to post-election normality instigated by the mocking of an avoided disaster and the unmasking of the real one) from SYRIZA's re-invented past. Let me now explore at greater length the emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal frames of these recontextualizations in an effort to understand the forms of agency and ordering that the apocalyptic politics of belonging enacts in each case, as well as their socio-institutional implications.

The apocalyptic as a recontextualizing practice of fearful and hopeful temporalisation

Chouliaraki has claimed that ecstatic mediations, what I understand here as the ecstatically impersonalising performativity of disaster ritualism, enact a form of *sovereign agency* which 'construes each actor […] as a thoroughly humanized and historical being – somebody who feels, reflects, and acts on his or her fate' (2008, p.378). The question that should concern us

therefore, regarding the agency-enacting aspect of recontextualization in disaster rituals, is how exactly the ecstatic spectator is invited to feel towards the disaster with which she is confronted, or how the affective energy of ecstatic impersonalisation is morphed into an emotional dynamic of the apocalyptic politics of belonging. As I wish to argue, the spectator of the imminent disaster is invited to feel the *fear* of resurgent socialism, while the spectator of the avoided disaster is invited to feel the *hope* of restored hedonism.

The slow motion in which both the internal function of the clock mechanism and the external force that destroys it are represented, in the Conservatives' broadcast, intensifies our agonising anticipation of an event that is not only unpleasant and upsetting but also 'absolute and irrevocable' (Baudrillard, 2003); after being smashed, the clock mechanism cannot be fixed or mended. From this point of view, the imminent disaster is not to be perceived just as a threat of economic collapse but, horrifically, as an existential danger for the organic order of British society; it causes fear. Historically, such a danger has been encountered in the Conservative vocabulary under the name of 'socialism' and/or 'communism' (Marquand, 2008), and history seems, surprisingly (for an otherwise decontaminated party brand), to repeat itself through the apocalyptic politics of belonging. Instead of the 'tax bombshell', for example, which symbolises the threat posed by Labour's economic policies and a danger of economic slump, the weapon of destruction in this broadcast is a hammer, one of the two symbols of communism. Hence, the threat here is the existential threat, a danger of national disorder and social corrosion, posed by socialism in general, by this 'worldview' that can unite Labour and the SNP in a catastrophic coalition ('*on Friday morning wake up to Ed Miliband propped up by the SNP and find this…*').

The Conservatives' disaster ritualism, by recontextualizing the symbol of organic order and its endemic anti-socialism/anti-communism, mobilises fear, an emotion related to heightened vigilance and therefore to an appraisal system that requires great attention to the

subject that causes fear (emotiocognition of surveillance): the resurgence of socialism. In doing so, disaster ritualism and its apocalyptic politics of belonging enact a *sovereign anti-socialist agency*, appealing not only to core Conservative and anti-Labour voters (partisan) but to all voters who oppose (and are afraid of) the 'catastrophic' ideas and practices of socialism and communism.

In SYRIZA's broadcast, the accelerated motion in which the panoramic city views are represented in the wake of the avoided disaster foreshadows the relief that the post-election reality will offer, by being not just normal but *ideally normal*. All the scenes of city life to which the viewer-spectator is exposed are largely embellished and beautified, involving stunning panoramic night shots of the city of Athens, daylight shots with crystal-bright colours, images of a modern apartment and a well-equipped laboratory. In a nutshell, the post-election normality has nothing to do with either the Armageddonean nightmare that SYRIZA's opponents falsely propagate, the avoided disaster, or the real anxieties and agonies that the policies of austerity have caused, the real disaster. Post-election normality is rather envisaged as an ideal normality, where both businesses will operate as usual ('*shops and banks will open after 8'*) and families will feel secure ('*no family will have to worry about ending up on the streets*'); neither will the former collapse under the burden of supporting the latter, nor will the latter have to make sacrifices for the benefit of the former.

Ideal normality is therefore deeply interwoven with a *hedonistic hope*, the hope that the post-election reality will somehow restore the pre-crisis imaginary of unconditional and undisrupted prosperity for all (the undifferentiated and indivisible whole of the non-privileged people), a prosperity without sacrifices and without anxiety (Triandafyllidou et al., 2013). Consequently, SYRIZA's disaster ritualism, by recontextualizing the symbol of vindication of the non-privileged and the social hedonism that lies in it, mobilises (hedonistic) hope, an emotion related to the search for more information about the subject that generates hope

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(emotiocognition of surveillance): the post-election ideal normality. In doing so, disaster ritualism and its apocalyptic politics of belonging enact a *sovereign hedonistic agency*, appealing not only to SYRIZA voters but also to all voters who are fed up with the domestic and foreign voices of catastrophism, still looking forward to getting their pre-crisis insouciant lifestyle back.

The sovereign agency (of anti-socialism and hedonism) with which the ecstatic impersonalisation of disaster ritualism confronts the spectator has its own spatiotemporal mode of operation, what Chouliaraki (2008) calls 'ecstatic chronotope', which help us understand, beyond the agency-enacting, the ordering capacity of the apocalyptic politics of belonging. To paraphrase Chouliaraki, the ecstatic chronotope involves 'a temporality that places [disaster] both in the order of "lived" experience and in the order of historical rupture' (2008, p.378). In doing so, the ecstatic chronotope draws attention to how disaster affects people's everyday life in the present or near future, specifically to the detrimental consequences of socialist resurgence (in Britain) and neoliberal policies of austerity (in Greece). At the same time, it stresses the rupture with the past that any disaster entails, such as the disruption of an order that has just been restored under great effort, in the case of the imminent disaster-resurgence of socialism (*'Over the **past five years** [...] thanks to the **British people's** hard work [...]'*), and the disruption-termination of a period of mass agony and deprivation, in the case of the mocked avoided disaster-restoration of ideal normality ('*On **January 26th**, the engines start and **society stands up straight**'*). In both neutral reporter broadcasts therefore recontextualization acts as (ecstatic) *temporalisation*.

In the Conservatives' broadcast, the ecstatic temporality of disaster ritualism recalls the restoration of order in the same manner that the remediation of the no-money note does in the leader's talking head (the second part of this broadcast): as a necessity and rationality of the last five years – Labour broke it so we had to fix it. It temporalises the symbol of restoration

of organic order identifying it with a safeguard of neoliberal order, as what Conservatives appear to have mended in the last five years is the macro-economic competitiveness of the country (*'ours was Europe's fastest-growing major economy'*) more than its micro-economic/living standards and social infrastructure (i.e. public services) (see Lee, 2015). At the same time, ecstatic temporality legitimises neoliberalism and anti-socialism/anti-communism by mystifying links to the (Thatcherite) past that would expose the restoration of order not as necessity-positivity of the present but as a historically precarious discursivity, and its neoliberal and anti-socialist aspects not as temporal rationalities but as socio-historically (institutionally) contingent 'discursive strategies' (Fairclough, 2005).

In SYRIZA's broadcast, the ecstatic temporality of disaster ritualism imagines the post-election restoration of ideal normality as a rationality and necessity against the current 'insanity' and 'cruelty' of austerity, what Tsipras has even characterised a 'humanitarian crisis' (Chu, 2015). By this token, 'January 26th', the day after the election, which is repeated over and over again throughout the broadcast, is anticipated with great (hedonistic) hope as an historic day, something like a new 'Independence Day' for Greece; the day that signals the historic vindication of non-privileged people. Recontextualization acts therefore as *temporalisation* of the symbol of ethno-populist resistance, 'forgetting' that before the 26th of January (2015), the 18th of October (1981) – when PASOK won an election for the first-time – was also celebrated by many as the day of the historic vindication of the non-privileged. It forges, in other words, a dissimulative sense of discontinuity with the past which, I wish to argue, undermines both the radical and the anti-neoliberal agenda of SYRIZA.

On the one hand, temporalisation reduces the notion of 'vindication' to the restoration of pre-crisis normality, and therefore to the reproduction of a hedonistic imaginary of prosperity and growth (see earlier on) which is responsible for several pathologies of Greek society, such as disdain for institutions (institutions as obstacles to what must be an easy and

uncontrolled upward social mobility) and reforms (reforms as unnecessary inconvenience and even a threat to vested interests-privileges) (Pappas, 2014). On the other hand, although temporalisation draws our attention to the recent widening of inequalities that rising poverty and unemployment have encouraged (the real disaster), putting into question the neoliberal policies of austerity, it leaves unquestioned the asymmetries that the non-differentiation and indivisibility of the 'non-privileged people' sustains and reproduces. In its classic populist dichotomisation of society (people vs elites-establishment), the discursive construction of the non-privileged mystifies the impossibility of the all-inclusiveness it promises; it mystifies, in other words, the fact that inequalities exist not only between the privileged few/elites and the non-privileged many/people but also among the non-privileged many, primarily thanks to clientelist networks of distribution of jobs and benefits (Featherstone and Papadimitriou, 2008). Ultimately, the vindication of the non-privileged may not vindicate those who have actually suffered the most from the crisis, thereby serving the neoliberal ordering at the moment that it claims to challenge it.

