
Article:
Veneti, A., Lilleker, D. and Reilly, P.J. orcid.org/0000-0002-6890-778X (2020) Photographing the 'battlefield': The role of ideology in photojournalist practices during the anti-austerity protests in Greece. Journalism, 21 (6). pp. 855-872. ISSN 1464-8849

https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918809521

Photographing the 'Battlefield': The role of Ideology in photojournalist practices during the anti-austerity protests in Greece

Abstract

This paper explores the interactions between photojournalists, police and protesters during protests and demonstrations, with a focus on how they influence photographic practices. Journalistic scholarship on issues of objectivity along with the theoretical framework of *ideologically structured action* (Zald, 2000) are employed in order to examine how the ideological, personal and professional values of photojournalists shape their coverage of protests. These issues are addressed through an empirical study of photojournalists who were tasked with capturing footage of the anti-austerity demonstrations seen in Greece since 2010. The paper presents the results of a critical thematic analysis of 20 semi-structured interviews conducted with Greek photojournalists between 2015 and 2016. It explores the factors that shaped the image production processes of these photojournalists, with a particular focus on how their often antagonistic interactions with police and protesters led them to reflect upon their role in covering the anti-austerity protests in Greece during this period.

Keywords: Photojournalism, objectivity, ideology, anti-austerity protests, interviews, ideologically structured action

Introduction

> "Being a photojournalist who has covered wars with Reuters for over 24 years I feel sad to be covering a "financial war" in my own country but at the same time I know that I must remain unbiased and objective"
>
> Yannis Behrakis, winner of 2016 Pulitzer Prize (Reuters' blog)

The above quote illustrates the emotional and ideological challenges faced by photojournalists covering political events such as the anti-austerity protests that have occurred in Greece since 2010. As Veneti (2017: 282) argues, coverage of protests "can be tricky, ambivalent and highly conflictual"; photographers can find themselves in situations that create tensions between the professional guidelines for protest reportage and their personal beliefs (Sritharan, 2015).

During the past thirty years, there have been many studies highlighting the crucial role of news images in shaping public perception of protests (Arpan et al., 2006; Corrigall-Brown et al., 2007). The power of such protest imagery is linked to its perceived 'level of authenticity' (Åker, 2012: 327), with these images considered by many viewers to be an unbiased and truthful depiction of reality (Barnhurst, 1994). The importance of protest images has been magnified in the digital era due to the unprecedented speed with which such images are circulated and brought to the attention of international audiences via social media (Reilly, 2015; Veneti, 2017) either as the product of professional photojournalism or amateur pictures by citizen journalism (Allan, 2015). A growing body of literature has focussed on the impact of such imagery upon the framing of protests (Perlmutter, 2004; DeLuca et al., 2012), as well as their use to either legitimize or delegitimize protesters (McLeod & Hertog, 1992; Juris, 2005) or provide evidence of police brutality (Ruiz, 2017). However, thus far, there has been only a few studies that have investigated the processes that underpin photojournalistic coverage of protests (Veneti, 2017; Faulkner, 2013; Hattingh and Gaede, 2011).

This article contributes to this emergent field by empirically investigating the image production processes of photojournalists. Our analytical approach combines journalism theories of objectivity and ideology with the theoretical framework of ideologically structured action elaborated by Zald (2000); these are used in order to explore the individual level factors that shape the protest imagery captured and shared by photojournalists. Specifically, it presents the results of a critical thematic analysis of 20 semi-structured interviews conducted with Greek photojournalists between July 2015 and July 2016. A particular focus of the study was on how their often antagonistic interactions

with police and protesters had led them to reflect upon their role in covering the anti-austerity protests in Greece during this period.

Anti-austerity protests in Greece 2010 - 2016

The roots of the current wave of anti-austerity protests in Greece can be traced back to the national debt crisis and subsequent financial bailout at the turn of the decade. In May 2010, the Greek government signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (mnimónio) with the so called 'Troika' i.e. the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Commission (EC), and the European Central Bank (ECB). In effect, this 'bailout treaty' guaranteed loans for the Greek government to address the debt crisis, provided they implemented austerity measures and deep structural reforms which many observers felt were both 'destructive' and 'punitive' (Ramoglou, 2016).[i] This first treaty further increased Greek debt and was followed by further agreements including the third Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece which began in August 2015 (European Council, 2017). Austerity policies had a significant negative impact upon the Greek economy as demonstrated by 30 percent reduction in state expenditure, pensions and salaries being halved, and various labour rights being restricted or removed altogether (Douzinas, 2013). By 2016, Greek unemployment had reached 23.6 percent (ELSTAT, *Labour Force Surveys*, 2016), with an estimated 3.8 million citizens living in poverty (Vaiou and Kalandides, 2017).

This socio-economic crisis was accompanied by deep political instability. Political power has been held by four governments since the signing of the first 'austerity' memorandum, ranging from the socialist PASOK administration (2009-2011), to the coalition government created by the left wing SYRIZA and the right-wing populist Independent Greeks in January 2015. The instability was exacerbated by the wave of protests,

occupations and 'solidarity initiatives' (Vaiou and Kalandides, 2017: 2). The two most striking characteristics of the post-2010 protests have been their representativeness (with participants from various ideologies, races, ages, and occupations involved) and the unprecedented scale of their mobilization (Douzinas, 2013). The Athens police faced widespread criticism for their excessive use of tear gas to disperse the rioters, and were also accused of indiscriminately assaulting protesters (Douzinas, 2013). Xenakis (2012) argues that the unchecked aggression and brutality associated with the Greek riot police (the MAT)[ii] actions may itself have fomented civil disobedience amongst many citizens. Photojournalists also found themselves the target of the police and MAT (Amnesty International, 2012; Reporters without Borders, 2016). For example, photojournalist Manolis Kipraios would experience permanent hearing loss in both ears after a police officer threw a stun grenade at him during an anti-austerity protest on June 15, 2011. It is within this environment that we explore how the experiences of photojournalists, as well as their personal values, shaped their practices.

