

The Greek ‘success story’ on the international media representations concerning the pandemic of COVID-19

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic concerns the rapid spread of the coronavirus disease that started in late 2019 and has gradually spread across the globe. Prior to the pandemic, Greece had already undergone a decade long financial crisis that had a great impact on the national healthcare system that had been weakened significantly. Along with the second oldest population of Europe and a big number of refugees and migrants living in concentration camps, Greece was not set to have a smooth fight. Against all odds, Greece managed to contain the spread of the virus with the rapid enforcement of a national lockdown. The international media quickly covered the handling of the outbreak from the Greek government and the Greek citizens. The depiction of Greece during the first coronavirus wave was very different to the depiction of Greece during the economic crisis. The depiction of Greece of the pandemic will be analyzed through 35 English and Spanish speaking articles that were published between April and June 2020. The head and sub-headlines of the selected articles will be analyzed and then the analysis will continue with the collection and organization of the metaphors that are used throughout the analysis. A secondary analysis focus on Greece of the past and this analysis will also be centered around the main metaphors that were used to describe Greece of the past. Lastly, the depiction of Greece of the financial crisis will be presented through a literature review. The analyses will then be compared to draw similarities and differences.

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Introduction

The pandemic of COVID-19 not only took the world by storm, but also affected how the media operate. Greece became the center of attention during the first coronavirus wave in 2020, because it managed to handle the outbreak better comparatively with other countries. News media decided to investigate the country's modus operandi and wrote articles about it. The articles, apart from mentioning the country's method with the handling of the crisis, they also referred to Greece of the debt crisis (2010-2018). During this period, although Greece was not a unique case (Mylonas, 2011) 'the Greek people entered into the epicenter of a ferocious global publicness' (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014).

The depiction of Greece during the first coronavirus outbreak and the depiction of Greece during the financial debt crisis portray differently the country, with the first depiction presenting Greece as a problematic case, while the second presenting it as a role model. These two different portrayals, that are only a few years apart, provoke some question. The first research question that will be addressed concerns the factors that led Greece into having a positive media portrayal during the first lockdown of March 2020. More specifically, which are the critical factors of understanding Greece that led to the country's positive portrayal? The second and final research question that will be addressed are the similarities and differences that arise through the two different portrayals can be explained through the utilization of certain theories such as globalization, europeanization and orientalism.

These questions need to be answered to discover the similarities and differences that arise between the two crises that were covered by the media to better understand the way the media interpret the different crises. It is also imperative to map out the media's depiction of Greece throughout this decade to have a more concise opinion towards the view of the media around the financial debt crisis and the healthcare crisis.

To answer these questions, a short literature review will be employed with the purpose of presenting the depiction of Greece during the debt crisis (2010-2018). The literature review will continue with the presentation and explanation of the main theories that will be used (globalization, europeanization and orientalism). Having concluded with the literature review, the research will focus on the analysis of 35 English and Spanish speaking articles that were written and published between April and June 2020. This period was selected

because the media centered their attention in the Greek efforts to contain the pandemic with the rapid enforcement of a national lockdown. The analysis will focus firstly on the head and sub headlines because the title is what calls the readers to click on the article and read further (Bavdekar, 2016). A secondary analysis will be based on the articles' metaphors. Through the research it was noted that the articles use metaphors to refer to Greece of the financial debt crisis. The metaphors will be divided into four categories and each one of them will be explained. Lastly, the two analyses will be compared so similarities and differences can be drawn.

The main findings of the study will reveal that Greece was presented as a model state for handling the pandemic of COVID-19 during the first wave of the pandemic (March 2020), with this finding being evident not only in the examined articles' head and sub headlines, but also throughout the articles. This finding will be further enhanced with the depiction of Greece during the financial crisis. The stark antithesis between the two depictions within the same article will reinforce the notion that Greece handled the pandemic wave well. Another important finding is that although Greece is presented positively, it still faces problems with the most important of which being the limited number of tests, the massive concentration camps of refugees and migrants and lastly, the depiction of Greece during the debt crisis, a depiction that tainted Greece's success by the reference to the past but at the same time enhanced the achievement. Another important conclusion is that, although the media vary, they use the same metaphorical structures to refer to Greece of the past. Lastly, the media depict the two crises in a very different way and this fact can be explained by the imploration of globalization and europeanization, since during the financial debt crisis, the governments opposed to europeanization and globalization processes and concepts, the current government (that was elected in July 2019) welcomed the possibilities that europeanization and globalization offer. The theory though that seems to be intact in both cases is that of orientalism, considering that Greece in both cases was presented as an extraordinary, unique case.

Greece: The place where theories meet

In an article published in Politico the author is addressing an ambiguous issue which is if 'Greeks are not Western' (Patrikarakos, 2015). According to Patrikarakos, who answers the question empathically right from the start, Greeks are not Western, and this can be explained by historical reasons but also from the strong ties between the Greek state and Russia, a country with which share

cultural and religious ties. The author explores this trivial subject with the help of the Director of the Center for International and European Studies, Dimitris Triantaphylloy, who also shares the concerns of the journalist by highlighting the fact that Greece is moving closer to Russia and at the same time distancing itself from the European Union and NATO. According to them, this stance can be explained mainly by the financial crisis that is tormenting Greece but also about the notion that Greeks have concerning where the country belongs.