Summing up, by removing human interactivity (interpersonal and mass), the neutral reporter establishes an aesthetic regime of ritualism which rests with the ecstatic impersonality of the imminent (Conservative) and avoided (SYRIZA) disaster. It is this ecstatically impersonalising dynamic of disaster ritualism which radically suspends the charismatic persona of the leader and the ordinary persona of the layperson and celebrity, re-signifying, at the same time, exceptional, unprecedented, and traumatic events (such as the smashing of a clock mechanism and the close pass of an asteroid) as collective-total experiences generative of unities (such as a threatened organic system and ideal normality). In doing so, it gives rise to a private-public coagulation: the apocalyptic politics of belonging. This politics of belonging temporalises nationalist symbolisms from the Conservatives' past (restoration of organic order) and ethno-populist symbolisms from SYRIZA's re-invented past (vindication of the non-

privileged) in a frame of socialist fear and hedonist hope, respectively. By virtue of this recontextualizing dynamic, the apocalyptic politics is able to enact a sovereign anti-socialist agency, serving to mystify the link between restoration of order and the neoliberal ordering of British society, and a sovereign hedonist agency, serving to mystify the link between vindication of the non-privileged and the neoliberal reproduction of asymmetries-privileges in Greek society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to shed light on the discursive construction of political spectacle as it is carried out in the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter genres of political advertising. The cinéma-vérité introduces the spectacle as an interactive drama, consisting of the personal interaction between the leader and a group of laypersons or the multi-layered (mass, mass-self and self) interaction between the leader and a mass of laypersons. The neutral reporter introduces the spectacle as an ecstatically impersonalising phantasmagoria, the phantasmagoria of the total effacement or panoramic gazing of humans/human activities. More than unique and unprecedented, both the interactive drama and the impersonalising phantasmagoria are generically re-dissected as ritualistic and ritualised performances; performances that can be exceptional and conventional, individually exciting and collectively empowering, at the same time. The performative logic of these performances is regulated by different aesthetic regimes of ritualism, such as schooling and football-playing, rally, and disaster ritualism, all of which result, however, in the suspension of the individual-private self and its re-invention as a manifestation of a total-public self.

Schooling and football-playing ritualism, for example, embed the leader and the layperson in an interpersonal interaction with each other, suspending the charismatic and ordinary personae, respectively, for roles, such as the teacher or coach and the learner or

trainee, which exist only as part of a pedagogical process, particularly as manifestations of a national(ist) imaginary of public pedagogy: one-nation Conservatism (Conservative Party) and reborn Greece (ND). Rally ritualism, on the other hand, embeds the leader and laypersons in a mass interaction with each other, suspending the charismatic and ordinary personae, respectively, for the roles of celebrity and fan, while re-signifying them, at the same time, as manifestations of a narcissistic imaginary of joining the movements of insurgent (Labour) and Eurosceptic (SYRIZA) populism. Finally, disaster ritualism, by confronting us with its ecstatic impersonalisation, radically suspends the charismatic and ordinary personae for 'dehumanised' imageries, such as the smashing of a clock mechanism and panoramic city views in the aftermath of an asteroid's near-miss, which are reconstituted here as manifestations of an (catastrophic) imaginary of a threatened organic system (Conservatives) and a relieving ideal normality (SYRIZA), respectively.

Consequently, the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter genres dramatise politics but not in the sense of reducing it to the theatricality of media politainment (Meyer, 2002). The three different examples of mediatized spectacle I have discussed in this chapter are, indeed, exceptional and phantasmagorical performances which offer aesthetic pleasure. This exceptional and phantasmagorical aestheticity, however, far from being an idiom of certain media events, constitutes an affective and, by extension, symbolic effect of the performativity of ritualism – the individualising-totalising sense of belonging (e.g. the empathic or narcissistic interpersonality of the cinéma-vérité and the ecstatic impersonality of the neutral reporter). In their ritualization therefore the leader-layperson interpersonal and mass interaction and the dehumanised imageries are invested with a (each one its own) recontextualizing dynamic – what I have called pedagogical (in schooling and football-playing ritualism), ironic (in rally ritualism), and apocalyptic (in disaster ritualism) politics of belonging.

Each of these performative individualisations-totalisations bring to the present several symbolic fragments from the past, such as symbols of communitarian moralism and paternalist modernisation in the pedagogical, populist symbols in the ironic, and symbols of restoration of the organic order and vindication of the non-privileged in the apocalyptic politics of belonging. In doing so, they emotive-cognitively encourage us to recognise parties either as agents of a partisan populism (Labour's melancholy and SYRIZA's enthusiasm) or as nationalist, patriarchal (the Conservatives' hope of nostalgic innocence and ND's masculinist hope) and sovereign (the Conservatives' socialist fear and SYRIZA's hedonistic hope) agents. They also encourage us, by virtue of the spatiotemporal framing of recontextualization, to misrecognise the socio-institutional ordering that is associated with these forms of agency. Pedagogical politics, thanks to the eternalisation of nationalist symbolisms, reifies the individualist/utilitarianist-patriarchal (in the UK) and parsimonious-patriarchal (in Greece) culture of neoliberalism. Ironic politics, albeit critical of technocratic liberalism in the UK (Labour's critique) and Europe (SYRIZA's critique), mystifies the undemocratic/authoritarian backlash of populism (temporalisation of populist symbolisms), and, finally, apocalyptic politics mystifies the neoliberal repercussions of anti-socialism (Britain) – restoration of order in the service of free market – and hedonism (Greece) – vindication of the non-privileged to the benefit of the 'privileged' (temporalisation of nationalist and ethno-populist symbolisms).

Conclusion

Ideology in the age of mediatized politics and mediatization in the age of ideological politics

Both the January 2015 parliamentary election in Greece and the May 2015 general election in the UK had their 'clear' winners and losers, if not in numbers, then certainly in symbolic terms. Though short of a majority, SYRIZA ended up as the largest party in the Greek parliament (just over 36% of the popular vote and 149 seats) for the first time in its history, with its share of the vote doubled since the May 2012 election (Deloy, 2015). Defeating forecasts of a hung parliament, Conservatives won a majority in the UK for the first time in twenty-three years (331 seats and almost 38% of the popular vote), returning to power for a second consecutive term (Curtice, 2015). At the same time, ND survived the January 2015 contest with a slightly decreased share of votes compared to the previous election but with the smallest group of MPs it has ever had (76 seats), and Labour underwent a bitter defeat (30.5% of the popular vote and 232 parliamentary seats) comparable to those they suffered against Mrs Thatcher in the 1980s.

However historic and unexpected these election results were, few could have predicted at that time how they would shape the political agenda in the two countries for the months to come and, even fewer, how dramatically the political terrain would shift in the next two years. Even if Tsipras had pledged during the campaign that a SYRIZA government would effectively terminate the bailout agreements appended by the previous government and would renegotiate a new solution for Greece with Europe, without measures of austerity, many held the 'rationalist' view that SYRIZA would soften its approach after the election, most probably looking for a compromise instead of risking conflict (see Maltezou and Babington, 2014). Similarly, even if Cameron had pledged that a Conservative government would renegotiate Britain's position in the EU and would also hold an in-out referendum after the new settlement

was agreed, the whole issue remained largely under-discussed during the campaign, considered more, again rationalistically, as an 'innocuous concession' to Tory Eurosceptics (Kettle, 2016).

To the chagrin of moderates/rationalists, neither did Tsipras avoid conflict and polarisation in his post-election negotiations with Europe, nor did Cameron's new settlement prevent the referendum vote from being dominated by highly divisive and controversial issues. Just six months after the January election, the SYRIZA-led government in Greece, refusing to accept the terms and conditions set by the country's creditors for a new bailout agreement, called the Greek people to denounce them too through a 'fast-track' referendum (Aslanidis and Kaltwasser, 2016). In the wake of this unexpected unilateral movement, the European Commission rejected Tsipras' request for an extension of the expiring bailout agreement, forcing the government to close banks and impose capital controls in late June 2015 (Popper and Baboulias, 2015). Despite these dramatic developments, the clear majority of Greeks (61%) stood by their government, resoundingly rejecting the proposed agreement, only to see their PM, shortly after the referendum, accept a different (for some tougher) version of it. Tsipras' 'U-turn' enraged SYRIZA's backbenchers, and even some ministers, who decided to openly oppose the government, leaving him eventually with no option but to call an early election (the September 2015, which produced similar results to the previous election).

The British EU referendum, on the other hand, did not come as a surprise – Cameron had committed to holding it as early as in 2013 – and the issue at stake was not just the approval or rejection of an agreement with the EU but the country's entire EU membership. Although Cameron and his government called the British people to vote in favour of remaining in the EU, stressing the widely negative impact a potential Brexit would have on the country's economy, the tough campaign, dominated by highly divisive and controversial issues, such as immigration and national sovereignty, ended with 52% of the electorate voting to leave (Hobolt, 2016). Unsurprisingly, in the wake of this result, Cameron stepped down, triggering

a leadership contest which was finally won, unopposed, by his Home Secretary, Theresa May, in July 2016. In less than a year of being in office, May came to the conclusion that she needed a fresh mandate so as to effectively run the Brexit negotiations, calling therefore an early election for June 2017 (Asthana and Walker, 2017). Almost two years after winning a majority for the first time in two decades, Conservatives were embroiled in another electoral battle that resulted in losing it.

In the meantime, of course, opposition parties have not been left unaffected. After bitter defeats in the (British) general election and (Greek) bailout referendum, respectively, Miliband and Samaras resigned, triggering leadership contests in their parties. As a result, both Labour and ND would find themselves with leaders who have never been favourites with the centrist party 'establishment' (e.g. Blairites and Karamanlites, respectively), the fierce critic of elites and austerity, Jeremy Corbyn, and the fierce critic of populism and statism, Kyriacos Mitsotakis.

Do the 2015 election campaigns, particularly the advertising campaigns analysed in this thesis, have anything to tell us about these post-election developments? What can we learn from the stories political ads tell their viewers-voters in the context of electioneering about the *historicity* of socio-political processes that are underway beyond this context? By posing these questions, I do not imply that we could have predicted the political future; analysing the past is not about predicting but rather understanding the future, understanding that what may have surprised us is not necessarily unexpected and what we may find expectable is not necessarily a historical causality. As an intervention in this debate, what the current thesis has come to argue is that such a past-informed understanding of the present-future lies in the heart of what we call political ideology. Hence, the task of eliciting historical and historicising understandings, and critical explanations of these understandings, through the analysis of

election campaigning is tantamount to exploring the place and role of ideology in political communication.