Much of the Greek news media coverage of the anti-austerity protests has focused on the destruction of property and the violent confrontations between police and protesters, despite these being relatively isolated incidents during the demonstrations. This was viewed by some researchers as an attempt by the government and the mainstream media to demonize and marginalize the protesters (Douzinas, 2013). More specifically, the Greek media are said to have interests that overlap with those of political and economic elites (Papathanassopoulos, 2001), with these political affiliations coming to the fore during such periods of political contention (Komninou, 1996). Douzinas (2013:89) argued that the mainstream media was complicit in the efforts of the Greek government to conflate the protests with the illegality and lawlessness of these incidents. Similar media framing

practices can be found in the coverage of the protests following the unlawful killing of Grigoropoulos'.[iii] As Batziou (2015) suggests, most news organizations would broadcast images that appeared to show the protesters as instigating the violence, or attempting to differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' protesters, between the peaceful protester and the hooded hooligan at the fringes of society. Photojournalists therefore find themselves constrained not only ideologically but also by the market forces prevalent in the media which determine what images are most likely to sell.

The ideology and identity of professional journalists

In contrast to the paucity of research on photojournalism, the factors that shape the production of news has long been in the epicentre of journalism studies (van Zoonen, 1998; Zelizer, 2004). Personal, ideological and institutional factors are said to shape the behavior and practices of journalists (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Hanitzsch et al., 2010). The strongly entrenched values associated with the dominant professional ideology, such as objectivity, autonomy and ethics remain influential within such journalistic practices (see Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001 for example). Deuze (2005) suggests that journalists across the globe refer to these in order to legitimise their practices, despite there being no consensus on how each should be interpreted. Although, some studies have identified similar processes of professionalization (see Hanitzsch et al. 2010 for example), Weaver (1998: 468) concludes that there is a significant national variation in professional norms and values that does not allow for 'universal occupational standards' in journalism. Hence, it has been argued by some that that professional ideology is an active practice rather than a fixed condition, with

professional journalistic codes “interpreted, used and applied differently among journalists across media” (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996: 11).

Thus far, there have been few studies that have explored how individual characteristics, such as political-ideological beliefs, shape journalists’ perceptions of their praxis (Patterson and Donsbach 1996; Skovsgaard et al., 2013). One explanation for this might be the professional and organizational constraints within the journalism ‘industry’, such as the degree of professional autonomy and the impact of media ownership upon editorial policies (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). There has also been an over-reliance on survey-based studies of journalism practice that provide little insight into the personal beliefs of practitioners. Those that have explored these internalised norms have found that personal viewpoints are particularly influential in narratives adopted by journalists during the early stage of protests, with professional values, organizational and economic factors becoming increasingly important during the later stages (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014).

Within this limited strand of research, Hattingh and Gaede (2011) have offered critical insights on issues of journalistic autonomy and images of resistance from the perspective of professional photographers. In their study of photographers who covered the anti-apartheid protests in South Africa during the 1980s, they found that politicised views of the struggle against apartheid resulted in a more strategic approach towards the protest imagery captured and shared. Similarly, Veneti’s (2017), qualitative study of photojournalists found their personal and ideological perspectives of events are reflected in their aesthetic choices, with photographs used to ‘humanise’ protesters.

While it has long been claimed that it is the duty of the journalist to capture ‘objective truth’ (Daston and Galison, 2007), photojournalists’ personal interpretations of events do appear to be indelibly stamped on their images (Ritchin, 2013; Sontag,

2008/1977). This notion of journalistic objectivity has been contested in a variety of studies over the past few decades (Donsbach and Klett, 1993; Skovsgaard et al., 2013). McNair (2000) suggested it offers at best a form of 'pluralist subjectivity;' the most attainable objective truth is based upon a combination of different subjective readings of events. This focuses attention on the notion of the journalist as a human interacting with other humans, as vividly demonstrated by media coverage of disasters which frequently combines "journalistic narrative and emotion/action" (Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2013: 963). Yet, Sreedharan (2009) argues that it may be impossible for any journalist to be fully objective irrespective of the subject of their coverage; a combination of their background and lived experiences influence their decisions over what to cover and how it should be framed for their audiences. For example, studies have suggested that the conceptualisation of objectivity varies between different cultural and professional environments (Schudson, 2001; Hampton, 2008).