The exploration of this question brings into question important questions that social scientists have been trying to answer, the main questions that arise is where Greece truly belongs, how Greece is viewed by others but also by the Greek citizens and lastly which are the cultural aspects that draw Greece closer to West and East respectively. To answer these questions and analyze the findings of the different portrayals, it is essential to examine certain theories.

Orientalism

Orientalism as a concept was created by Edward Said with his homonym book *Orientalism* (1978), with the concept centering around the field of European studies. For the creation of his concept, Said is borrowing elements from Foucault, such as the dipole knowledge and power, and from Gramsci the concept of hegemony. Combining these elements, he concludes that East is constructed in western thought or even in western imagination as a counterweight to the West. This construction is being aided by colonialism, imperialism, and eurocentrism. The western culture is deemed culturally superior to the Eastern one and appears to act as a role model, in some cases, this model uses force.

The creator of the term places the scientific object of orientalism in British and French academic intellectual environments because of the growing communication of those with the Near East. Orientalism though soon ceases to be only an academic subject and becomes a lens through which West 'sees' East. This lens is closely lined to the dynamics of colonialism and the hierarchical relations that formed its consolidation. The 20th century birthed new versions of orientalism in the American academia, mainly in geopolitical studies programs of universities.

A version of orientalism is believed to be Hellenism, which re-appeared during the Greek debt crisis (2010-2018). Throughout this period, Greece seemed to be insubordinate since there were many images of violent rallies and public outrage circling the media and thus an old phenomenon was revived, the 'Greek exoticism'. According to Said (1994), Hellenism cannot be compared with orientalism, while Porter (2009) describes Hellenism as a relation that

exists between a particular past that is being imagined differently over time and a present that is constantly changing. The differences that come to surface from the description and definition of Hellenism continue, since Said (1994) points out that orientalism is expressing antipathy towards Islam, while Hellenism expresses sympathy for classical Greece, but this view is not shared by everyone.

Panagiotopoulos and Sotiropoulos (2019) argue that Hellenism is in fact a form of orientalism since it refers to the cultural projections of westerners that have political extensions and thus, affect the country's image within and outside Greece. Carastathis (2014) also shares the opinion that Hellenism is a form of orientalism since Hellenism is being constructed in the European fantasy and it operates under a western hegemony. It is undeniable that throughout history Greece was rediscovered many times and from the idealistic construction of ancient Greece, Greece came to be a place where travelers saw their hopes shattering when met with Greeks, who were deemed unworthy followers of ancient Greeks (Tziovas, 2019). The rediscoveries though did not end there since travelers were choosing to visit Greece for its natural beauty and realness, with the thread continuing until the Greece of the financial debt crisis, where this 'Zorba the Greek' realness was continued by Varoufakis and a new exoticism is born (Karavidas & Papatheodorou, 2019).

Although the creator of the term may not share the view that Hellenism is in fact a form of orientalism, it can be argued though, that Hellenism is orientalist, since there are certain forms of discourses that are understanding Greece's past but also present in an oriental manner. The idealization of Greece's ancient past along with the fabricated continuity of Greece, that was consolidated in the 19th century (Koundoura, 2012), seem to be forgotten by the creator of the term. These characteristics that go unnoticed by Said, put Greece in the center of western culture and differentiates Hellenism from Orientalism. Lastly, another important observation that can be used to claim that Hellenism is a form of Orientalism, is modern history. Greece's entrance to the European Union and the consequent economic crisis (2010-2018) revived Greek exoticism, by putting into the spotlight the discourse of Greece's insubordinate stance.

Europeanization

Europeanization can refer to different phenomena such as changes in eternal boundaries, the development of institutions at a European level, the penetration of national systems of governance, the export of political organization and a political unification project according to Olsen (2002). Although the phenomena are different, they all belong under this umbrella term. From the enlargement

of the European project to the development of European institutions, the adaptation of different levels of governance (national and sub-national), the export of organizations that exceed the European borders till the political unification. The europeanization process though is not the same for all the participating countries, since some of them choose to push for strategies, others choose to block or delay them and then there are some that align either with the first or the second depending on the subject at hand, with Greece belonging clearly to the third group as far as environmental policies are concerned (B rzel, 2001).

The entrance of Greece in the European Union has reshaped the country, since in an assessment made by Ioakimidis (2000) it has been found that Greece underwent many changes such as the formation of nongovernmental organizations, the creation of developmental plans, the increase in the number of actors in policy making and the creation of administrative regions among others. Apart though from these significant changes, Greece underwent legal changes as well, since it had to adopt the European legal framework (Kalpadakis & Sotiropoulos, 2007).

The impact of europeanization in Greece is a synonym of modernization, since through this process the role of the state concerning the economy has changed and this process also affected the way that civil society operates, with the latter 'freeing' itself from the state's interventions (Featherstone, 1998). The adaptations that Greece needed to make though did not come easy, since Greece participated in a project with advanced democracies and mixed economies (Tsoukalis, 1999).

The Greek debt crisis, except from reviving the Greek exoticism, it also revived the discussion concerning the Greek European integration, a discussion that was limited to academics and politics. The financial crisis revealed negative sentiments towards E.U. (Andreadis et al., 2014) and with the election of Syriza in the government the Euroscepticism only grew stronger, since these concerns were raised by the government party (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016). Syriza's skepticism only grew stronger with the coming of the crisis, although the party still believed that Greece should remain in the European Union (Nikolakakis, 2016). Lastly, this Euroscepticism might have been aided also by the stance of the Greek media and public, which were holding the Germans responsible for the debt crisis (Michailidou, 2015).

