



MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN GREECE UNDER CRISES

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THE CURRENT STUDY FOCUSES ON...

- How Greek daily press covers the issue of domestic violence against women in Greece from 2010 onwards.

 For the past decade, contemporary Greece is witnessing multiple and successive crises as many countries globally: the economic crisis from 2008 onwards, the humanitarian crisis due to the refugee crisis and the pandemic (hygiene) crisis due to covid – 19 spread.

METHODOLOGY

- Gender perspective of the social representations on domestic violence against women through the contemporary media rhetoric in Greece.
- Emphasis on *images* of victims and perpetrators as well as domestic violent acts scenes in order to understand more fully the mediating impact and influence of the daily press of distinct political affiliations towards perceptions, beliefs and stereotypical representations of the issue at stake.
- The sample design included all leading newspapers (N=12) across the whole of the political spectrum for the years 2011, 2018 and 2020. For the year 2020 electronic press is included too.

THE “SOUND OF SILENCE”

- Silence covers not only the phenomenon of the domestic violence against women but also its representations through the daily press.

From the almost 2.500 newspaper sheets examined only 121 relevant clippings emerged.

Greek daily press seems to adopt and perpetuate the dominant stereotypical perception of domestic violence against women as a phenomenon purely domestic, restricted to the domain of the private sphere and family life well protected by the sanctuary of “domus”.

“TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED”

- Press “narrations” portray domestic violence against women as an unpredictable or random phenomenon.
- As a phenomenon which takes place under particular circumstances where “things are getting somehow out of control” and violent acts against women by their spouses are occurring “unexpectedly”, or “in the heat of the moment”, by “peaceful family men”.
- Man perpetrators are presented as “victimized” by the circumstances and, therefore, non-accountable for their acts or even justified. There are recognized woman victim blaming as well as the already well noted repercussions of the toxic or romantic love.

The violent acts mentioned include predominantly physical assaults and abusive behavior as well as femicides which are always referred to as homicides or murder cases as the concept of femicide has not been embedded in press rhetoric and rational.

MALE PERPETRATORS AS PSYCHOPATHS

- Narrations of male perpetrators as psychopaths or mentally defective are common, always casting the blame upon their psychopathic state or the women victims, their state being portrayed as removing any aspect of calculation, sanity or control of actions, being this way justifiable.

**“Mentally disturbed
the matricide”, Τα
Nea, 18/06/2020**

Διαταραγμένος ψυχικά ο μητροκτόνος

Οικογενειακή τραγωδία στις Αχαρνές, όταν 34χρονος με ψυχολογικά προβλήματα επέθεσε με βιολίτιο στην 54χρονη μητέρα του και τη μαχαίρωσε, τραυματίζοντάς την θανάσιμα. Το στιγμικό έγκλημα έγινε προχθές αργά το βράδυ στο σπίτι της οικογένειας στην οδό Αγίου Σπυριδωνος. Ο 34χρονος συλληφθείς αντιμετωπίζει έντονα ψυχολογικά προβλήματα και σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες είχε νοσηλευτεί τουλάχιστον τέσσερις φορές σε κλινική. Φέρεται ότι μπήκε από την μπαλκονόπορτα στο δωμάτιο της άτυχης μητέρας του, την ακινητοποίησε και της κατάφερε τουλάχιστον έξι μαχαίριές στην κοιλιά. Τραγική φιγούρα ο πατέρας του δράστη, συνταξιοδότης αστυνομικός, ο οποίος τον τελευταίο καιρό εργαζόταν νυκτοβλάχικας σε εταιρεία. Την ώρα της δολοφονίας δεν ήταν στο σπίτι του, καθώς είχε φύγει λίγα νωρίτερα για να πάει στη δουλειά του.

ELEMENTS OF MYTH AND FATE

- Representations from ancient Greek philosophy deterministic conceptualization of destiny and fate as overarching conditions that cannot be avoided.

“The tragic story of the chef who killed his mother”,
Proto Thema,
5/4/2020.



“PERPETRATOR MONSTRUM”

- A very common representation in which the perpetrator is portrayed as a monster with an inhuman behavior.
- The “monstrous” conceptualizations, however, with their mythical connotations function once more in favor of the male “monstrous perpetrator” who exceeds any comparison in terms either of humanity or of reality.
- This way social imagery is once more fed with “images” of male extraordinary perpetrators, seldom and only on exception met within society.

WOMEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN SILENCE

- They are often portrayed as passive and fragile victims mostly for blame or in guilt.
- *Passivity* is reinforced by narratives or references to religious aspects of the women roles within the family (virginity, innocence, maternity, care, etc) while the *victim blaming* stance is of course the announcement of a kind of “secret report” since most of the women victims of domestic violence have no “voice” into the respective newspaper clippings.
- Exceptions to such portrayals are the clippings of the communist party official gazette, where structural and institutional factors that provoke and legitimize domestic violence, or support its perpetuation are mostly highlighted. Also in left wing papers we meet with “images: of vigorous and emancipated women, employed women at the “front line”, women depicted as heroines or warriors.

CONCLUSIONS

- Religion and culture are instrumental in the press representation of the phenomenon of domestic violence against women.
- Greek predominant stereotypes about gender and the sanctity of marriage and family are being noticed.
- Despite the strong portrayal of men as offenders and women as victims, it has been observed the justification of the perpetrator and the victim blaming.
- Myths, fiction and drama are important tools in the press representation of the issue.

THANK YOU!

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