To this exploration, my thesis has sought to contribute, first of all, *conceptually*, through a practice-discourse based paradigm that advocates an integrationist approach to ideology (as recontextualization of institutional symbolisms – chapter one) and mediatization (as self-subjection to institutional media performativity – chapter two), foregrounding an analytical interpretation of political communication as potentially ideological. Second, *analytically*, through an analytics of mediatization which seeks to understand how the recontextualizing mediatic practices are performed, textually-discursively (through different modes of presentation, visual-verbal correspondences, emotive-cognitive and spatiotemporal frames), as meaning-making patterns of an institutionally embedded media performativity (genres – chapter three). Third, *empirically*, through the application of this analytics to a paradigmatic case study; a case study which gives us a generic insight into how institutional symbolisms from the past of political parties with paradigmatic institutional genealogies (British major parties as exemplars of an, North-Western, institutional genealogy marked by social cleavages and a long-pluralistic transition to democracy and Greek major parties as exemplars of an, South-European, institutional genealogy marked by historical traumas and a short-polarised transition to democracy) are recontextualized through these parties' recent political advertising-election broadcasts – the paradigmatic platform of communication (chapter four).

So the stories that political advertising tells its viewers, to return to my earlier question, are stories with their own generic formats, such as the leader's talking head, testimonial, cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter formats, each of which matters as discursive manifestation of one of the paramount mediatic practices-performances in contemporary political communication, the performances of personalisation (talking head), conversationalisation (testimonial) and dramatisation (cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter). By this token, prior to,

and in order to be capable of, exploring how the past informs our understanding of the institutional present-future, we need to explore how a specific understanding of the past (instead of another) emerges out of, 'codified' in, the different genres of political communication. The past is always an *invented past*, as Eric Hobsbawm (1995) has famously claimed, and in the age of mediatization, the invention and reinvention of the political past, what I refer to as recontextualization, is very much a generically formatted mediatic performance invested with its own aesthetic qualities.

The talking head genre of political advertising, for example, tells us a 'charismatic' story of personalisation, inviting the viewer to evaluate a leader's dedication to her great mission in the aesthetic terms of authenticity, rather than in the epistemic terms of efficacy (chapter five). As an aesthetic quality of the performativity of the talking head, authenticity rests with the affective claim to the seamless continuity between the private life of the leader as an individual person and her public life as embodiment of a social-national mission. Relatedly, the testimonial genre tells us an 'ordinary' story of conversationalisation, inviting the viewer to evaluate a layperson's or celebrity's everydayness in the aesthetic terms of intimacy, rather than in the epistemic terms of proximity (chapter six). Like authenticity, intimacy also involves an affective claim-appeal, but to the reconstitution of a meaningless – unknown (layperson) or known but remote/extraordinary (celebrity) – individuality or private activity as a meaningful – publicly and institutionally recognisable – persona/voyeuristic experience this time, or the affective claim to the re-institutionalisation of the politics of everyday life. Finally, the cinéma-vérité and neutral reporter genres tell us 'spectacular' stories of dramatisation, now inviting the viewer to evaluate the phantasmagorical experience of belonging, offered by the (interpersonal or mass) leader-layperson interaction (cinéma-vérité) or the impersonal observations by a third person (neutral reporter), in the aesthetic terms of ritualism, rather than in the epistemic terms of exceptional events (chapter seven). As an

aesthetic quality, ritualism appertains to the simultaneous affective suspension and reconstitution of the individual self as a manifestation of a collective-total self.

Therefore, central to all mediatic performances is the aesthetic capacity of genres – the various affective claims to authenticity, intimacy, and ritualism, as well as the various symbolic meanings of mission, everydayness, and belonging, respectively, that accompany them – to form coagulations of the private (the individual and partial) with the public (the collective and total). It is exactly these private-public coagulations that potentially speak to institutional history in a way that both re-invents the past and re-orders the present, in a way that recontextualizes institutional symbolisms from the past serving the institutional exercise of power in the present; ultimately, in an ideological manner. Let me now reflect on how the different charismatic, ordinary, and spectacular private-public coagulations, as generically formatted mediatic performances of political advertising, fulfilled their recontextualizing potential in the institutional context of each of the four political parties that have concerned me in this study and, in so doing, how they inform our understanding of these parties' present. In other words, let me reflect on how the ideology of the Conservatives, Labour, ND, and SYRIZA was performatively renegotiated in the 2015 election advertising campaigns and what the ideological implications for the post-election reality in which these parties have found themselves are.

Conservatives: the change that never happened?

The Conservative Party fought the advertising battle in the run-up to the 2015 general election on all generic fronts. Broadcasts ranged from Cameron's personal address to the nation as a disciplined leader, and therefore as charismatic-authentic embodiment of the mission of restoring order to the British economy and society, to the neutral reporter's impersonal observation of the smashing of a clock mechanism (imminent disaster), which confronts us

with the ritual of ecstatic-apocalyptic belonging to a threatened organic system. From the family documentary, which acts as an ordinary-intimate re-institutionalisation of the banal sentimentality of nurturing parenting, to the cinéma-vérité of the interpersonal interaction between Cameron and the pupils of a preliminary school, which confronts us with the ritualistic experience of pedagogical belonging to one-nation Conservatism.

Both the personalised disciplinary politics of mission and the dramatised apocalyptic politics of belonging tell us a story of Tory nationalism, that is, a story about the indispensability of preserving and defending the organic order of society against any change that potentially poses a threat to it, such as the nationally humiliating (the 'Greece' metaphor in Cameron's address) and catastrophic (the 'hammer' metaphor in the neutral reporter's observation) Labourite and socialist policies of borrowing and spending. In both cases, symbols of restoration of order are recontextualized as temporal rationalities and emotionalities of a hope-anxiety dipole (in Cameron's address) and fear (in the neutral reporter's observation), giving rise to a de-historicised nationalist-sovereign agency which serves to mystify the neoliberal contingencies of austerity and free market economics that are associated with the restoration of order.

The conversationalised banal politics of everyday life, on the other hand, tells us a story of democratic republicanism, that is, a story about the importance of family as a unit of social organization for individual self-fulfilment. The symbolism of family-assisted self-fulfilment is recontextualized in this case as an ahistorical eternality (the nurturing parent) and emotionality of voyeuristic hope, enacting a liberal agency which serves, rather restrictively, to reify the neoliberal logic of individualism and utilitarianism. Finally, the dramatised pedagogical politics of belonging tells us a story of both democratic republicanism and Tory nationalism, by enshrining the communitarian ethos of protecting the vulnerable, on the one hand, and the commitment to a nation that rewards those with moral virtues and principles, on the other. Both

the symbols of communitarian solidarity and moral sovereignty are recontextualized as eternalities invested with the hope of nostalgic innocence (vulnerable femininity), thereby foregrounding a liberal-and-conservative agency this time, which serves to reify not only neoliberal individualism and utilitarianism but also the patriarchal logic of protecting the weak and naïve 'ingénue'.

Out of the four discursive formations that, according to many students of political history and political sociology, have shaped democratic politics in the UK (see chapter four), the Conservatives' mediatized discourse draws on two, Tory nationalism and democratic republicanism – rearticulating conservative and nationalist symbols of order, morality, and sovereignty from the former with liberal symbols of self-determination and communitarianism from the latter. Such a recontextualizing activity is by no means innovative or unprecedented in the Conservatives' history. Quite the contrary, it is central to the Thatcherite compound of neoliberalism, where 'the market/free enterprise/private property discourse persists cheek by jowl with older conservative attachments to nation, racial homogeneity, Empire and tradition', according to Stuart Hall (2011, p.713). Instead of attempting a radically new synthesis, all the Conservative mediatic performances examined in this study seek rather to camouflage the continuities with and the contingencies in the old neoliberal synthesis, as their recontextualizing dynamics predominately enact forms of ordering (temporalisation and eternalisation) and agency (nationalist, liberal-conservative) which *avoid sociohistorical references to the past* and *pure Conservative partisanship*, respectively. Hence, if Cameronite compassionate Conservatism has sought to modernise and decontaminate the Tory brand as is often claimed (Quinn, 2011), it has done so by attempting not so much the removal of Thatcherite 'stigma' as a *patchy plastering* of Thatcherism (see also Bale and Webb, 2011; Kerr and Hayton, 2015; Lakin, 2013 for relevant critical assessments of Cameron's modernisation project).

This *disguised non-change* renders the Conservatives' mediatized discourse neither more nor less ideological than the original Thatcherite synthesis. It is not merely a tactical electoral move of making the Conservatives 'appear modern, forward-looking and centrist' (Quinn, 2011, p.404) or a subtle consolidation and unproblematic reproduction of Thatcherite neoliberalism (Fuchs, 2016b). To some extent, Cameronism has been more successful than late Thatcherism in dealing with the contradictions and antinomies of the neoliberal compound – in effecting the decontestation of the inherent contestability of neoliberalism, as Freeden (2013) would argue – and it has taken the credit for this 'success' in both the 2010 and 2015 election. In Bale's words, Cameronism is about '"the politics of and" – that the Party could protect the environment but also promote private enterprise, could defend UK sovereignty but also fight global poverty, could prioritise public services but also talk about crime, immigration and family' (2010, p.336). To Cameronites' chagrin, however, the EU referendum, as any referendum, was not about the politics of 'and' but about the politics of 'or'. By calling it therefore Cameron took a high risk against his own ideological edifice.