Although photographs are often closely associated with objectivity and truthfulness (Mäenpää, 2014), Åker (2012: 336) argues that photographs should been seen as "interpretations and constructions of reality and not parts of it." This is congruent with the findings of Tumber's (2006) study of how foreign correspondents cover disasters. He argues that the journalistic 'witnessing'is designed to awaken people to human tragedies rather than reporting in a detached, impartial manner. Accepting the problematic nature of defining objectivity, we argue that photographs constitute predominantly subjective readings of an event that, at best, represent the most truthful version of the events witnessed. Indeed, a growing body of scholarship has generated new understandings and representations of protests that have disrupted the protest paradigm (Hall et al., 2018; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2014) which suggests that the news media generally support the

status quo by marginalizing and even demonizing protesters (Chan & Lee, 1984). Following such arguments, this paper investigates the photojournalists' ideological and ethical approaches, as well as their own perceptions of objectivity and its impact on their practice. Our study examines whether and how their coverage of protest events is shaped by their personal and ideological beliefs, organizational constraints and the industry norms they experience in their work.

In addition to the above theories from the field of journalism, we also draw on the concept of ideologically structured action (hereafter referred to as ISA), to analyse such processes. ISA, first conceptualized by Dalton (1994) and applied to the study of social movements (Zald, 2000), refers to "behavior shaped by ideologically charged beliefs, factual and evaluative, about both the ends of action and the means of action" (McCarthy and Zald, 2001:549). The suggestion that "ideology both emerges from and manifests itself in practice" (Zald 2000: 4) is particularly pertinent to our exploration of whether photojournalists' actions are influenced by personal beliefs and ideologies. As Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2014) argues, journalists' individual identification with the protesters is an under-researched area, which we argue can only be explored by combining the aforementioned theoretical frameworks from journalism and social movement studies.

Following McCarthy and Zald's (2001: 549) argument that ideology emerges from of a "complex process of cultural and historical development," it is important to consider how it shapes the processes of photojournalism. During their coverage of protests this might include the decision of which group to align with, as well as the vantage point from which images should be shot. This is particularly salient in those circumstances where dynamics between the different agents [(photo)journalists, police and protesters] become more complex (della Porta et al., 2006), such as during the isolated incidents of violence that

occurred on the fringes of the anti-austerity protests in Greece during this period. Both Dalton's (1994) and Zald's (2000) conceptualization of ISA offers an integrated approach to culture, structure and action that allows for a deeper examination of the symbols produced in the context of protests. Therefore, ISA complements our journalistic-focused analysis by focussing attention on the cultural and historical influences on Greek photojournalism during this period.

Specifically, there were three research questions that emerged from the preceding literature review that were investigated in this study. These were:

RQ1: How do photojournalists perceive their own practices in terms of adhering to norms of objectivity?

RQ2: How do photojournalists position themselves ideologically in relation to the police and protesters?

RQ3: Is ISA evident in the practices of Greek photojournalists during the coverage of anti-austerity protests?

Method

The paper presents the results of a critical thematic analysis of 20 semi-structured interviews conducted with Greek photojournalists during a period of a year (July 2015- July 2016). A purposeful sampling technique was initially employed to identify participants with relevant experience, with subsequent interviewees recruited through the snowballing method. The sample included eight freelancers, ten photographers in contracted positions, and two stringers working for international news agencies such as Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), Reuters, Bloomberg, Athens News Agency (ANA), Panos

Pictures, Greek photo agencies (Eurokinissi and SOOC), the Chinese Xinhua and the Greek media. The sample also varied in terms of gender (six interviewees were female), and years of employment, including photojournalists in their twenties with less than three years of experience as well as several aged over 40 years old who had more than 20 years in the profession. Contact was established through the Union of the Greek Photojournalists and the photojournalists that were interviewed were chosen based upon their experience of having shot footage of the anti-austerity protests in Greece that was later published in the national and international press. In terms of political orientation, the majority of the photojournalists were identified as being closer to the left, two participants were allied with center-left parties and two with center-right, while two participants admitted their relation to the Greek anarchists.

Four interviews were conducted via Skype, the rest were conducted face-to-face. The duration of the interviews varied between 45 minutes and two-hours. The discussion revolved around four main themes, namely: (a) the factors that influence their practice (aesthetic, personal, professional, ideological); (b) their interaction with protesters and the police; (c) the processes underpinning the selection and publication of such images by the news media; and (d) the use of social media to share images. For the scope of this paper, we focus primarily on (a) and (b). Despite the fact that specific published images were mentioned during these interviews, the focus here was on the general approach that photojournalists took when capturing the protest events and the type of images they would shoot.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed in both Greek and English for the purposes of coding. The six phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013) were then implemented in order to analyse these data. This process, beginning with

line-by-line reading of the transcripts and culminating in the definition of themes, took place between May and September 2017. Due to the discussion of potentially sensitive issues such as allegations of police violence against photojournalists, it was agreed that the identities of interviewees would not be disclosed in the study. Congruent with the approach of previous research into conflict and post-conflict contexts (Reilly, 2015), participants were anonymised and identified according to pseudonyms and role/ affiliation (for example, stringer).

