

# Modernizing Tradition: Love, Friendship, Family and De-Urbanization in Greek TV Fiction (1993-2018)

Vassilis Vamvakas

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

## ABSTRACT

*This paper explores the thematic and cultural frames present in the narratives of the most popular Greek television fiction since the 1990s, after public TV lost broadcasting monopoly. The examination of the most successful series of Greek television of the last thirty years reveals important social, ideological, and cultural features of the post-modern semiosphere in Greece. A thematic categorization of the 30 most popular TV series between 1993-2018 – according to AGB Nielsen ratings – based on their plot descriptions, their protagonists, and the critique of journalists or nostalgic fansites, reveals four important frames of interest: a) paradoxical love, b) multidimensional friendship, c) family crisis, d) juxtaposition between rural and urban culture. In methodological terms, frame and thematic analysis are applied, focusing especially on the most popular examples of each category in order to decode a stable element in their narration: the modernization of tradition either in terms of its identity and hermeneutic aspects, or in the satirical deconstruction of its authority and normative role.*

## KEYWORDS

Greek TV series  
ideology  
modernity  
popular TV culture  
tradition

## INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to highlight the entertaining and ideological significance of a rich but underestimated field in Greek academic scholarship, that of Greek television series<sup>1</sup> and especially the most popular ones (Mills 2010). The fact that this important field of study has been neglected is a consequence of the general tendency on the part of Greek media studies to underline the commercialization, as well as the lack of originality and aesthetic quality in Greek television. There are only few attempts by Greek scholars for an in-depth study of local TV series (Koukoutsaki-Monnier 2003; Koukoutsaki 2003; Paschalidis 2013; Vovou 2010), covering both the beginning of Greek television in the 1960s, but also the period since 1989, when the production of TV fiction grew considerably in the environment of pluralism that private channels created. A first collective effort to overcome this underestimation took place in 2016 in Thessaloniki at a conference dedicated to the 50 years of Greek television, where a considerable number of papers focusing on television fiction were delivered (Vamvakas & Paschalidis 2018).

The academic negligence of the popularity of Greek series has also been accompanied by a general suspicion against the AGB Nielsen ratings – a suspicion often cultivated by conspiracy theories that Greek TV stars (such as Lakis Lazopoulos and Makis Triantafillopoulos) defused when the result of the measurements did not meet their expectations. This study trusts these certain facts and, based on them, tries to decode the significance of the spectators' choices throughout the last three decades. This paper explores the thematic and cultural frames in which the most popular Greek TV series developed their narratives since the 90s, when public TV lost its monopoly (Papathanassopoulos 1997). The examination of the most successful Greek TV series of those years reveals important social, ideological and cultural features of the post-modern semiosphere in Greece.

One of the most interesting and common issues that can be identified in different genres and topics of Greek TV fiction is the distinction and overlapping between traditional and modern social roles and attitudes. The critique of the modernization theory (Bauman 1987; Cresswell 2006; Featherstone 1995; Webster 1984) has long ago proved that the particular distinction overlooks many aspects of the transition of various societies from the pre-modern to the modern phase, with evidence showing that economic growth and modernity do not necessarily mean that the so-called 'traditional' patterns of action, values, or beliefs have been abandoned or no longer exist (strong family bonds or religious

---

<sup>1</sup> Although the author acknowledges the distinction between 'serials' and 'series' (fictional programmes of serialized or episodic content respectively), this is not going to be used in this paper as it does not serve its basic aims, so the reader should understand the term 'series' as implying both.

beliefs) (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1994). However, we consider that traditional and modern lifestyles and ways of thinking are useful as ideal types of identifying and analyzing important representations of Greek TV fiction, not only as separate and antagonistic poles of social and cultural interaction, but also as issues of permanent negotiation and coexistence.

In this sense, the 'traditional' aspect of the representations under examination basically refers to:

- a) a considerable orientation of the protagonists to the past and the cultural inability to adjust to new circumstances;
- b) the fact that kinship system is the deciding factor for all social (economic, political, legal) practices;
- c) the emotional, superstitious, and fatalistic approach to the world.