Yet the referendum and its result can still find their explanation in the 'politics of and', reminding us that the decontestation of political meaning is never absolute and complete but a 'permanent fragility' (Freeden, 2013). Both the Tory nationalist restoration of order and the democratic republicanist self-determination, on the grounds of which the Conservatives fought and won the 2015 election, have nurtured Conservative Euroscepticism throughout the post-war years. By raising 'charismatic' and 'ordinary' hopes and anxieties about national-moral sovereignty and individual self-fulfilment, and 'spectacular' fears about enemies that threaten the social order, the recontextualization of Tory nationalist and democratic republicanist symbolisms, during that general election campaign, enacted the ways of thinking and acting that we can subsequently trace in the EU referendum campaign. *Thinking*, for example, of European integration-regulation as loss of national sovereignty, and as an obstacle to free self-

determination, and of immigration as a threat to organic order-security, and *acting* therefore by voting leave (see also Hobolt, 2016; Jessop, 2016). The referendum irony is just that from an authentic embodiment of Tory nationalism, Cameron, in a desperate effort to make his case for a 'remain' in which he did not fully believe (Kettle, 2016), ended up looking like a bad caricature of it, leaving plenty of room for his opponents, Conservative 'Brexiteers' like Boris Johnson, to emerge as the new authentic cheerleaders of Tory nationalism.

Labour: moving on from or with New Labour?

Labour's 2015 advertising campaign was less multi-generic than the Conservatives' and significantly 'skewed' towards testimonials. Instead of having more leader's talking heads or a neutral reporter election broadcast, Labour preferred, uniquely among the four parties but not unprecedentedly for them, to throw celebrity testimonials into the electoral battle. In this study, I examined one of them, the testimonial of Steve Coogan, which acts as an ordinary-intimate re-institutionalisation of the redemptive-reconciliatory practice of confession, together with the lay testimonials of Harry Leslie Smith and Charlotte, which act, instead, as ordinary-intimate re-institutionalisations of the demotic imaginaries of elderly's wisdom and civil ethics, respectively. I also examined the one and only leader-related broadcast, both in its talking head moments, where Miliband appears as the ordinary charismatic leader, authentically embodying the mission of changing people's lives, and in its cinéma-vérité ones, in which the leader/celebrity-layperson/fan mass interaction gives rise to a ritualistic experience of narcissistic-ironic belonging to Miliband's movement of insurgent populism.

The personalised compassionate politics of mission in conjunction with the conversationalised demotic politics of everyday life tell us a story of Whig imperialism and democratic collectivism, that is, a story about the inclusive and ethical British patriotism (as it is symbolised in Ralph Miliband's (remediated) and Smith's emblematic lives of national

service) and the importance of central-governmental planning in effecting social change (as it is symbolised in Ralph Miliband's life legacy and Charlotte's civil ethics). The symbol of ethical patriotism is recontextualized, in both cases, as a displaced 'golden past' (the post-war national reconstruction) with the emotional attachment of hope (the power of will and faith in Miliband's talking head) and hope-anxiety dipole (uncertainty about the future in Smith's and Charlotte's testimonials), enacting a single continuous and unbroken Labourite national agency which mystifies some of the New Labour discontinuities (e.g. free-market adaptation and global interventionism). Contrarily, the symbol of central planning, while following exactly the same recontextualizing pattern in the politics of mission, in the politics of everyday life is recontextualized, instead, as just a rational solution to the present neoliberal crackdown on the NHS (temporality and emotionality of the hope anxiety-dipole), misrecognising the 'thin line' between political-governmental centralisation and neoliberalism.

The dramatised ironic politics of belonging, on the other hand, tells us a story of democratic republicanism, though not the one about individual self-fulfilment we are told by the Conservatives. It is a story in which the republicanist principle of self-governance emerges closer to Paineite radicalism than to Millean liberalism, galvanising the insurgent populism of anti-establishment and anti-parliamentarianism. Populist symbolisms are recontextualized as a temporality and emotionality of melancholy (Miliband's lonely standing-up against the big interests), encouraging a backward-looking partisanship which critiques New Labour's alienating technocracy but fails to address the 'dark' (xenophobic, authoritarian, etc.) sides of populism.

Finally, the conversationalised confessional politics of everyday life tells us a multidimensional story, a story that brings together all three ideational 'tanks' on which Labour has historically drawn, the ethical patriotism of Whig imperialism (British fairness) and the central planning of democratic collectivism (caring government) with the communitarian ethos

of democratic republicanism (helping each other), in a frame of hope-anxiety which fosters a centrist-idealist agency of socially just individual/capitalist success. While, however, communitarian symbolisms are recontextualized as products of the 'Left turn' in the 1980s, mystifying the pro-market and pro-EU discontinuities in the communitarian tradition, the symbol of ethical patriotism is recontextualized as a temporality, an antidote to the moral decline that the recent Tory government has caused, misrecognising Labour's own ethically questionable interventionism in the recent past (e.g. over Iraq). In its turn, the symbol of central planning is recontextualized as an eternality, an axiomatic principle that de facto differentiates Labour's state-monitored market from the Conservatives' free market evangelism, again obscuring their overlaps in the recent Labour past.

This centrist reconciliatory positionality could have easily passed for a discursive endeavour of Blairite New Labour. As a masterpiece of hybridity and of what Cameron later professed, in his own Blairite moment, 'the politics of and' (see previous part of this chapter), 'New Labour has assumed aspects of all these traditions at once' (Freeden, 1999, p.44); from the communitarian ethos and individual self-fulfilment of democratic republicanism, to the central planning of democratic collectivism, to the ethical patriotism and pragmatic adaptation of Whig imperialism, and even the 'law and order' of Tory nationalism (Marquand, 2008). Is Labour's mediatized discourse therefore, like the Conservatives', a silenced continuation of the past? To some extent it is. As my analysis of Labour's 2015 election advertising campaign has demonstrated, the very same symbolisms that can be found in the discursive repertoires of New Labour are now recontextualized as spatiotemporally delimited to the present (temporalisation), deprived of their specific sociohistorical references, or invested only with references to a distant past, prior to New Labour (displacement), or even as completely ahistorical (eternalisation). There is, however, an important difference. While the Conservatives tried to disassociate themselves from Thatcherism in name only – to get rid of

the stigma of being the 'nasty party', as Theresa May once put it (Kettle, 2016), without abandoning Thatcherite neoliberal synthesis – Labour tried to draw a deeper line of distinction with Blairism. After all, it was not the Iron Lady-Thatcher who was accused of betraying party core values but the Technocrat-pragmatist Man-Blair (MacCabe, 2006).

It is exactly this technocratic-pragmatist aspect of Blairite Whig imperialism that Miliband's Labour seek to distance themselves from, by openly critiquing it and replacing it with the anti-establishment populism of democratic republicanism. Discourses, however, as I have argued throughout this thesis, more than reflections of actors' wills and intentions, are practices with their own logics and dynamics, and therefore far-reaching implications for the institutions wherein they are situated. By this token, beyond critiquing New Labour, the recontextualization of anti-establishment/anti-parliamentarianism symbolisms enacts, as we have seen, a backward-looking partisanship in the form of insurgent populism which is not hard to imagine how it may have paved the road for the otherwise surprising rise of the 'hardliner' Jeremy Corbyn, after Miliband's defeat in the general election. It is also not hard to imagine that this rise would bitterly divide and confuse Labour.

The more Labour, under Corbyn, continue their melancholic journey of healing the wounds inflicted by the loss of contact with the people (technocratic alienation), the more the (dissimulative) re-imagination of 'Labour psyche' as radical-populist rather than liberal-pragmatist is fortified, harnessing the tensions between the so-called Left hardliners or traditionalists and the revisionists-modernisers (see also Richards, 2016). Such a divisive re-imagination is dissimulative and confusing not only because it misrecognises the marginality of the anti-establishment/anti-parliamentarianism discourse in Labour's history (Thorpe, 2001), electorally disapproved until recently, but also because it does not effectively disassociate itself from the socio-political pathologies and pathogenies this discourse carries with it. Miliband's movement of insurgent populism, as I have shown, is set to spectacularly

fight authoritarianism from 'above' ignoring, however, authoritarianism from 'below'. By failing to expose and isolate the Europhobic leftist sociohistorical references (from 1980s) of the anti-establishment symbolism (temporalisation), insurgent populism allows Labourite anti-technocratic and anti-elite sentiments to be blended with Ukipist and other far-Rightist xenophobic and racist outbursts. Such an 'explosive combination' might well fuel the populist rhetoric about the uncaring European establishment which has done nothing to control immigration, during the EU referendum campaign (Freeden, 2017; Hobolt, 2016).

To what extent this revitalised anti-establishment populism can be effectively spliced together with the disguised New Labour centrism remains to be seen. What can be confidently concluded so far is that, seen either from the Conservative's or Labour's prism, 'the contest has left a country in which questions of *identity* and *ideology* have come to matter much more', as John Curtice insightfully put it in his anatomy of the 2015 election (2015, p.7, emphasis added). But they have come to matter more through the aesthetic and affective performativity of mediatized discourse: the charismatic, ordinary, and spectacular capacity of private-public coagulations to recontextualize institutionally symbolic meanings. To know therefore whether the same questions matter for another country, a country, for example, whose parties' institutional genealogy has been shaped not by the pluralist antagonism among four traditions, as in the UK, but by the polarising clash between two, as in Greece (see chapter four), we need (as I have tried in this thesis) to examine how the generically formatted mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation are, textually-discursively, performed in the (paradigmatically) different institutional context of these parties, ND and SYRIZA.

New Democracy: towards a new 'old' Right?