Results and Discussion

Photojournalists' perception of objectivity in their practices

In relation to our first research question, photojournalists active during the protests in Greece appeared to share Sreedharan's (2009) observation about the factors that shaped their reportage. One stringer highlighted the 'tightrope' a photojournalist in his/her position had to traverse when asked to what extent personal ideology affected their practice:

> "To a great extent. However, you do need to put this aside in order to work. There are only few photojournalists, especially those working for international news wires that express personal views… There are specific policies from such agencies regarding what you do and what you don't, it depends where you work". (George, stringer, international agency)

This view was common among all interviewees:

> "There is always an internal conflict, among your own political beliefs and those that you have to cover… I do not want to say that I am objective but what I want to say is that I am honest." (Manos, staff, international agency)

Honesty was viewed as an integral part of the professional norms to which journalists should adhere to. Our photojournalists appeared to offer a more nuanced conceptualization of their approach to accurately recording protest events. As one interviewee posited:

> "I prefer to have an honest subjective approach instead of deceiving people that my picture is objective. Anyway, we are talking about an image that it is a fragment of a reality [...] You have a flow of events unfolding in front of you and you are asked to cut and chop it, to freeze the event." (Achilleas, staff, Greek media)

Our findings appeared to corroborate previous research that highlighted differences between the professional values, as well as the conceptualization of objectivity, held by journalists working in different cultural and political settings (Donsbach and Klett; 1993; Schudson, 2001). The subjective honest approach proposed by our participants was achievable within practice, while also being reconciled with their professional values (or ethos). Moreover, our results resonated with previous research showing photojournalists do not adhere to traditional notions of objectivity and truth (Åker, 2012). Congruent with Tenenboim-Weinblatt's (2014) study, some photojournalists were quite open about having an affinity with the protesters:

> "I, as a worker, demand and fight for some issues. As photojournalists we have been on strikes. So when you have another worker [at the protest] who asks for some things, [...] more or less you feel some kind of connection". (Jim, freelancer)

> "I too was one of them, a potential protester, because potentially all those measures passing through Parliament were against me too […] So, on that level, I identified with the protesters, because I could see they were right". (Alexis, stringer international and local agencies)

This solidarity between photojournalist and protester lead some of our interviewees to question whether it was possible for them to be fully objective:

> "[I] cannot but be a trade unionist or a politically active subject. I do not believe that there is objective photography. There is no such thing". (Costas, stringer, international agency)

Yet despite recognising that total objectivity may be impossible to be achieved, this did not mean that photojournalists were bound to shoot a one-sided perspective of events:

> "That doesn't mean of course that if a police officer finds himself cut-off, alone, which has happened on some occasions, and he's being beaten up, I'm not going to shoot that […] I shoot both sides, whatever happens." (Alexis, stringer international and local agencies)

Hence, the lived experiences of photojournalists appeared to shape their approaches to their work. Unconstrained by the need to satisfy the demands of major news media outlets, they freely admitted their solidarity with the protesters in their struggle against the Greek government. Yet, shooting the perspective of both sides was a professional imperative, a practice through which they could produce images that were valuable to news outlets. Therefore, they attempted to record events with reference to both their personal and professional values.

A complicated relationship: Photojournalists, police and protesters

Our interviewees explained how they had been exposed to violence, threatened and had their equipment damaged by both police and demonstrators:

"I have been on the receiving end of verbal threats from either side" (Ares, staff, Greek media).

Despite the tension in their relationship, the interviewees chose not to demonize the police as an institution, and singled out the the riot police (MAT) for their use of violence during these demonstrations. Several acknowledged there was more than one approach towards how protests were policed and that the dynamics between protesters and the police were often determined by the internal organization of the police unit (see della Porta et al., 2006 for example). Maria (stringer, international agency) argued that unit commanders determined these dynamics, and another interviewee claimed that they had overheard one saying:

> " "don't let me hear of a photographer being hit; I'll have your heads for it". And then there's other protests where they're like, hit 'em, beat 'em up,". (Alexis, stringer international and local agencies)

Nearly all of the interviewees expressed anger and frustration at photojournalists being the victims of unjustified violence mainly by the police:

> "When my colleague was attacked [...] we were a group of 15-20 people… the police were next to us, no one else, nothing, and all of a sudden we're being attacked by the MAT forces. No reason, just like that, without provocation.." (Ares, staff, Greek media)

All suggested that the police violence towards photojournalists was motivated by the fear of being exposed for using heavy-handed tactics against the protesters. Our participants suggested that the police viewed their cameras as "weapons," and

photojournalists working for independent media as having close relationships with the protesters:

> "[...] police violence spiked after 2008, with the Grigoropoulos affair [etc.],; and we simply shot that spike…. And they didn't like that either. Papoutsis, the ex-minister of Public Order under the PASOK socialist government, told us when we met him, that the MATmen looked at our cameras and saw them as potential killing weapons [...]They're afraid to be seen beating up someone." (Costas, stringer, international agency)

> "I mean, at times when they arrest people violently, when they hit protesters; and I was there shooting, I was not alone; but I was attacked. I mean, I was punched in the face". (Maria, stringer, international agency)

Our photojournalists asserted that riot police were rarely, if ever, held accountable for these unprovoked assaults. This perception that the MAT could act with impunity created widespread frustration and anger amongst photojournalists, many of whom already felt a strong sense of injustice about the policing of the protests. Such situations appeared to have brought photojournalists and protesters together in the 'battlefield,' both symbolically and physically as the victims of police brutality. Returning to our research question, witnessing such perceived injustices appeared to lead these photojournalists to produce a more emotive narrative on these events (see Andén-Papadopoulos and Pantti, 2013). In some cases, these assaults would also lead some photojournalists to perceive the police as their enemy, while strengthening their bonds with the protesters and further blurring their identity: "maybe our relationship with the protesters angers them" (Alexis, stringer international and local agencies). As a result of these interactions, we can observe

the tension between the professional values of photojournalists and elements of Tumber's (2006) 'journalism of attachment'.