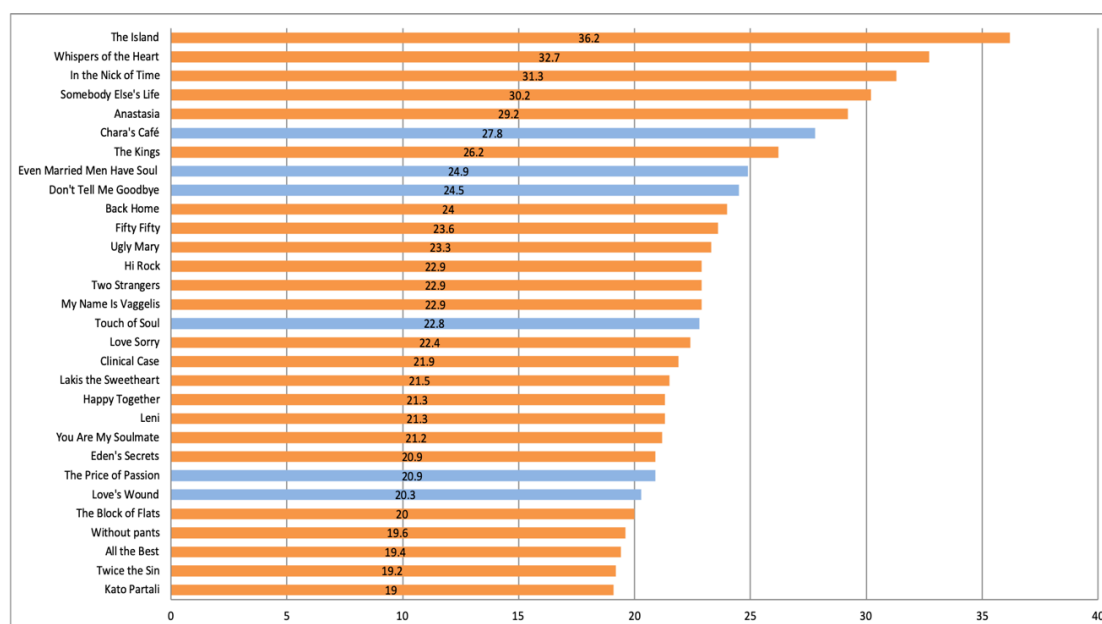
On the other hand, the 'modern' aspect of Greek TV fiction primarily concerns those representations that:

- a) show a strong tendency towards challenging the past and anything that seems unnecessary and hinders progress;
- b) imply that social status in the economy and society is earned through work and achievement-motivation rather than through kinship, as long as anonymity in a mediated (by technology, bureaucracy, market) social life is the basic cultural norm;
- c) explore protagonists who are forward-looking and innovative, ready to overcome the obstacles they find in their way, members of a society with strong entrepreneurial spirit and rational-scientific approach to the world.

Therefore, this paper maps the central motifs of representation of this distinction and the ways that plots and protagonists of some of the most popular Greek series of the period 1993-2018 try to resolute or complicate this particular differentiation. The general conclusion is that – as we already know from relevant literature – the world of tradition is not destroyed in the post-modern media era as Lerner (1958) suggested during the Cold War period (Thompson 1995). On the contrary, it is always a feature of fictional or informal negotiation and reevaluation. The most challenging part in examining the relationship between tradition and modernization is resist the balanced handling that we usually meet in studies of popular culture and to specify instead in which cases modernization tends to absorb tradition and when tradition prevails over modernism (Charalabis & Demertzis 1993; Panayotopoulos & Vamvakas 2014). This is an open-ended question and each case needs to be examined carefully before we reach a safe supposition.

## THE MOST POPULAR GREEK TV SERIES 1993-2018

The study of the most popular Greek TV series from 1993 to 2018 is based on data available through the AGB Nielsen's Yearbooks,<sup>2</sup> the only authorized company of television audience measurement in Greece. In an attempt to make a first categorization in narrative and thematic frames of television series which attracted the largest audience, not only was their own audiovisual discourse used (indicative episodes, summaries in the press etc.), but also two fields of their mediated reception. The first concerns the journalistic criticism in the press (especially from the Labrakis Press Group archive) during the original broadcasting moment. The second field concerns the collective memory pool which is set up for television series by nostalgic fans on the internet.<sup>3</sup> These rich in content forums, apart from the fact that they constitute a very interesting research field, highlight the great gap left by scientific research for a cultural product that concerns a significant part of the Greek audience. An audience that seems eager to preserve the value of popular products of the era when television was the dominant medium (Papathanassopoulos 1997) in today's reality where the growing convergence of the media prevails (Jenkins 2006).



**Fig. 1:** *The 30 most popular Greek series 1993-2018 (the orange and blue color indicates programmes broadcasted by MEGA and ANT1 respectively). Average minute rating share (percentage of the whole population). Source: AGB Nielsen.*

Out of a total of 148 TV series that AGB places within the all-time highest rating television programs for the period 1993-2018, 30 reach phenomenally high