All but one (the neutral reporter) political advertising genres were used in ND's campaign for the parliamentary election of January, 2015, a snap election which was called, under constitutional imperatives, after the failure of the previous parliament to elect the new President of the Greek Republic. One election broadcast in which Samaras addresses voters, acting as a disciplined charismatic leader, and therefore authentic embodiment of the mission of securing Greece's place in the EU, one testimonial in which a middle-aged man engages in work-related chores, acting as an ordinary-intimate re-institutionalisation of the banal sentimentality of misery syndrome, and one cinéma-vérité in which the interpersonal interaction between the leader and a bunch of football-playing boys gives rise to a ritualistic experience of pedagogical belonging to reborn Greece, have been examined in this study. All these generically different mediatic performances tell us variations of the same story, the paternalist modernisation that ND's founder, Karamanlis, has bequeathed to the party and to which all subsequent leaders have, more or less, felt compelled to claim allegiance (Voulgaris, 2008). The moral of this story is that the country's economic prosperity, social stability and, above all, national pride is inextricably intertwined with its place in the European-Western bloc, and the decisiveness of its leadership in securing this place.

In the personalised disciplinary politics of mission, this moral is retold, through the recontextualization of the symbol of rearguard pro-Western nationalism, as a displaced memory from Karamanlis' heydays (remediation), and an emotionality of the hope-anxiety dipole, enacting a pro-European national agency which serves to mystify the convoluted history of paternalist modernisation in the post-Karamanlite years of populist anti-reformism. In the conversationalised banal politics of everyday life, the paternalist modernisation story is told again by means of the recontextualization of the symbol of rearguard pro-Western nationalism. This time, however, it does not refer to post-dictatorship Karamanlite Europeanism, but to the

eternality of the national inferiority complex, and the voyeuristic fear with which is invested (the fear that any act which exceeds the limited capacity of the country poses a national threat). Paternalist modernisation now fosters a conservative agency of national mindedness, reminiscent of ND's repressed pre-dictatorship past of militarist anti-communism, serving to reify a monolithic geopolitics of surrenderism: the Greek periphery will always be dependent on the European centre. Finally, in the dramatised pedagogical politics of belonging, paternalist modernisation returns in the form of the dictum that the right decisions are the difficult decisions made by well-trained men. It is recontextualized therefore as an eternality and emotionality of masculinist hope, calling for a sovereign agency of national palingenesis which reifies a patriarchal and parsimonious but still statist and reform-sceptic imaginary of neoliberal austerity.

Albeit enshrined as a 'sacred relic', paternalist modernisation was gradually downplayed in the post-Karamanlite ND, partly because of the tremendous success of its major opponent-PASOK's ethno-populism of resistance. It was only after Samaras was 'forced' by the EU to join the grand coalition under the former governor of the Bank of Greece in November 2011 and, as a result, to move away from the anti-Memorandum populism he experimented with, and towards a pro-Memorandum politics of responsibility (Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013), that the sacred relic returned to the forefront. It would be logical to account for the reactivation of the Karamanlite legacy, in line with the critical paradigms in the study of ideology which I have discussed in this thesis, as an attempt of mediatized discourse to legitimise ND's U-turn; to construe the commitment to implementing the Memorandum policies as the party's historical duty to safeguard the country's place in the EU.

However, Karamanlis' paternalist modernisation had nothing to do with the neoliberal logic that underlies the recent bailout agreements: the spending cuts and labour market reforms, the privatisations and drastic restructuring of the public sector, with which it is now placed

side-by-side. On the contrary, as I pointed out in chapter four, Karamanlis took the state and government as ineradicable pillars of capitalist growth. Therefore, for Karamanlism to authentically grant legitimacy to a neoliberal pro-Memorandum politics, arguably, its 'statist' origins should have been silenced. It should have been recontextualized as a temporal rationality if you will, not a historical continuity or eternality. ND's mediatized discourse, however, has attempted something different: to silence the neoliberal logic of the Memorandum rather than the statist logic of Karamanlism.

In all ND's broadcasts examined in this thesis, paternalist modernisation is recontextualized with either concrete sociohistorical references to the Karamanlite past (displacement) or an indeterminate reference to ever-lasting dictums (eternalisation), but not with specific references to the present. It is recontextualized as a charismatic and spectacular *grand modernising-Europeanist* agency, exceeding the present, and the narrow contours of partisanship, and embracing all pro-European forces regardless of whether they fully agree or not with the Memorandum requirements. ND itself does not seem to be absolutely content with these requirements, by considering them as necessary difficulties, an inevitable hardship we all need to endure. ND's mediatized discourse therefore, more than seeking a recourse of legitimacy in history for the party's present neoliberal responsibility, *sets the limits* of this responsibility; it latently pledges not to go beyond what is necessary – what its Karamanlite psyche would tolerate as necessary – in terms of structural state reforms to keep the country in the EU. It is not the rationalities and necessities of the present that lead to the reinvention of the past, here, but the 'spirits' and 'ghosts' of the past that ensnare and restrain the present, as Marx would argue. Indeed, after three years in office, the ND-led coalition achieved a level of fiscal consolidation (spending cuts) unprecedented for a European country, but the Greek economy was still plunged into the pathogenic inefficiencies of statism and clientelism

(disinclination to privatisations and liberalisation of so-called 'closed professions', see Trantidis, 2016).

Is the election of Mitsotakis, the open and strong defender of radical state reforms, a sign that ND is moving towards 'neoliberalising' its Karamanlite past? I doubt it. It would be too speculative as yet to say that this election automatically means an endorsement by ND's voters of the new leader's neoliberal views. Considering that Mitsotakis ran predominately on an anti-populist ticket of change and renewal in politics, his victory is more likely to reflect ND voters' request for an 'anti-Tsipras', a young leader who tells unpleasant truths and has been consistent throughout his political career (see Petsinis, 2016). Additionally, given the lack of a symbolic backdrop of neoliberalism deeply rooted in ND's history[1], it seems a hard thing for Mitsotakis to both establish his authority over the party-in-parliament, the majority of which threw its weight behind his traditionalist opponent (Meimerakis), and galvanise the centre-right liberal party identity he envisages (van Versendaal, 2016). If ND shows a rightward leaning, this is not so much a result of the reinvention of a non-existent neoliberal past as of the reinvention of a repressed conservative past, or what we have encountered as fear-driven recontextualization of pro-Western nationalism in the form of an 'ordinary' national inferiority complex that favours surrender, conformity, and futility.

Albeit widely criticised as electoral strategy, with some analysts suggesting that it heavily backfired, not only in the general election but also in the bailout referendum, leading to Samaras' resignation (Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou, 2017), as discursive strategy this recontextualizing move implies that ND has stopped being ashamed of its conservative past. With the historical traumas of civil war and dictatorship now distant memories, ND seems to feel more confident about reclaiming its conservatism, not as a rear-guard/defensive but *front-guard/aggressive* nationalist (e.g. by picturing SYRIZA as national threat) and traditionalist (e.g. by reifying patriarchy) force. In this regard, it does not come as a surprise that while

Mitsotakis has declared himself a diehard liberal, even putting forward a pro-LGBT agenda, he finally yielded to his party's paleo-conservative voices opposing the government's bill on the right to gender self-determination (Smith, 2017).

SYRIZA: **radical Left or meta-Left**?

SYRIZA's 2015 election advertising campaign does not constitute an exemption to the multi-generic ideotype; in its election broadcasts we encounter the personal address by the defiant charismatic leader, acting as authentic embodiment of the mission of fighting for the Greek underdog, and the mini-statements by first time voters who act as ordinary-intimate re-institutionalisations of the demotic imaginary of passionate youth. We also encounter the leader/celebrity-layperson/fan mass interaction which confronts us with a ritualistic experience of narcissistic-ironic belonging to Eurosceptic populism, as well as impersonal observations of an avoided disaster (city views after an asteroid has passed close by the earth) which confront us with a ritualistic experience of ecstatic-apocalyptic belonging to post-election ideal normality.

If ND's mediatic performances tell us different versions of the paternalist modernisation story, SYRIZA's tell us variations of the story of ethno-populist resistance, reaffirming polarisation in the Greek political culture, even if this is no longer a polarisation between the Right and the Left but between pro-European/pro-Memorandum and Eurosceptic/anti-Memorandum forces. At the heart of this story lies, not the by-all-means defence of Greece's place in the EU, but the by-all-means resistance against whoever is perceived as oppressor of the Greek people and, therewith, the moral vindication of whoever is perceived as oppressed or non-privileged.

In the personalised defiant politics of mission, this vindication of the non-privileged is symbolically recontextualized as an eternality and emotionality of ressentiment, envisaging

resistance as a repressed right, lost in the ages of the glorious Greek history. Recontextualization seeks, here, to mobilise the resentful anti-memorandum voters but fails to distinguish between a radical left-wing and a reactionary far-right resistance to the memorandum. In the conversationalised demotic politics of everyday life, the vindication of the non-privileged is recontextualized, instead, as a temporality and emotionality of anger, as a righteous reaction and claim of the young generation who suffer the most from austerity. Here recontextualization mystifies the universality of the Left's values of political participation and democratic claiming, presenting SYRIZA as more radical than its leftist antecedents and as the much-anticipated (by angry left-wing voters) first-time Left government. Finally, in the dramatised ironic and apocalyptic politics of belonging, the symbol of ethno-populist resistance is also recontextualized as a temporality, emotionally invested, instead of anger, with narcissistic enthusiasm and hedonistic hope, respectively. Recontextualization now launches a critique of undemocratic practices within the EU establishment (ironic politics) and of the inequalities that have been widened by neoliberal austerity (apocalyptic politics), but, at the same time, its narcissistic enthusiasm mystifies the undemocratic inclinations of Eurosceptic populism and its hedonistic hope misrecognises that some inequalities are endemic to ideal normality.