ISA and photographic practices during the anti-austerity protests

Distinctions between Greek photojournalists and protesters appear increasingly blurred. Common experiences and a rather similar ideological stance towards the problems that the austerity measures have inflicted upon the Greek society can be seen as prevalent factors in this blurring of identities. McCarthy & Zald's (2001: 549) argument that ideology is shaped by complex cultural processes enables us to further understand how the background and lived experiences of the photojournalists, prior to and during the protests affect their practice from the choice of alliance formation to specific photographic tactics.

A recurring theme was that photojournalists empathized with the anti-austerity protesters who had been violently suppressed by the Greek police during this period. Indeed, they saw it as their duty to accurately represent the experiences of those activists with whom they were often embedded. Similar to photojournalists covering anti-apartheid protests in South Africa (Hattingh and Gaede, 2011), Greek photojournalists sought to use their cameras to depict unjust behaviors along with the struggle of those opposing the austerity policies in Greece. In this light, it is important to observe how photojournalists' perceived role in society impacted on their adherence to the journalistic norm of objectivity (Skovsgaard et al., 2013).

> "... we were shooting the kids being arrested [...] The MATmen were saying don't shoot, don't shoot [...]. But those arrested were shouting, shoot me, look at me, here am I..." (Costas, stringer, international agency)

Whereas previously photojournalists had been compelled to remain behind police lines during such incidents, the ability to shoot from the vantage point of the protesters was said to have liberated them, to a certain extent, from such editorial constraints. The consensus amongst the interviewees was that since 2008 protesters were less likely to view photojournalists with suspicion due to this commitment to covering protests from their point as well. A constant refrain of the interviewees was that this was necessary in order to provide more balanced coverage of these incidents:

> "Whilst in the old days, because we were all seen as working for private TV channels, who used to transmit bullshit, the protesters themselves had driven us behind the police, [...]. Whether we liked it or not. You couldn't go side by side with the protesters, they'd beat you up. So you had to go behind the police lines. It's dangerous there, too, but I don't want to be behind the police lines. I want to be behind the protesters' lines too. Or in between. I want to have the possibility to move as I choose." (Costas, staff, international agency)

But it is not always simply a matter of producing a balanced perspective. The study also suggested there was a significant overlap between the ideological leanings of photojournalists and the protesters with whom they were embedded (see also Shultziner and Shoshan, 2017). In many cases, interviewees talked openly about identifying with the anti-austerity agenda especially anarchists within the profession, who particularly saw it as their duty to highlight the beatings meted out to protesters during these demonstrations. Even those interviewees who suggested they had minimal ideological ties to the protest movement intimated they perceived themselves as potential protesters due to the socio-economic crisis that had beset Greece since 2008:

> "It's clear to me I would never show a police officer in a favourable light. I wouldn't do that, out of personal conviction. I've always published pictures that depict the situation at hand, but what I try to shoot is an image that serves the weaker party; and I'm the weaker party too. [...]" (Nick, freelancer)

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there was significant variation in the extent to which these photojournalists identified with the protesters. Similar to the findings of Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2014), the interviewees had different perspectives on whether they should be ideologically or emotionally involved with the protesters. In addition, this coverage was said to be shaped by the institutional pressures faced by stringers and photojournalists in contracted positions, which were perhaps less of an issue for the freelancers. In particular, those working on a contractual basis for international news agencies had to negotiate the 'conflict' between their own ideological-political beliefs and their professional norms. Conversely, freelancers appeared to be more freely able to negotiate such internal conflicts.

> "photographing a protest of far right supporters opposes my personal beliefs. However, this does not mean that I should not take photos of them [...] you need to cover it. It has to do with professionalism". (Manos, staff, international agency)

Our participants suggested that the final visual outcome was shaped by three key factors, namely their 'shooting instinct' (related to experience), an understanding of the demands of the market, and their ideological beliefs. Zald's (2000:4) argument that "ideology both emerges from and manifests itself in practice" was illustrated by our finding that photojournalists' actions were influenced by complex combinations of personal values, beliefs, professional norms and the environment in which they were operating. These factors, to different extents, shaped their practice in different ways and were evident in

their thematic representations of the protests. As discussed below, ISA appeared to inform these photojournalists' perceptions of objectivity.

(a) The 'phantasmagoria of the battlefield'

The consensus amongst the interviewees was that pictures of mayhem 'sell well,' with those depicting molotov flames, tear gas, stone throwing and other scenes of violent confrontations most likely to be purchased and published by mainstream news outlets. Such photos were said by our participants to adhere to the criteria long associated with newsworthiness (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). Indeed, Greek photojournalists appeared fully aware of the marketplace for such imagery:

> "The photos with the molotovs always sell well. A picture in which someone throws the Molotov, the movement. The riot police in flames. These are those you see the most". (Spiros, freelancer)

> "I photograph tension. And what's going on. We photograph everything. Even a Molotov bomb thrown at a police officer who is subsequently set on fire. 'Cause the police, you know, they think we are one-sided." (Costas, stringer, international agency)

Although photojournalists aimed to capture 'all sides', in reality this was not possible due to the editorial and organizational structures of news organizations they collaborated with during these demonstrations. Decisions relating to which images were used to capture these events would be made by news organizations that were unduly influenced by vested interests:

> "Do you focus on the police or the protesters? That depends on the media for which you are working and on what exactly they wish to present and what they want to gain from disseminating a specific piece of information. Some media serve specific 'interests' and ideologies. [...] every medium selects what to present". (Spiros, freelancer)

Our participants appeared fully aware of the implications of these market forces. There was also a recognition this created an irreconcilable tension between their personal beliefs and the editorial lines taken by such organizations:

> "When you do a job for a living you do some steps back. However, there are some red lines to those. We all have our red lines. If my employer asks me to cross these, I won't do it no matter the consequences". (Costas, stringer, international news agency)

> "I openly admit that I have different ways of operating depending on for whom I am working. People do not easily talk about this, because it's your job at the end of the day [...]" (Giorgos, stringer, international news agency)

These 'different ways of working' mainly applied to the processes whereby photojournalists would select the pictures they intended to sell to media organizations.