During the crisis though, another discourse came into existence, a discourse against globalization, with the riots that erupted in Athens in December 2008 being influenced by the anti-globalization movement (Bratsis, 2010).

Globalization

Just like orientalism and europeanization, globalization is also a complex concept that cannot be defined easily. Rosamond (2000) clarifies that globalization can refer to transformation, uncertainty, and challenge among other things while Giddens (1990) stretches that globalization is in fact relating distant localities and events that are taking place in local level that have been insinuated by events happening miles away. Gilpin (2001) on the other hand highlights the increase in the integration of the world economy while Harvey (1990) stretches more the compression of time and space.

To ensure a better understanding of globalization, it is imperative to observe it as a process, through which it is noted an expansion of social, political, and economic activities that outrun the national frontiers, and thus, are making the events that take place in one place important for regions that are far away (McGrew, 2007). Globalization is not only connected to the corrosion of sovereignty, a characteristic that is important for the existence of the nation-state, but also to the deconstruction of the social welfare state. This does not necessarily mean that the nation-state is rejected as a basic mush of modernity, but that it needs to adapt and reform (Κοτζιάς, 2003). According to Cerdas Cruz (1997), globalization is an accelerated process of change that is taking place worldwide and affects all aspects of life, particularly though affects the military, the economy, trade, finance, information, technology, art, and culture.

When it comes to Greece, the political parties heavily discussed this new concept, and this field became a field of juxtaposition. The parties had different understandings of the concept, with the communist party stating that globalization is a new form of imperialism, whereas the center right party considered globalization a new reality. Overtime though, the two big parties, New Democracy and PASOK, changed their stance, with the latter slowly gaining a more positive outlook, while New Democracy adopted a more neutral approach (Antoniades, 2007). The view of the political parties concerning this phenomenon is imperative to be considered, since it creates the framework in which Greeks view the concept.

Globalization in Greece was achieved through the country's participation in the European Union and the regional integration in the Balkans. At the same time, Greece experienced the liberalization, with the consequent limitation of the government in the economic field (Zink, 1997). The results of globalization and liberalization are mainly two: small businesses had to adjust to the new reality of big corporations and the Greek governments had to create an environment that would be considered 'business friendly' (Zink, 1997). The results of liberalization

and globalization soon became evident. Global corporations could move their businesses according to taxation policies and low-cost labor. The Greek debt crisis that soon followed was partially attributed there.

The Greek debt crisis: timeline and coverage

The collapse of the mortgage market in 2007 in the United States triggered an international financial crisis and for Greece to avoid default, it was deemed necessary to agree to a bailout program by the International Monetary Fund and the European Union in 2010 (Ardagna & Caselli, 2014). This bailout program, and the next ones that followed suit, came along with austerity measures such as tax increases, cuts in pensions and salaries. The completion of the second bailout program and the election of a left-wing party as the governor party in January 2015, leads to a controversial referendum in July. On June 30th Greece misses its 1.55 billion Euro payment to the IMF and becomes the first developed country to default to the Fund (Amadeo & Boyle, 2020). On July 5th 2015 the referendum takes place with Greeks turning down the proposed deal. The overturn of the citizens' decision was followed by continuous talks, not only with the international creditors, but also with the Greek parties. The unprecedented crisis throughout this time gained international media attention.

Although the Greek debt crisis was not a unique case, since other countries faced similar difficulties (Mylonas, 2011), the Greek citizens but also the Greek crisis was in the spotlight (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014). The German press seemed to be working on a smear campaign, with the tabloid Bild Zeitung and periodical Focus using negative adjectives to describe Greeks (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014) with the attention by the financial German press being more intense (Tzogopoulos, 2011). The coverage of Bild created a culturalization pattern and moved away from the global economic crisis, stressed that the Greek crisis was a result of certain policies and did not communicate an alternative path (Mylonas, 2012). In contrast, Der Spiegel from 2009 till 2014 used more arguments and distanced itself from racial stereotypes, although it still was not able to address the source of the problems (Mylonas, 2015). The German and English press covered the crisis in an aggressive manner and supported the option of a 'Grexit' (Bickes et al., 2014).

The stance of the media changed in 2012 (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014). The coverage of the crisis became less offensive (Bickes et al., 2014; Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014) and the media portrayed Greece as a dependent country and a country that was responsible for the crisis (Bickes et al., 2014). The press in this second phase of the crisis focused more on the repercussions the financial crisis

had on the Greek citizens, and thus, became more sympathetic to the Greek people (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014).

Overall, the Greek crisis was presented in a tense way by the European media but still, Greece, was not portrayed as a failed state (Papathanassopoulos, 2014). Another interesting conclusion is that the framing that was used to cover the crisis was deemed racist and was a product of neocolonialism (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014; Van Vossolle, 2016).

What is undeniable though is that the media coverage of the Greek debt crisis had a direct negative effect on the Greek economy, since the events that were covered by the media affected the bond yield on the same day or the coming days, whereas the uncovered events did not have such an impact (Daniel et al., 2018). The fluctuation of the market is therefore partly caused by the media (Volker & Peters, 2018) since the confidence of the investors is shaken by the media coverage (Juko, 2010).