The rise of SYRIZA from a small peripheral player in Greek politics to one of the two major political parties in the post-PASOK era (after the electoral collapse of PASOK in the 2012 elections) has certainly concerned and intrigued political analysts, leading to a couple of interesting studies on this 'spectacular phenomenon' (Moschonas, 2013; Katsambekis, 2016; Spourdalakis, 2014; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014). Many of these studies partly attribute SYRIZA's astonishing ascendance to power to the unprecedented austerity that Greek society has undergone since 2010 and the growing disillusionment with mainstream centre-ground parties. The main focus is on SYRIZA's capacity to capitalise on this disillusionment; on its

appeal as a *non-traditional* and *radical* party which can accommodate everyone from Trotskyites and Marxist communists to members of street movements, like the 'Greek indignados' and the 'I don't pay movement' (Katsambekis, 2016). On the one hand is the readiness of Greek society to go radical after all it has suffered, and on the other SYRIZA's, and Tsipras' personal, radical dynamic (Moschonas, 2013).

As analysed in this study, SYRIZA's mediatized discourse tells us a different story about the party's 'miraculous rise' and post-election political manoeuvring, a story which instead of taking SYRIZA's radicalism at face value, as the *explanan* of its appeal, it turns radicalism into the *explanandum* – in what sense and to what extent is SYRIZA radical? First of all, it is worth noting that SYRIZA's path to victory is not unprecedented in post-authoritarian Greece; PASOK, the former giant of Greek politics won a landslide victory in 1981 (48%), in a turbulent historical moment too (seven years after the collapse of the junta and with the fears of another coup still around), quadrupling the share of the vote it had received in the first post-dictatorship election (Voulgaris, 2008). In a polarised political culture, like the Greek one, two similar spectacular rises (and downfalls) can be hardly unrelated. The 'crossroad' in SYRIZA's rise and PASOK's fall is none other than the ethno-populism of resistance. PASOK's fall made space for SYRIZA to breathe, not only electorally but also *ideologically*, that is, it allowed SYRIZA to recontextualize-reclaim what it should have always had and of which it has been deprived so far: the major representation of the Left. As we have seen, this sentiment of 'taking back what belongs to me' is quite intense in all the charismatic, ordinary, and spectacular partisan agencies that SYRIZA's mediatized discourse enacts, predominately thanks to its emotional investment with ressentiment and anger.

For SYRIZA to be able to effectively reclaim the leading place in the Greek Left, its own 'genuine' leftist background is not enough – the Eurocommunist-democratic Left of SYRIZA's political antecedents never had a broad appeal beyond some intellectual circles. It

needs to embody and re-institutionalise the ethno-populism of resistance, which is pervasive in Greek post-authoritarian Left culture, without, of course, looking like PASOK's copy. Like the Conservatives want Thatcherism without Thatcher, SYRIZA wants ethno-populism without PASOK. Its mediatized discourse manages to do so by silencing (temporalisation and eternalisation) any sociohistorical referents to the past that could expose the historicality of Tsipras', allegedly ahistorical, mission of the vindication of the non-privileged (it is rather represented as lost in the ages of Greek antiquity) and movement of Eurosceptic populism (it is rather represented as currently being empowered by Tsipras' own influential status in Europe).

By suggesting that there is a continuity between PASOK's and SYRIZA's discursive formations I do not claim that SYRIZA is PASOK in new clothes. Recontextualization is as much reproductive as transformative, as I noted in chapter one. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how PASOK's supremely anti-Rightist ethno-populism could have undergirded the 'unholy alliance' with the right-wing ANEL, the party that SYRIZA has chosen twice as its governmental partner (in fact, PASOK participated in a coalition under ND, along with another right-wing party, the 'Popular Orthodox Rally', only after having moved away from ethno-populism and towards the pro-Memorandum politics of responsibility [Aslanidis and Kaltwasser, 2016]). It is also hard to imagine how it could have justified extensive spending cuts and privatisations like those the SYRIZA-ANEL government has overseen since Tsipras' post-referendum U-turn (in fact, the ethno-populist backlash prevented even the moderniser Simitis from effectively pursuing structural reforms back in late 1990s and early 2000s [Dimitrakopoulos and Passas, 2010]).

On the other hand, it is not hard to imagine that PASOK's ethno-populism could not have gone so far as to call a 'risky' bailout referendum (indeed, Papandreou Jr. stopped short of calling one back in 2011, just before his fall [see Trantidis, 2016]) or to introduce

'provocative' legislation on gender self-determination. This is because PASOK never had something that SYRIZA has always had: the *leftist pre-history*. Unpopular and peripheral as it is, the Eurocommunist-democratic Left is neither completely absent from nor irrelevant to SYRIZA's mediatized (particularly, to its conversationalised) discourse, as we have seen. SYRIZA may need the appealing vagueness of ethno-populism to reclaim its leading role in the Greek Left but without the historical weight that the universal values of democratic claiming and political participation carry, SYRIZA is not Left at all.

SYRIZA's mediatized discourse comes therefore to re-dissect both the ethno-populism of resistance – from an absolute anti-Rightism to an ambivalent anti-Memorandum Euroscepticism which is vulnerable to reactionary and neoliberal anomalies – and the legacy of democratic Left – from a universal-historical leftism to a Greek-historic radicalism – galvanising an identity not of radical Left but rather of *meta-Left*. It is only this meta-Left that could critique the lack of integration and democracy in Europe while reassuring that it would not want Greece out of the EU; it could critique the neoliberal inequalities between the privileged few and the non-privileged many while enabling the reproduction of inequalities within the undifferentiated and indivisible assemblage of non-privileged people. It is only this meta-Left which could figure, at the same time, as the 'holy bible' of the first truly Left government, standing for the human rights of refugees and homosexuals, and a 'heretic sermon' by the first radical Left (SYRIZA)-reactionary Right (ANEL) coalition government, condoning attempts to control the judiciary and the media[2]. After all, it is probably only this meta-Left which could hold and win a referendum on the rejection of an unethical-undemocratic ultimatum and three months later, having had this ultimatum accepted, also call and win a general election.

Epilogue: advancements, limitations, and avenues for future research

In his discussion of modern, mediatized electoral politics, Manuel Castells suggests that 'regardless of ideology and rhetoric in political discourse, only one thing matters for political parties and candidates in campaigning: winning. Everything else is a derivative' (2009, p.228). Arguably, Conservatives' silencing of the negative connotations of Thatcherism, Labour's distancing from discredited New Labourism, ND's renewed dedication to Karamanlism, and SYRIZA's reclaiming of the Left culture of resistance all intend to improve parties' electoral performance. They all seek to reconstruct a party-image that voters would like: the image that the Conservatives are no longer the nasty Thatcherite party, that Labour has moved on from New Labour, that ND is a responsible pro-European party, and that SYRIZA fights for the vindication of the non-privileged.

However, parties could have told through other likable stories through their mediatic performances. The fact that they tell their voters these particular stories, made up with these particular symbolic materials, and framed in these particular spatiotemporal and emotive-cognitive manners cannot be explained just by their will to win – it is not only that they want to win but also how and why they want to win. If these *how* and *why* matter, then ideological discourse should not be taken to be a derivative of but the very means through which campaigning is conducted and, even more importantly, the means through which political power is contested. In this regard, all the single particular – theoretical, conceptual, methodological, and empirical – contributions of this thesis have a common goal, which is also an advancement to our understanding of contemporary political communication, and this is that the interest in political ideology, while studying election campaigns and their communication strategies, is not a philosophical mega-theoretical but a *pragmatic analytical* one. It is the interest in understanding the enactment of institutional forms of agency and ordering in the

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present by exploring the discursive recontextualization of institutional symbolisms from the past.

If we are interested in the pragmatic implications that ideology may have for political institutions, we cannot afford not to be interested in the various generic patterns of institutional media performativity, the personalising performativity of charisma, the conversationalising performativity of ordinariness, and the dramatising performativity of spectacle. These performative repertoires of mediatization, the genres of contemporary political communication, are now the workstations *par excellence* of ideological production. They are the sites where claims to national missions, sensibilities and sentimentalities of everyday life, and imaginaries of belongingness are made through authentic personae, intimate experiences, and ritualistic phantasmagorias, respectively, recontextualizing institutionally symbolic and pragmatic meanings. This thesis suggests therefore that we begin our (ideological) study of mediatized politics not with mega-theories and grand narratives about the rationalistic or idealistic private-public distinction (liberal and critical modernism) but with an exploration, *in-situ and in-actu*, of the performative private-public fusion (critical post-structuralism). We need to embark, in other words, on an analytical exploration of the different aesthetic and affective forms this fusion takes across different generic platforms and institutional contexts of political communication.

In terms of platforms of political communication, the thesis has focused on political advertising which, thanks to its multi-generic and journalistically unmediated nature, stands as a paradigmatic platform of how party politics is discursively shaped and communicatively performed in the age of mediatization. In terms of institutional contexts, it has focused on major political parties with North-Western and South-European institutional genealogies. First, major political parties are taken to be a paradigmatic institutional setting of mediatized politics, thanks to their widely known status as highly professionalised and managerialised electoral

machines. Second, the two different institutional genealogies allow for a specific selection of major parties: (British) parties whose symbolisms carry the weight of social cleavages and, therewith, a long-pluralist transition to democracy, and (Greek) parties whose symbolisms carry a different weight, that of historical traumas and, therewith, a short-polarised transition to democracy. Overall, by focusing on a paradigmatic case study, the thesis seeks to find sympathetic ears across disciplines and fields that have largely contributed to our understanding of ideological (e.g. political history and sociology from which we have inherited the two genealogical patterns) and mediatized party politics (e.g. political marketing-campaigning studies which attest to the centrality-popularity of political advertising as platform and major political parties as institutions of contemporary political communication). It seeks to draw their attention to the need to reconceptualise both ideology and mediatization in a way that is sensitive to the generic discursivity and institutional embeddedness of performative practices of political communication, and therefore to the need for an analytical interpretation of political communication as potentially ideological.