While our participants claimed that they were 'documenting reality,' they also reflected on their practice and perception of reality and recognise both the blurring of their identity that can be understood through the lens of ISA and the various editorial constraints. Their ISA might not always correspond with the editorial stance of the organizations they sell images to. They all recognised their vital role in shooting the images that featured in news media

reportage of the protests but acknowledged as various studies suggest (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Grayson, 2013) that the final call regarding the selection of these images remained with the editors:

> "[...]I had the freedom to shot whatever I wanted but I also knew what they would select and publish. [...]". (Costas, stringer, international news agency)

> "[the selection of the photo] depends on the target audience, the editor's choice... What kind of images does he want to publish and how many? [...] However, the problem is not as much technical as it is political. So, what the photographer does, and what do I do? I try to be very careful with the pictures I give, so as not to be utilised for propaganda from any side. This is not always feasible but I try [...] I avoid selecting images that can be misinterpreted or be interpreted to serve various interests. [...]". (Manos, international agency)

(b) Documenting reality

The blurring of photojournalists' identities was most evident when our participants spoke about how important it was to document evidence of police brutality. For example, several interviewees stated that they had taken photographs of teenagers being beaten by the police, with a view to defending them from any criminal prosecution and providing evidence that the MAT had used excessive force.

> "When you hold the power that an image has, in particular in special occasions, like when colleagues or protesters are beaten by police without reason, then you can see that those images can be used as a proof of what has happened and therefore you feel that you have to take such images". (Jim, freelancer)

> "[…] From 2008 onwards, we had this practice of publishing pictures and we went out publicly, as a union, supporting the group of lawyers helping out the kids that were being arrested en mass. The cops, the MATmet, would just pluck any kid that was running around. So, using our photographs, we could prove that this particular kid, at the time of the arrest, was not carrying any bag, say. [as bags could contain missiles or weapons]". (Costas, stringer, international agency)

Photojournalism thus developed into a form of activism during the anti-austerity protests in Greece. Practitioners believed that, just as in South Africa during the anti-apartheid demonstrations, they were "doing it for the right cause" (Hattingh & Gaede, 2011: 504):

> "if some protesters are throwing rocks or whatever, it would be better if you didn't distribute pictures showing their faces. […] First of all, because of the impact that this might have on this person. If he will be arrested, it [the photo] will be used against him in the trial. And secondly, because the anarchist world, with and without inverted comas for the anarchist world, does not wish that such images are circulated. There's this trust built over the last few years, we've come closer, they've let us work on their side, it's like… it's like a common secret, a silent pact. It started I think around 2008..." (Alexis, stringer international and local agencies)

> "We are not really objective, because when the police beat them we do shoot that [...]. Look, at the end of the day, I believe, you do tell the truth. I mean the destructions, one way or the other you do depict them. Ok. You will not shoot their faces, I told you I do not want to be the cause that...and I am not in a position to judge their outbreak, there are teams that smash banks and public buildings, I am not saying I accept this..."(Maria, stringer, international agency)

However, those who have expressed high levels of identification with the protesters confessed more intense personal dilemmas that went far beyond their professional identity and the need to actually do the job:

> "This is a big problem for me. Cause I come from the anarchist world. Since the time that I was participating at protests, I had no issue with revealing my face. However, as I know that some people do not want to show their faces, especially when there is mayhem, molotovs etc, I cannot overcome myself and I cannot take photos that show these people doing such stuff. [*Even if you know that such pictures will sell well?*] Yes. And that makes me mad when I return home. But I cannot do otherwise. Yesterday again that happened to me. My girlfriend asked how did it go? You did it again? I told her I shoot some fires, molotovs. But those images that would sell the most, I could not turn towards their side". (Jim, freelancer)

The most obvious instantiation of ISA is therefore protecting protesters, even if they commit criminal damage, by hiding their identities. Yet there are hints, often just inferences, that broader considerations also influence the actions of photojournalists:

> "The photo bears truth on its own but at the same time the photographer can build on that. It is whom who will decide what will be included and what will be left outside [...] Being human makes you more vulnerable to what's going on around you". (Spiros, freelancer)

CONCLUSION

This study provides further insight into the relatively under-researched topic of how the personal values and ideologies of photojournalists may conflict with the organizational and

professional norms of this field. Drawing on theories of objectivity, ideology and the ISA, we sought to explain how personal and political beliefs of photojournalists, as well as their interactions with police and protesters (ideological and spatial) affect their photographic practice. The theoretical framework of ISA, placing emphasis on culture, structure and action, revealed how Greek photojournalists express sympathy and in some cases an affinity with the anti-austerity protesters. Moreover, the experiences during the protests lead them to witness and suffer repression at the hands of police. Thereupon, while they recognise that some protesters commit acts of violence they can understand the reasons, while they see any state repression as unfair. Despite organizational constraints and well-established professional norms being significant factors to their practice, their personal values and ideologies equally impact upon where they point their cameras. Hence, we find Greek photojournalists adopt a nuanced view of objectivity, claiming they wish to document the truth but admitting it is a truth as they see it.