The media coverage of the pandemic during the first wave of COVID-19 in early 2020, became very apparent in the international media, which focused on Greece. The pandemic not only revealed the revived interest in Greece, it also sparked a conversation within the country about the country's media. The two main issues that arose was that of the presentation of the pandemic, which according to an analysis conducted during January till March 2020, 30% of the articles at the forementioned period, were misinterpreting the topic by incorporating in the articles either misleading or deficient information (Veglis et al., 2020). The second problem that was raised concerned the media's funding by the Greek government. During the first lockdown in March 2020, the Greek government distributed to the media outlets twenty million for them to carry out a public health campaign with the main message being 'Menoume Spiti' (Stay at home). The distribution of these funds was made by a private media company. This move was heavily criticized for lack of transparency since it did not abide by the rule that all public transactions that are conducted need to be made public. The International Press Institute (2020) claims that the arisen issue only highlights the partisan identity of the Greek media, while the ThePressProject.gr (2020) points out that the media that are judgmental towards the government received less than 1% of the fund. The problems that revealed the pandemic contribute to the existing problems such as the political affiliation of newspapers, or the lack of reporting of possibly embarrassing stories for state officials (Papathanassopoulos, 2013) and the commercialization that has contributed to a lack of factuality and the reinforcement of freedom of expression over objectivity, factuality, and neutrality (Touri et al., 2017). The weaknesses

of the Greek media are not completely counterbalanced by the strengths that the media appear. The deregulation that happened in the 1980s has helped the media by introducing new technologies, diversifying the ownership status.

Having concluded the investigation with the coverage of the Greek debt crisis, it is imperative to investigate the materials and the methodology that was used to examine the coverage of the pandemic when it comes to Greece and then, compare them and draw conclusions.

Materials and methodology

In order to proceed with the selection of the material, it was imperative to identify the most read English and Spanish speaking newspapers as well as the most visited news websites in English and Spanish. This important information came from Statista (2021) and 4imn.com (2019). After that, the most read and visited news websites were researched to detect the articles that would be selected and analyzed. The material that was selected by these media was not efficient for the purpose of the research and more articles that came from less read and visited sites was incorporated in the research. All articles had to be published between April and June 2020 and refer to pandemic Greece. This period was selected because the results of the strict lockdown that was imposed were starting to show, and this generated a positive media reaction. The examined articles were selected throughout the studied period. The English-speaking media were selected because they attract a larger audience, whereas the Spanish-speaking media were selected because the research, when it comes to Greece, is more focused on the German speaking media and this research would shed light in a less researched field.

The analysis will be focused on the titles, because the title is what calls the readers to click on the article and read further (Bavdekar, 2016). Apart from that, through the title the readers get a glimpse of what will be discussed further on and how the author will present and approach the issue at hand (Jamali & Nikzad, 2011). The methodology used for the titles' analysis is the Critical Discourse Analysis, which is the research method that is used to analyze texts and their production, distribution, and consumption while at the same time, analyze the institutional and discursive practices (Fairclough, 1995). This method examines 'the realization of social structure' through language (Halliday, 1978). Basically, CDA's goal is to detect the relations that exist between language-text and social relations and the adoption of critical objectives (Halliday, 1978). This analysis therefore aims to find the representations of social reality that exist in communication with the end goal being the change of society (Fairclough, 1995).

The used metaphors that refer to Greece of the past in the articles published about pandemic Greece will be analyzed with the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which supports that metaphors are the 'vehicles for understanding' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This theory (Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) supports that metaphors are not a purely linguistic phenomenon, but also a conceptual one and is highlighted that 'they define in significant part what one takes as a reality' (Chilton & Lakoff, 1995).

The results from the analyses will be explained with the theories of globalization, europeanization and orientalism.

Results

The spread of the COVID-19 was closely followed by the international media. Greece, for yet another time stood in the spotlight because of the swift handling of the pandemic. With the first case of the coronavirus appearing on February 26th 2020 in Thessaloniki, the government quickly decided to impose severe measures. On March 10th and with only 89 confirmed cases, all the educational activities were suspended and three days later, this measure was extended to cafes, restaurants, shopping centers and sports facilities. On March 22nd it was announced that the country would enter a national lockdown.

The restrictions were decided upon the state of the national healthcare system that would not have been able to handle a major number of incoming patients. Another reasoning was the aging population of Greece that has the oldest population in the Union (Bouloutza, 2018). Finally, the large number of migrants and refugees living in concentration camps would also worsen the healthcare crisis. The rapid and strict measures of the government soon worked and caught the international media attention, since neighboring countries that faced a larger number of infections and deaths were not ready to impose such measures.

The articles that will be analyzed come from different media, so the analysis would enclose different media and thus, different points of view. The analyzed articles can be found in the table, along with their title, publication date and the link.

Table 1

Articles: Medium, Title, Publication Date & Link

	Medium	Title	Publication Date	Link
1	Al Jazeera	How Greece flattened the coronavirus curve	April 7 th , 2020	https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/4/7/how-greece-flattened-the-coronavirus-curve
2	Independent	How Greece managed to flatten the curve	April 8 th , 2020	https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/coronavirus-greece-cases-deaths-flatten-curve-update-a9455436.html
3	Bloomberg	Greece shows how to handle the crisis	April 9 th , 2020	https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-04-10/greece-handled-coronavirus-crisis-better-than-italy-and-spain
4	Deutsche Welle	How Greece's crisis is helping it bend the COVID-19 curve	May 2 nd , 2020	https://www.dw.com/en/how-greeces-crisis-is-helping-it-bend-the-COVID-19-curve/a-53280532
5	Bloomberg	Humbled Greeks show the world how to handle the virus outbreak	April 16 th , 2020	https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-04-17/humbled-greeks-show-the-world-how-to-handle-the-virus-outbreak
6	Time	Greece has an elderly population and a fragile economy. How has it escaped the worst of the coronavirus so far?	April 23 rd , 2020	https://time.com/5824836/greece-coronavirus/
7	ITV	How Greece has emerged an unlikely success story of the coronavirus pandemic	April 23 rd , 2020	https://www.itv.com/news/2020-04-23/how-greece-has-emerged-an-unlikely-success-story-of-the-coronavirus-pandemic