It is important to note at this point, however, that by employing a paradigmatic case study, this thesis offers a global-panoptic understanding of the generic discursivity and institutional embeddedness of mediatic practices, and their recontextualizing dynamic, which, necessary as it is as a first step towards the reinvigoration of the debate around the place and role of ideology in contemporary political communication, is by no means sufficient. Along with a panoptic we always need a *kaleidoscopic* understanding of practices, an understanding that is sensitive not only to what is generically and institutionally paradigmatic but also generically and institutionally non-paradigmatic; not only to the aesthetic regimes but also to the *aesthetic capillaries* of charisma, ordinariness and spectacle; not only to pragmatic-centrist but also to *dogmatic-extremist* institutional actors of political communication; not only to

genealogical variations within Western democracies but also *across Western and non-Western semi-democratic polities*.

The need for a kaleidoscopic understanding of the place and role of ideology in political communication does not relativise the analysis offered by this thesis. It does not imply that there are mediatic practices, for example, which are not generically formatted or which are formatted in generic patterns radically different than those discussed in the last three (empirical) chapters. It may suggest, however, speaking to the dialectic of tenacity/fixedness and fluidity/plasticity inherent in any practice, that the same genres are discursively manifested in different platforms of political communication through some techno-semiotic subtleties that political advertising lacks (as other platforms lack the paradigmatic techno-semiotic conventionality of political advertising). These subtleties potentially have recontextualizing implications of some interest, especially in platforms over which political actors do not have full control, such as political debates and social media.

The need for a kaleidoscopic understanding does not imply either that there are political parties, the 'non-major' ones for example, whose practices of political communication are radically different than those of major parties and their institutional genealogies not marked by social cleavages or historical traumas. It may suggest, however, that the same paramount mediatic practices of personalisation, conversationalisation, and dramatisation, and the same genealogical rubrics of long-pluralist and short-polarised transition to democracy, are discursively manifested by non-major political parties and in non-Western democracies, respectively, straddled with some social-historical particularities that do not apply to major parties and/or established democracies of the West. These particularities potentially have some interesting recontextualizing implications in the case of erstwhile marginal but recently re-empowered parties of the far-Right, such as the AfD in Germany and Golden Dawn in Greece, as well as in cases where the transition to democracy has proved both long and polarised (if it

has not reversed in the end), such as in countries of the former Eastern bloc (here, for the example, the 'historical trauma' may refer to communist rule) or those of the Middle East (here, for example, the 'social cleavage' may refer to religious vs secular interests).

By this token, the need for a kaleidoscopic understanding of the place and role of ideology in political communication does not drive us away from the analytics of mediatization this thesis advocates. It rather calls for extending the application of this analytics to non-paradigmatic, especially new-emerging platforms of political communication which are already intensely used by political actors in Western democracies (e.g. President Trump's obsession with Twitter). It also calls for extending the application of the analytics of mediatization to non-paradigmatic, especially resurgent extreme parties which rampage the traditional political systems of Western democracies, and post-communist and (religiously) neo-fundamentalist institutional genealogies which have encouraged a truncated democratisation, or even authoritarianism, in non-Western societies. It calls, in other words, for a future research agenda that pays attention to the recontextualizing subtleties and particularities of the, always, generically formatted and institutionally embedded mediatic practices – the practices which this thesis has already identified and paradigmatically explored – so as to both diversify and enhance our understanding of the potentiality of ideology in the age of mediatized politics.

To be sure, this is indeed an ideological age, like all ages before it; it is just not an age of grand belief systems and dominant signification systems – and no age was before it. It is not an age colonised by or adapted to some kind of media logic either. It is an ideological age of ravenous eyes and feeling minds, like all ideological ages before it, but an age where the eye devours aesthetics and the mind feels symbols through a plethora of mediatic performances seen in no other age before it.

Notes

Introduction

1. See Janson (1959), p.531

2. As a further elaboration on the distinction and interrelation between methodology and method, we could argue that a method tells us how to study a certain phenomenon and why to do it in one way instead of another – e.g. studying ideology, as institutional practice/ subjective act, may involve conducting interviews with political actors, observing their interactions in a given setting, or analysing institutional texts. The methodology of research we espouse, however, tells us in the first place what to study when we study a certain phenomenon, on which aspects or version of this phenomenon to focus (see Bryman, 2008; Tuck and McKenzie, 2015) – e.g. to study ideology in terms of either institutional practice or subjective act.

Chapter 1

1. I refer here to Mannheim's 'total evaluative conception' of ideology, which he takes as precondition for a sociology of knowledge – the dialectical process through which a form of knowledge is found to be inadequate and obsolete (ideological), and therefore must be replaced by another, more inclusive one.

2. This is what Mannheim (1954) refers to as the 'particular non-evaluative conception' of ideology.

3. See also Thompson (1990) for what he calls 'core consensual' theory of social reproduction and Abercrombie et al. (1980) for what they call 'dominant ideology thesis'.

4. See also Thompson (1990) for what he calls 'differentiated consensual' theory of social reproduction.

5. For a concise overview of the post-modernist critique of ideology, see Zhao (1993).

6. This could apply to what Lukes (2005) understands as 'two-dimensional view of power', a view of power that provides only a qualified critique of behaviourism and rationalism, or what Couldry (2003a), in his own critique to Thompson, refers to as a 'weak' concept of symbolic power: the power of individuals and groups to construct the social world through the socially situated use (enabled by structural opportunities and disabled by structural constraints) of symbolic forms.

7. Prior to actors' world-making power there is the 'mind-making' (Lukes' three-dimensional/radical view of power) and 'ordering' (Couldry's strong, Bourdieusean, concept of symbolic power) power of practice. For Bourdieu, however, whose original insight I retain in my analysis, practices owe their symbolic power to discourse – see indicatively Bourdieu (1989) and, for more on the practice-discourse complex, the next part of this chapter.

8. Some of them propose the study of discourse in linguistic texts (see Phillips et al., 2004; Smith, 1999) while some others refer broadly to symbolic representations and cultural meanings (March and Olsen, 1984). In chapter three, I will advocate a discourse analytics of institutional practices based on texts – texts as multimodal constructs though, that is, communicative platforms which involve the use of language as much as other semiotic forms (e.g. still and moving image).

9. Such an understanding of institutionalisation bears, inevitably, two crucial implications for our understanding of institutions in general: (i) it suggests that the status of 'institution' should be given not only to formal, legally established, spheres of social activity, such as political parties, universities, the church, the media, the judiciary, etc., but to all the (discursively) sedimented, conventionalised and recurrent, forms of social activity; (ii) it also suggests that even the 'traditional' institutions need to be re-examined and re-theorised in the light of this discourse-based paradigm (the current thesis seeks to contribute to this second suggestion by reconceptualising party ideology as a discursive practice).

10.   Discourse with a capital 'D' is an uncountable noun: it refers to the dynamic of meaning-making, inherent in any practice; what we loosely call signification. Discourse with a lower-case 'd' is a countable noun: it refers to specific clusters of meanings; what we loosely call ideas or beliefs (e.g. the discourse of 'New Labour' or the discourse of 'one-nation Conservatism').

Chapter 2

1. For the sake of brevity, I discuss here, along with the exclusionary paradigm, a conception of ideology that in the previous chapter was introduced as inclusionary: the conception of ideology as 'consensus-building, philosophically grounded meaning-making act'. From the standpoint of mediatization as evolutionist transformation of politics, both the latter and the 'action-oriented belief system' paradigm, due to their obsession with coherence and

consistency in political meaning, encourage the same verdict, that is, mediatized politics is de-ideologised politics.

2. The 'structural transformation of the public sphere' (1989) and the 'theory of communicative action' (1984).

3. For a comprehensive critique of the binary 'political-media logic' see also Couldry (2008), Hepp (2012) and Lundby (2009).

4. This argument is in line with the revisionist political culturalism, discussed earlier in this chapter, which has located cultural analysis, particularly the analysis of popular media culture, at the heart of politics and, at the same time, political analysis – the analysis of power dynamics – at the heart of culture. The difference, of course, is that revisionist culturalism explains the co-articulation of political and media logics with reference to the 'whole' culture of a society, presuming that different institutions and groups share some dominant symbols and values, while the institutional approach I employ here designates this co-articulation to the micro-culture of the different institutional settings, acknowledging that each institution has its own repository of discursive-symbolic sedimentations.

5. The self-subjectifying dynamic of premediation, as a typical characteristic of the imaginary of media omnipresence, is not limited to party politics and political communication. Davis (2007), for example, has shown how such an imaginary can create 'herd-like tendencies' among investors and fund managers, that is, how the frenzy and riskiness of information abundance, instead of motivating purely rational decisions, may encourage economic elites to follow patterns of economic behaviour that are deeply rooted in their own institutional microcosms.

Chapter 3

1. I use the term 'discursive moment' to indicate that all institutional practices have an inherent discursive aspect, which is also constitutive of them – as meaning-making, but they are not only discursive (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Discourse is this moment of articulation of the various economic, cultural, political, broadly sociohistorical, contingencies into one relatively stable and enduring conventional pattern of action (what in chapter one I referred to as ontological mystification).

2. I borrow the term from Chouliaraki's 'analytics of mediation' and I re-appropriate here in a way that is close to her Aristotelian and Foucauldian comprehension – an *in situ* and *in*

actu analysis of how 'discourse manages to articulate values of human conduct as "universal" at any historical moment and how, in so doing, it places human beings into certain relationships of power to one another' (2006, p.157).