Due to the specific circumstances, Greece has been a compelling case that offered us critical insights on the photographic practices, it offers insights into photojournalists' perceptions and their affinities with various groups present in the protest, as well as their experience of the clash between their ideology and market forces. The importance of this discussion is elevated given that the Greek media are seen as having overlapping interests with business and political elites and these influences how protests are covered. There may be other hidden factors that shape photojournalistic practices, which should be investigated in future research. Hence our research offers direction for future researchers to consider the extent all forms of journalism could be considered ISA. With powerful imagery being shared online, photojournalists may have an increasingly important role to play in the contemporary media

ecology given the speed with which protest imagery can be shared online and the potential impact this might have on attitudes towards its subjects. Hence using the ISA framework to explore their approach to events, where they point their cameras and what factors influence the composition of images is an important and fertile area of study.

References

Åker P (2012) Photography, objectivity and the modern newspaper. *Journalism Studies* 13(3): 325-339.

Allan S (2015) Introduction:Photojournalism and citizen journalism. *Journalism Practice* 9(4): 455-464.

Amnesty International (2012) Police violence in Greece. Not just 'isolated incidents'. Available at https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur25/005/2012/en/ (accessed 25 May 25 2017).

Andén-Papadopoulos K and Pantti M (2013) Re-imagining crisis reporting: Professional ideology of journalists and citizen eyewitness images. *Journalism* 14(7): 960–977.

Arpan LM, Baker K, Lee Y, Jung T, Lorusso L and Smith J (2006) News coverage of social protests and the effects of photographs and prior attitudes. *Mass Communication & Society* 9: 1–20.

Batziou A (2015) A Christmas Tree in Flames and Other – Visual – Stories: Looking at the Photojournalistic Coverage of the Greek Protests of December 2008. *Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest* 14(1): 22-41.

Barnhurst KG (1994) Photography as culture. *Medien & Zeit* 1(94): 17-24.

Braun V and Clarke V (2013) *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. London: Sage.

Behrakis Y (2011) In the eye of the Greek storm. Available at http://blogs.reuters.com/photographers-blog/2011/11/14/in-the-eye-of-the-greek-storm/ (accessed 3 July 2017).

Chan, J. M. and Lee, C. C. (1984). The journalistic paradigm on civil protests: A case study of Hong Kong. In: Arno A and Dissanayake W (eds) *The news media in national and international conflict*. Boulder: Westview Press, pp.183-202.

Dalton RJ (1994) *The Green Rainbow: Environmental Groups in Western Europe.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Daston LJ and Galison P (2007) *Objectivity*. New York and Cambridge, MA: Zone Books.

Della Porta D, Peterson A and Reiter H (2006) (eds) *The Policing of Transnational Protest*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

DeLuca KM, Lawson S and Sun Y (2012) Occupy Wall Street on the public screens of social media: The many framings of the birth of a protest movement. *Communication, Culture & Critique* 5: 483–509.

Deuze M (2005) What is journalism. Professional identity and ideology of journalists reconsidered. *Journalism*, 6(4): 442-464

Donsbach W and Klett B (1993) Subjective Objectivity. How Journalists in Four Countries Define a Key Term of their Profession. *Gazette* 51(1): 53–83.

Douzinas C (2013) *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis*. UK: Polity Press.

ELSTAT, Hellenic Statistical Authority (2016) *Labour Force Surveys 2016*. Available at goo.gl/k81YwS (accessed 20 May 2017).

European Council (2017) *Greece: the third economic adjustment programme*. Available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/financial-assistance-eurozone-members/greece-programme/ (accessed 20 May 2017).

Faulkner S (2013) Images and demonstrations in the Occupied West Bank. *JOMEC Journal* 1-19. Available at http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/jomecjournal/4-ovember2013/Faulkner_WestBank.pdf

Galtung J and Holmboe RM (1965) The structure of foreign news: The presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers. *Journal of Peace Research* 2: 65–91.

Grayson L (2013) Editorial photographs and patterns of practice. *Journalism Practice* 7:3, 314-328.

Hall S, Lenette C, Murray S, Chan C, Flannery A and Vickery K (2018) #LetThemStay: Visual representations of protests and community mobilization for asylum seekers in Australia. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* 7(1):38-55.

Hampton M (2008) The 'Objectivity' Ideal and Its Limitations in the 20th-century British Journalism. *Journalism Studies* 9(4): 477-93.

Hanitzsch T, Anikina M, Berganza R, Cangoz I, Coman M, Hamada B, Hanusch F, Karadjov CD, Mellado C, Moreira SV, Mwesige PG, Plaisance PL, Reich Z, Seethaler J, Skewes E, Noor DV and Yuen EKW (2010) Modeling Perceived Influences on Journalism: Evidence from a Cross-National Survey of Journalists. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 87 (1): 7–24.

Hattingh HMS and Gaede RJ (2011) Photographer autonomy and images of resistance: the case of South Africa during the 1980s." *Visual Communication* 10(4): 499-525.

Juris JS (2005) Violence performed and imagined: Militant action, the Black bloc and the mass media in Genoa. *Critique of Anthropology* 25(4): 413– 432.