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8	New York Times & Independent *Same article published in 2 different media	Greece has defied the odds in the pandemic & Greece's handling of outbreak is a surprising success story	April 28 th , 2020 & April 29 th , 2020	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/28/world/europe/coronavirus-greece-europe.html and https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/coronavirus-greece-response-success-test-economy-reopen-a9489391.html
9	Institut Montaigne	Greece, an unexpected model	May 20 th , 2020	https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/blog/europe-versus-coronavirus-greece-unexpected-model
10	The Guardian	To manage the COVID-19 crisis, look to Greece.	April 27 th , 2020	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/27/to-manage-the-COVID-19-crisis-look-to-greece
11	Telegraph	How Greece moved quickly and decisively to keep COVID-19 out	May 27 th , 2020	https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/science-and-disease/greece-moved-early-decisively-keep-COVID-19/
12	Fortune & Brookings.edu	How Greece can reopen without ruining its coronavirus containment success	May 27 th , 2020 & June 2 nd , 2020	https://fortune.com/2020/05/26/greece-coronavirus-lockdown-reopening-tourism/ and https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/06/02/how-greece-can-reopen-without-ruining-its-coronavirus-containment-success/
13	EU Observer	Why is Greece and outlier in EU's COVID-19 response?	May 19 th , 2020	https://euobserver.com/opinion/148397
14	Bloomberg Quint	Greece looks like a safer destination now	June 17 th , 2020	https://www.bloombergquint.com/gadfly/greece-is-no-longer-bottom-of-euro-zone-class-as-italy-struggles

15	Financial Times	Greece anxiously prepares for a socially distanced beach life	May 15 th , 2020	https://www.ft.com/content/380f6cb4-d061-48f4-8150-d4bd593d312f
16	South EU Summit	Greece beats back coronavirus	April 20 th , 2020	https://southeusummit.com/europe/greece-beats-back-coronavirus/
17	The Guardian	How Greece is beating coronavirus despite a decade of debt	April 14 th , 2020	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/14/how-greece-is-beating-coronavirus-despite-a-decade-of-debt
18	El Español	El Milagro de Grecia: el país que cerró el paso al coronavirus tras el primer muerto	April 15 th , 2020	https://www.elespanol.com/mundo/20200415/milagro-grecia-pais-cerro-coronavirus-primer-muerto/482453025_0.html
19	Libertad Digital	El 'milagro' griego frente al coronavirus	April 6 th , 2020	https://www.libertaddigital.com/opinion/cristina-losada/el-milagro-griego-frente-al-coronavirus-90436/
20	RTVE	La anomalía griega o como gestionar bien la crisis del coronavirus contra pronóstico	April 16 th , 2020	https://www.rtve.es/noticias/20200416/anomalia-griega-como-gestionar-bien-cri-sis-del-coronavirus-contra-pronostico/2012132.shtml
21	El Confidencial	La paradoja griega: cómo el país que lo tenía todo en contra ha logrado contener el COVID	April 23 rd , 2020	https://www.elconfidencial.com/mundo/europa/2020-04-22/misterio-grecia-coronavirus_2558703/
22	20minutos.es	Grecia se convierte en un modelo de gestión del coronavirus: ¿qué han hecho allí que no ha hecho España?	April 16 th , 2020	https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/4229221/0/grecia-se-convierte-en-un-modelo-de-gestion-del-coronavirus-que-han-hecho-alli-que-no-ha-hecho-espana/

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23	Consalud.es	El modelo griego: un ejemplo de gestión anómalo frente al coronavirus en la asolada Europa	April 20 th , 2020	https://www.consalud.es/pacientes/especial-coronavirus/modelo-griego-gestion-frente-coronavirus-anomalo-asolada-europa_77863_102.html
24	Huffington Post	Grecia, el modelo ejemplar ante el coronavirus que pende de un hilo	April 26 th , 2020	https://www.huffingtonpost.es/entry/grecia-un-modelo-ejemplar-frente-al-coronavirus-que-pende-de-un-hilo_es_5e9f05cbc5b6a486d07f8ddf
25	GNDIARIO	Grecia, un gran ejemplo de país en confinamiento	April 25 th , 2020	https://www.gndiario.com/grecia-ejemplo-gestion-COVID
26	Marca	Coronavirus en Grecia: un ejemplo de respuesta temprana	April 14 th , 2020	https://www.marca.com/tiramillas/actualidad/2020/04/14/5e957a07268e3e7d3b8b4645.html
27	Clarín	Confinamiento estricto. Coronavirus en Grecia: lejos de anarquía habitual, ahora es modelo de gestión de la pandemia	April 17 th , 2020	https://www.clarin.com/mundo/coronavirus-grecia-lejos-anarquia-habitual-ahora-modelo-gestion-pandemia_0_GkAE-ksYz.html
28	Finanzas.com	Coronavirus. Grecia da una lección a España	April 13 th , 2020	https://www.finanzas.com/coyuntura/coronavirus-grecia-da-una-leccion-a-espana_20053221_102.html
29	Periodista Digital	La comparativa entre España que 'sepulta' al Gobierno de Sánchez	April 7 th , 2020	https://www.periodistadigital.com/politica/gobierno/20200407/coronavirus-comparativa-espana-grecia-sepulta-gobierno-sanchez-noticia-689404288975/
30	Business Insider	Por qué Grecia tiene muchos menos fallecidos por coronavirus que España o Italia	April 22 nd , 2020	https://www.businessinsider.es/grecia-tiene-muchos-menos-fallecidos-coronavirus-625871