3. In Fairclough's terms, genre is 'a relatively stable set of conventions that is associated with and partly enacts a socially ratified type of activity' (1992, p. 284). In the context of political communication, such a ratified type of activity-performance with its own meaning-making conventionalities may be political advertising (which this project uses as its empirical point of reference, for reasons I will explain in the next chapter), election debates, political interviews, etc.

4. My discussion of the different forms of realism established by modes of presentation in media texts is inspired by Chouliaraki (2006), who, in her examination of the modes of presentation of news broadcasts, discerns perceptual, categorical (by which she means affective) and ideological realism (which I refer to as 'thought realism', to avoid confusion with ideology as it is reconceptualised in this project).

5. CDA attempts here a critical re-appropriation of systemic-functional linguistics, primarily associated with Halliday (1995). Unlike the latter's functionalism, however, CDA understand discursive functions as deriving not from the *organic needs* of social systems but from asymmetric social relations of power, and the *political need* to be sustained or disrupted (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999).

Chapter 4

1. In this article, Flyvbjerg rigorously addresses some common 'misunderstandings' about case-study research, one of which refers to the issue of generalisability that concerns me here.

2. The audience to which this thesis could speak is political scientists-sociologists, cultural theorists, and media scholars interested in the study of ideology and mediatized politics, political and media actors concerned with the institutionality and historicality of political communication, especially now that rationalist and voluntarist approaches prove to be inadequate (e.g. rise of extremism and populism), and the segment of the general public which is concerned with the ideological implications of the messages conveyed by media texts.

3. The difference between a party election broadcast (PEB) and a spot is more legal than content-related in nature. The term PEB is frequently used with reference to parties' 'free'

advertising in broadcast media, especially in countries where paid political advertising is prohibited (as in the UK) – certain amount of time is allocated to each party according to the electoral regulations. 'Spot', on the other hand, is a term frequently applied to paid advertising in broadcast media (following again certain regulations), especially in countries where only paid advertising is available to parties (as in the US) or in countries where both options are available (as in Greece) (see McNair, 2007; Kaid and Holtz-Bacha, 2006). In this thesis, I shall use the term election broadcast to refer to both cases.

4. Paradoxically, relevant research that pays attention to the ideological meanings of advertisements (primarily through the lenses of critical cultural theory, and therefore of ideology as order-sustaining signification system), has been conducted in the realm of commercial rather than political advertising (see indicatively, Soar, 2000; Sinclair, 1987; Wernick, 1991; Williamson, 1978).

5. In some cases (e.g. US and UK), two-partyism is attributed to the majoritarian/first-past-the-post electoral system (Duverger, 1954; Lijphart, 1994) while in others (e.g. Germany, Spain, Greece), with more proportional systems and greater party competition, is considered as a repercussion of the polarisation of political culture (Dunleavy and Husbands, 1984; Hallin and Mancini, 2004), thereby problematising the previous explanation.

6. Although the establishment of constitutional monarchy and full male enfranchisement came astonishingly early in Greece (as early as in 1860s when in Britain, for example, almost 40% of adult men were still not eligible to vote [Charalambis and Demertzis, 1993]), Greek politics, until the collapse of the (1967-1974) junta, had been racked by military coups, elections of questionable legitimacy and, especially after the civil war, parastatal authoritarianism (ibid); it is hard therefore to talk about a stable-consolidated democratic system of power prior to 1974.

7. SYNASPISMOS was formed in 1992, as an heir to KKE Estorikou, which used to represent the Eurocommunist-democratic and revisionist (or renewing as it is often referred by Greek politicians who identify themselves with it) Left after the 1968 split in the communist party (KKE) (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014).

8. Greeks went to ballots twice in 2015, on January 25th and September 20th, and Britons were also called to a snap election on 8 June 2017. However, as this study was already in progress by the time the second, and latest, Greek and the latest British elections took place, I

consider here the January 2015 Greek and the May 2015 British elections as the 'most recent' ones.

Chapter 5

1. For links to the corresponding videos of all the broadcasts analysed in this and subsequent chapters, see table 4.2

2. In this chapter, I analyse only these parts of Miliband's portrait that draw on the talking head genre; there also plenty of cinema-verité moments in this broadcast which are analysed in a subsequent chapter (seven).

3. Empathy, like sympathy, has its root in the Greek word '*pathos*', which means 'to suffer in the sense to endure, to undergo, or to be at the effect of' (see the Internet encyclopaedia of philosophy http://www.iep.utm.edu/emp-symp/). The prefix *en-* in empathy (which is turned into em-) means 'within, in' – hence, feel in or from within – while the prefix *syn-* in sympathy (which is turned into sym-) means 'together with' – hence, feel with or together with.

4. A notorious example is the controversial article published by the Daily Mail in September 2013, under the title 'The man who hated Britain' (http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2435751/Red-Eds-pledge-bring-socialism-homage-Marxist-father-Ralph-Miliband-says-GEOFFREY-LEVY.html), which represents Ralph Miliband's legacy and its heir and continuator, 'Red Ed', as a socialist menace to the country.

5. Tsipras declared to his European counterparts that he would not put on a tie until Greece's debt problem was resolved, as a sign of protest against their intransigence on this matter (see Smith, 2015a).

6. The term 'ressentiment' is preferred to that of 'resentment' (moral indignation caused by an unfair treatment) as an emotional equivalent for the repressed imaginary of vindictiveness, since it exactly grasps the feeling with which a subject is overwhelmed because of her failure/impotence to express and vindicate moral indignation, not because of the moral indignation itself (Demertzis, 2006).

Chapter 6

1. A video recording of the speech is available here: https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/jun/24/jeremy-corbyn-calls-for-unity-in-glastonbury-speech

2. See previous chapter about empathy as the affective potential of instant identification with the represented subject.

3. *Labour will guarantee 20,000 more nurses, 8,000 more GPs, 5,000 more care workers, a GP appointment within 48 hours, no one will wait more than one week for a cancer test and result.*

4. This was one of the party's major slogans/discursive mantras during the campaign (see Prifti, 2015).

5. See also Calvert's (2000) study on 'mediated voyeurism' and Papacharissi and Mendelson (2007) about voyeurism in reality TV programmes.

6. *I* […] *want them not to have any worries and not have anything holding them back – We'll clear the deficit so our economy is secure for the future; I want him to […] to get a good job – We'll back business to keep creating jobs and opportunities; I want him to work hard and know that he can support himself and his family – We'll cut income tax so people keep more of their hard-earned money; I want them to get the skills they need – We'll deliver 3 million apprentices so young people can get the skills they need; I want her to have the best education – We'll deliver a good primary school for every child; I want her to have […] a home of her own – We'll extend our help to buy scheme to help more people get a home; I don't want them to have to worry about us when we are older – We'll continue to increase the state pension and protect pensioner* benefits.

7. In a speech he delivered at Heraklion city, Tsipras, wanting to emphasise the tough negotiating tactic he would employ as PM, said: "We will beat the drums, and they [the markets] will dance! Or, since I am in Crete, we will play the [Cretan] lyre, and they will dance the [Cretan dance] pentozali!" (http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/whats-the-greek-word-for-suicide.aspx?PageID=238&NID=77310&NewsCatID=398).

8. From the *Independent's* article: 'Margaret Thatcher: a life in quotes' (8/4/2013), available at: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/08/margaret-thatcher-quotes

Chapter 7

1. For more about the non-functionalist application of Durkheim's approach to media rituals, what he calls 'post-Durkheimian' perspective, see Couldry (2003b).

2. See chapter six for what Bennett (1998) calls 'politics of identity'– the enactment of self-understandings and understandings of self-belongingness (politics of belonging), no longer confined to the institutional politics of class but open to multiple mundane contexts (politics of everyday life).

3. See chapter five on what Corner refers to as the 'symbolic excess at work in the figure of the politician' (2000, p.398) – changing society or safeguarding the nation (politics of belonging) as a mission to which the leader is authentically dedicated (politics of mission).

4. Neoliberalism is rather tangential to the party's past, limited to the short and unpopular attempt by Mitsotakis Sr. in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The patriarchal discourse, on the other hand, regained political salience after Averof – a political mentor of Samaras – took over the party's leadership in the early 1980s, attempting a (short-lived) conservative-nationalist turn, which had more in common with the pre-dictatorship anti-communist national-mindedness than with Karamanlis' rearguard pro-Western nationalism (Voulgaris, 2008).

5. Arguably, this is not so much a 'conscious' gesture with which the person would like to show that he agrees with what the leader says – neither the leader nor other people would probably notice – as an 'unconscious' gesture of self-affirmation, a gesture which reveals that what leader says is something this person has already thought of by himself.

6. The ritualism of the political rally has not received enough scholarly attention, arousing the suspicion that in the post-cold war era rallies have been rather irrelevant and/or supplanted by the modern model of campaigning (Negrine, 2008; Swanson and Mancini, 1996). An exception to this, and in line with the 'ironic turn' in the post-cold war politics (see Chouliaraki, 2013), is Vamvakas' study of rally ritualism in post-dictatorship Greece (2006). This study insightfully suggests that the political (fall of grand narratives), economic (rise of neoliberalism), and socio-cultural (growing individualism, commercialisation) transformations that have taken place in the post-cold war era have not cast rally rituals out of modern campaigning, but have re-invited and reinforced their narcissistic nature. Mediatized rally ritual no longer binds leader and participants together on the basis of shared mega-ideas or social-class registers but on that of a 'mutual

mirroring' that gives the participant the satisfaction of seeing in the leader an extension of herself and the leader the satisfaction of eliciting legitimation for her authority.

Conclusion

1. The short-lived neoliberal attempt by Mitsotakis' father back in the 1990s backfired within the party instead of creating a legacy to build on (Voulgaris, 2008).

2. See Papasarantopoulos (2017) for a critique of the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition's proposed constitutional reforms and other legal interventions concerning justice and the mediascape.

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