Komninou M (1996) The role of the media in the Third Hellenic Republic. In: Lyrintzis C, Nicolacopoulos E and Sotiropoulos D (eds) *Society and politics: Facets of the Third Hellenic Democracy 1974–1994.* Athens: Themelio (in Greek), pp. 219–246.

Kovach B and Rosenstiel T (2001) *The Elements of Journalism*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Mäenpää J (2014) Rethinking Photojournalism. The changing work practices and professionalism of photojournalists in the digital age. *Nordicom Review* 35(2): 91-104.

McCarthy JD and Zald MN (2001) Resource mobilization theory: Vigorous or outmoded. In: Turner JH (eds) *Handbook of Sociological Theory*. New York: Springer, pp. 533-566.

McLeod DM and Hertog JK (1992) The manufacture of public opinion by reporters: Informal cues for public perceptions of protest groups. *Discourse & Society* 3: 259–275.

McNair B (2000) Power, profit, corruption, and lies. *The Russian media in the 1990s*. In: Curran J and Park JM (eds) *De-Westernizing media studies*. London: Routledge, pp. 79–94.

Papathanassopoulos S (2001) Media commercialization and journalism in Greece. *European Journal of Communication* 16: 505–521.

Patterson TE and Donsbach W (1996) News Decisions: Journalists as Partisan Actors. *Political Communication* 13:455–68.

Perlmutter DD (2004) The anatomy of a photojournalistic icon: Marginalization of dissent in the selection and framing of 'a death in Genoa'. *Visual Communication* 3(1): 91–108.

Reese SD (1990) The News Paradigm and the Ideology of Objectivity: A Socialist at the *Wall Street Journal*. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 7(4): 390–409.

Reilly, P. (2015) Every Little helps? YouTube, sousveillance and the 'anti-Tesco' riot in Bristol, *New Media and Society.* 17(5): 755-771.

Reporters Without Borders (2016) RWB condemns impunity for police violence against journalists. Available at https://rsf.org/en/news/rwb-condemns-impunity-police-violence-against-journalists (accessed 10 April 2017).

Ritchin F (2013) *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary, and the Citizen*. New York: Aperture.

Ruiz P (2017) *Power revealed: masked police officers in the public sphere. Visual Communication* 16(3): 299-314.

Schudson M (2001) The Objectivity Norm in American Journalism. *Journalism* 2(2): 149–70.

Skovsgaard M, Albæk E, Bro P and De Vreese C (2013) A reality check: How journalists' role perceptions impact their implementation of the objectivity norm. *Journalism* 14(1): 22–42.

Shoemaker P and Reese SD (1996) *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influence on Mass Media Content*. New York: Longman.

Shultziner D and Shoshan A (2017) A Journalists' Protest? Personal Identification and Journalistic Activism in the Israel Social Justice Protest Movement. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 1–28.

Snow DA, Vliegenthart R and Corrigall-Brown C (2007) Framing the French riots: A comparative study of frame variation. *Social Forces*, 86: 385–415.

Sreedharan C (2009) *Reporting Kashmir: an analysis of the conflict coverage in Indian and Pakistani newspapers*. PhD Thesis, Bournemouth University, UK.

Sritharan B (2015) Creating the new symbols of protest imagery. *British Journal of Photography*. Available at http://www.bjp-online.com/2015/12/natalie-keyssar-institute/?utm_source=British+Journal+of+Photography&utm_campaign=5b30812293-

BJP_Editorial_Newsletter4_24_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a74238e4ee-5b30812293-14178313 (accessed 2 April 2016).

Tenenboim-Weinblatt K (2014) Producing protest news: An inquiry into journalists' narratives. The *International Journal of Press/Politics* 19(4): 410-429.

Tumber H (2006) The fear of living dangerously: Journalists who report on conflict. *International Relations* 20(4): 439–451.

Vaiou D and Kalandides A (2017) Practices of solidarity in Athens: reconfigurations of public space and urban citizenship. *Citizenship Studies* 21(4): 440-454.

Van Zoonen L (1998) A Professional, Unreliable, Heroic Marionette (M/F): Structure, Agency and Subjectivity in Contemporary Journalisms. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 1(1): 123–43.

Veneti, A. (2017) "Aesthetics of protests: An examination of the photojournalistic approach to protest imagery." *Visual Communication* 16(3): 279-298.

Weaver DH (1998) (eds) *The Global Journalist: News People around the World*. New Jersey: Hampton Press.

Xenakis S (2012) A New Dawn? Change and Continuity in Political Violence in Greece. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24(3): 437-64.

Zald MN (2000) Ideologically structured action: An enlarged agenda for social movement research. *Mobilization: An International Journal* 5(1): 1-16.

Zelizer B (2004) *Taking Journalism Seriously: News and the Academy*. London: Sage.

[i] Ramoglou Stratos (2016) A false morality tale blocks the resolution of the Greek debt crisis. *The Conversation*. 10 September 2017, https://theconversation.com/a-false-morality-tale-blocks-the-resolution-of-the-greek-debt-crisis-59754

[ii] MAT (*Monades Apokatastasis Taksis* in Greek is translated as the Units for the Reinstatement of Order) are the Hellenic Police Force's Riot Control Units, akin to the UK's Territorial Support Group and France's CRS.

[iii] On 6 December 2008, 15 year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos was shot dead by a Greek police officer in central Athens. The unlawful killing of the teenager led to mass public demonstrations and days of rioting across several Greek cities (Douzinas, 2013).