31	Cope.es	Cómo ha contenido Grecia la epidemia: confinamiento temprano para evitar el colapso de la sanidad	April 17 th , 2020	https://www.cope.es/actualidad/internacional/noticias/como-contenido-grecia-epidemia-confinamiento-temprano-para-evitar-colapso-sanidad-20200417_684760
32	Agenda Pública	Grecia gana el primer asalto contra la 'COVID-19	May 2 nd , 2020	https://www.cope.es/actualidad/internacional/noticias/como-contenido-grecia-epidemia-confinamiento-temprano-para-evitar-colapso-sanidad-20200417_684760
33	Cambio16.com	Grecia y la COVID-19, más ciencia y menos política menuda	April 17 th , 2020	https://www.cambio16.com/gestion-de-grecia-de-la-COVID-19/

As it can be seen by *Table 1*, the first big hit came from Al Jazeera that mentions in the headline that the lockdown was effective, since the author refers to the flattening of the curve, a goal that all states had at the time. The title's choice reveals that Greece is examined as a good example; a case that needs to be looked at. The sub-headline also helps the readers to better understand the headline because it refers to the reasons of this choice. As the author mentions, the fast enforcement of the lockdown was a production of the nation's economic fragility and the subsequent loss of ICU beds. The explanation that is provided by the sub-headline and the wording that is used ('forced') reveal to the readers, that according to the author, there was no other choice. A day later, The Independent chooses to cover the flattening of the curve that seems to be occurring in Greece and for the sub-headline the journalist refers to the effort that was being made by the government to augment the number of ICU beds but does not shy away from referring to the refugee population that could pose a healthcare threat. These two articles, although from different media, they are examining in the same way how Greece managed to keep under arms the number of COVID-19 cases. Greece is being looked at as an exemplary model of the healthcare crisis, while the sub-headlines refer to the thorns that Greece had to handle.

Following these two articles, another article was published, this time from Bloomberg. Yet another time, Greece is being seen as an exemplary case with the journalist mentioning in the sub-headline that Greece imposed the sever measures much sooner than other countries. In this case though, the author

does not mention anything negative about the country's state (number of ICU beds or the number of the refugee population) and is strictly characterized as a good manager of a healthcare crisis. The wording of the author (Greece shows how to handle the crisis), Greece becomes a straight A student, a student that needs to be looked at so the other countries can do the same. This word hides a hierarchy, a hierarchy that is created by the journalist and is only meant to enhance the good image of Greece. The second article that was published in this medium only a week later, chooses also to portray Greece positively but this time, the authors choose to refer to Greeks as 'humbled', a word that means humiliated or degraded and makes a clear reference to Greece's past.

The Guardian throughout this period published two articles. The first article although supports in the headline that Greece is 'beating coronavirus' at the same time refers to Greece of the past by saying 'despite a decade of debt'. This reference stains the positive headline since there is a reference to a rather dark period for Greece. The verb beating makes the title more vibrant with the readers imagining Greece punching the virus back. This is an athletic metaphor that refers to the struggle of Greece with the containment of the virus. This fight becomes even greater since Greece is winning the fight. The same verb is also used in an article published in South EU Summit. The author highlights that Greece is beating back the virus, while in the sub-headline she mentions that Greece is leading the EU by keeping the number of deaths low. This sub-headline coincides with the one from Bloomberg, since both, create a hidden hierarchy. Lastly, the article of Deutsche Welle the journalist attributes this success to Greece's past. Although the explanation and the reasoning are right, the success of the country is belittled by this reference. In the sub-headline there is for yet another time a hierarchical scale that reveals where Greece used to stand.

Time magazine mentions right from the beginning the issues that Greece had to deal with: the aging population and the fragile economy. This headline informs the readers about the problems that Greece had to face and poses a rhetorical question ('how has it escaped the worst so far?'). The question calls the readers in, while at the same time, creates a mental image, one of a play that Greece wins. This unlikeliness that is implied by the article, is highlighted clearly by ITV's headline that refers to the country's unlikability and describes the country as a success story. Although a scale is created, this scale is result-driven, not hierarchical. In this scale, Greece was doomed to fail considering its past but against all odds, managed to make it to the top. This is clearly stressed by the article in the New York Times that point out this unlikely success by characterizing it 'surprising', something that went 'against all odds'. Although

the country has managed to avoid the seemingly inevitable, the danger is still omnipresent. Finally, an article that falls in the category is the article by Institut Montaigne which describes Greece as an ‘unexpected model’.

Another category that is of interest is the one that presents Greece purely as a role-model. In this category belong the second article that was published in *The Guardian* and compares in the sub-headlines Greece to Germany and UK that are ‘outperformed’ by Greece. The second article that belongs in this category is the one by *Telegraph* that states that ‘Greece has moved quickly and decisively’. This article though refers to the possible disasters that Greece could have faced, but it still managed to avoid them.

The last category that was observed in the English-speaking media is the one that concerns the steps ahead. Some of these articles were published after the end of the lockdown. An article of this kind is the one that was published in *Fortune* and then in *Brookings.edu*. In this case, the headline offers a very positive message since Greece is a successful case study, with the authors giving more details about this success. The journalists in the article are trying to find a safe way for Greece to re-open. The contrast that is created by the word ‘ruin’ and ‘success’ is very intense, with the first word referring to an absolute disaster and the second one referring to a triumph. These next steps are also examined by *The Financial Times* that support that the country although is a success story, it still faces a big financial hit without tourism. This reference belittles the success considering that the focus stands more on the steps that lie ahead.

Two articles that could not fall under any of these categories are the ones from *EU Observer* and *Bloomberg Quint*. The first article describes Greece as an outlier for help and holds a judgmental view and does not critique Greece in a positive way for the handling of the pandemic. The second article presents Greece as a safe destination and since there is no sub-headline the readers could not understand a lot about the handling of the pandemic. In contrast to other articles that clearly mentioned that Greece did well in the containment of the virus, this article chooses to refer to Greece’s past in the lead paragraph and mentions the feelings that Europeans had towards the ‘indebted Greeks’. The reference that follows and describes Greeks as ‘aggrieved’ for being judged prematurely implies that the handling of the outbreak was good.

When it comes to the Spanish-speaking media, lots of similarities can be drawn as well. The first category was that of the Greek miracle. In this category falls the article by *El Espa ol* that in the headline states that the country closed before even the first death. The word miracle is a synonym to something that is surprising and unexpected, an excellent achievement that does not follow the

usual events. The headline explains how this miracle was achieved while the sub-headline refers to the steps that were taken to achieve it. The word miracle reveals the thoughts of the journalist who did not see it coming and because of that there is such a characterization. In this category also belongs the article by Libertad Digital that in the headline as well, described the handling of the crisis as a miracle. In the sub-headline though the writer chooses to compare Greece to Spain and the U.S. when it comes to deaths per millions. In this case, the 'miracle' wording is interesting because there is a comparison with countries that are significantly bigger than Greece, and the result is that of success.

Another category that was identified was that of the 'Greek anomaly'. In this case, the word anomaly is used in a positive manner since Greece is differentiating itself in a positive way. The article from RTVE belongs in this category with the author choosing to describe Greece as an anomaly or how to handle the coronavirus crisis well against all odds. The paradoxical title makes Greece's success even greater and with the sub-headline focusing on the small number of cases in contrast to other countries, this success is even greater. The same structure is followed by another article this time published in El Confidencial. In this case, there is a slight change in the used term, since Greece is described as 'paradox' meaning that it combines contradictory features. The paradox is not explained but one can assume that it refers to Greece's past. The sub-headline in this case focuses on Greece's characteristics that are discipline, resilience, fastness, and the understanding of its limitations of the healthcare system. The special characteristics are compared to other countries which had the available resources to conduct massive testing (Germany) or had advanced technologies (South Korea, Israel).

Another category is the one that presents Greece as an exemplary model. Just like in the English-speaking articles, such a category could be found in these articles as well. The first article that belongs in this group is the article published in 20minutos.es and uses a very positive headline by describing Greece as appositive case of study. In the sub-headline more data is given concerning the outbreak (number of cases and deaths) and this reference along with the comparison of Greece to Spain justifies the stance of the author. The second article that was published in the Consalud.es follows the same formula. The headline speaks of a Greek model but the explanation that soon follows talks about a divergent management against coronavirus. The characterization of the Greek case as a model and then the divergent description could have had a negative connotation, but in this case, the divergence is a positive one. In contrast to the first article of the same category, this one, does not refer to

official data and the author explains the title by referring to the sub-headline to Greece's weakened healthcare system. The third article of the category also displays Greece as an example but at the same time this success is 'hanging by a thread'. The Huffington Post article decides to stretch that the success can be easily ruined. Also, the article published in GNDIARIO portrays Greece as an example and with the elliptical headline – since it misses a verb – this description is very strong and with no explanation to how Greece managed to make it work this success becomes mysterious. The penultimate article of the category describes Greece as an example that decided to act quickly and does not provide the readers with any further clues in the head and sub-headline. The Marca article focuses on the swift response in its titles, although while reading one can observe the references to the national healthcare system that could possibly not have handled the incoming of patients. Lastly, in Clarín they are focusing on the strict confinement. This is something that is not apparent in the other articles, since the comparison that is presented is between Greece of the past and Greece of the pandemic. The old Greece was taken over by anarchy whereas Greece of today acts as a role model. The article falls in this category because it presents Greece as an exemplary case.

The last category consists of three articles. The first one is published on Periodista Digital and compares Greece with Spain. The journalist decides to compare the two countries in the headline and decides to comment it by mentioning that this comparison is 'burying the Spanish government'. The strong headline sets the tone for the rest of the article and the readers can understand that the Spanish government will be judged heavily. The sub-headline, just like in another category, refers to statistical data. The second article that was published on Finanzas.com also compares Greece to Spain. In the headline Greece 'gives a lesson to Spain' and in the sub-headline the author mentions that Greece imposed severe measures before the Spanish government. Lastly, on the Business Insider article Greece is compared to Spain and Italy with the comparisons favoring Greece, since it managed to contain the number of cases and deaths.

In the Spanish-speaking category there are also articles that could not be categorized easily. The first one is published on Cope and addresses how Greece managed to handle the epidemic. The journalist interviews a Greek citizen to get answers. This form of analysis is very different, since the journalist does not choose to analyze or bring statistical data but interviews a Greek to get answers. The penultimate article also chooses a different point of view by mentioning that Greece stayed away from politics and chose science. The Cambio16.com

article uses a unique way to explain this, since this was an unexplored territory for the media, which chose to attribute the deciding factors by either providing statistical data or simply referring to Greece's past. The last article published in *Agenda Publica* takes a clear stance concerning how Greece handled the crisis by mentioning that it has won the first attack against COVID-19. This article sets straight the opinion of the journalist and is justified by the provision of data.

The last part of the findings focuses on the metaphors that were used to refer to Greece of the debt crisis. After the examination of the titles, it was observed that the articles were using a set of metaphors to refer to Greece of the past. The categories that were found were four.

The first category was that of the 'ailing healthcare system'. This metaphor was used in 20 articles, and it was the most used one. It was combined with 'Greece, problem child' and it was presented with variations since the healthcare system was described as crippled, ravaged by the crisis, weak, teetering and asphyxiated. This metaphor can be described as a catastrophic metaphor since it produces fear to the readers. When talking about a healthcare crisis and then referring to a healthcare system that seems to be beaten down, it is inevitable for the readers to feel fear. This description most of the times is not justified by data. The authors do not provide data for such a description. Apart though from the fear that imposes to the readers, it also creates a great antithesis between the broken-down healthcare system and the handling of the pandemic. The journalists in this way manage to portray Greece even more favorably, with the achievement becoming of higher importance.

The second most used metaphor is that of the 'fragile economy'. With this metaphor the journalists chose to refer to Greece of the past and this metaphor, just like the previous one, presented a great variation. The economy was described as 'fragile', 'weak', 'ravaged by austerity'. This metaphor though is not a 'clear' one, unlike the previous one, since the language that is used to describe the Greek economy has a great penetration to the language. This metaphor yet again provokes negative sentiments and paints a negative image for Greece. It also produces a stark antithesis between Greece of the pandemic and Greece of the past. This metaphor is used as a justification for the country's rapid, restrictive measures.

The last two categories are metaphorical images. The first metaphorical image is that of 'Greece: problem child'. This metaphor is deemed a metaphorical image because it merges two images together, the image of Greece and the image of a problematic child. In this case, Greece appears to be the counter opposite of the other European countries and thus, a double hierarchical antithesis is

created. Greece is contrasted to the other Member States but also to Greece of the economic crisis. From this metaphorical image it is evident that Greece was not taken seriously in the past, since it was used alternatively with ‘Greece, the bad student’. The last metaphorical image is that of ‘Greece, black sheep’ that in this case as well merges two images. This metaphor only appears 3 times and it has a completely negative connotation. This characterization only comes after mistakes are made and thus, it is a very judgmental metaphor.

In general, it is difficult to conclude whether the authors believe if the metaphors are true or not. It can be argued that the authors wanted to remind their readership about Greece’s past and highlight the huge gap that is produced between the two cases. Although Greece is a ‘problem child’, ‘a black sheep’, has an ‘ailing healthcare system’ and a ‘fragile economy’ managed to handle the outbreak.

Conclusions

From the findings, it can be argued that in both cases (Greece of the debt crisis and pandemic Greece) Greece was presented in an orientalist manner, with the first case depicting Greece as a unique, bad example while the second, as an exemplary case. The political setting might have played an important role in that direction, since Greece of today seemed to coincide more with globalization and europeanization, after following through with reforms and the change in government. The containment success is only tainted by the lack of massive testing, the large number of refugees and migrants that are concentrated in camps and the description of Greece of the debt crisis, which appears to be the counter opposite of Greece of the pandemic. Greece of the past is mentioned with the worst colors not only by the used metaphors, but also by the simple reference to the events that were taking place and the effects that they had. The two depictions are very different, not only because of the harsh coverage Greece has had during the first phase of the Greek debt crisis, but also afterwards. Of course, the stance of the media changed, and Greece managed to gain a more favorable coverage, but this coverage is still very different to the coverage that Greece had during the pandemic.

Lastly, when it comes to the similarities and differences that arise across the titles, it is evident that there is a recurring theme across the English and Spanish-speaking articles and that is the handling of the crisis. The English-speaking articles chose two different titles to depict that (‘how to handle the crisis, role-model’) while the Spanish-speaking media preferred to portray Greece as an exemplary model. The second similarity is that of the ‘unlikely success story’

and the 'miracle case'. The two categories present the handling of the pandemic in the same way, but they choose a different wording to portray that with the second one stretching more the unlikeliness of this success.

When it comes to the differences, the English-speaking media referred to the flattening of the curve and the next steps that Greece would have to follow whereas the Spanish-speaking media compared to Greece to other countries and did not focus on the next steps. Lastly, the word 'anomaly' that was used in the Spanish-speaking media and was not found in the English ones, refer to a positive deviation, although the wording is ambiguous.

This research highlights that although the media varied, they still portrayed the Greek healthcare crisis in a similar way with the homogenization being more evident in the English-speaking articles. Lastly, another conclusion that can be drawn is that globalization has not only affected the products we use, but also our news, since the media that were selected although varied in forms, language, and political affiliations, they still portrayed the healthcare crisis in a similar manner.

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