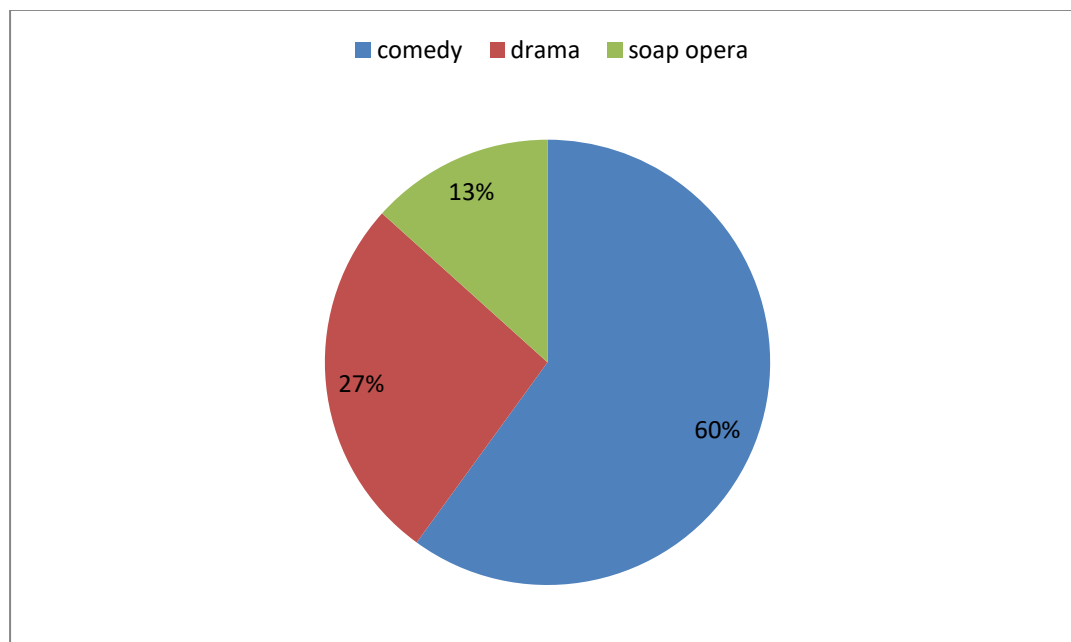
<sup>2</sup> The beginning of this particular period indicates the year that AGB Nielsen started providing ratings of spectatorship in a consistent manner.

<sup>3</sup> For example: [www.retrodb.gr](http://www.retrodb.gr), [www.retromanix.gr](http://www.retromanix.gr), [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com) (last access: 18/10/2019).

viewing ratings, ranging from almost two to more than three million spectators. The average viewing rate of the 148 programs was approximately 1.5 million viewers. Before proceeding to a categorization of the first 30 series based on their content, some significant descriptive data are presented above in Figure 1:

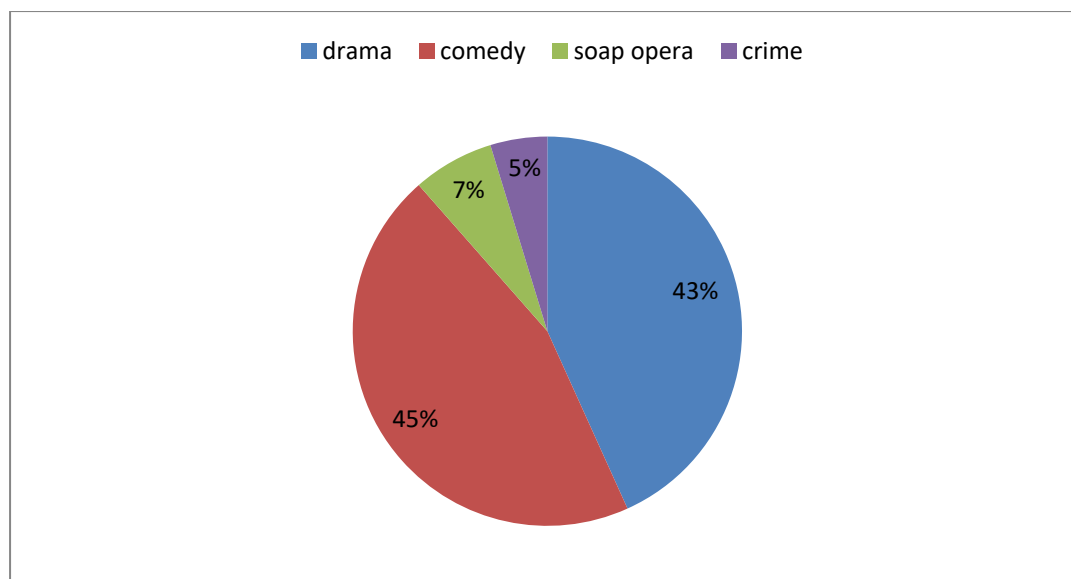
a) The highest ratings have primarily been recorded by MEGA and ANT1, two private TV channels which served as prominent players following the 1989 privatization and deregulation of television in Greece (Papathanassopoulos 2001). MEGA had the biggest portion of the first thirty series in comparison to ANT1 (24 and 6 respectively), making obvious that fictional productions constituted a great asset for the most popular channel during the period 1989-2015, before the economic crisis led to its closure. What is impressive, however, is the absolute absence of public broadcasters in the highest ratings list, although the amount of fictional programs produced during the whole timeframe was significant. The 'defeat' of the public by the private sector in Greek television is striking, not only in terms of information programming (due to the longstanding propaganda practices that public channels followed, fully dependent on each government's will) but also in the field of entertainment (Paschalidis 2013).

b) 18 out of the 30 most popular series are comedies, while 8 are dramas and 4 soap operas.<sup>4</sup> Although this distinction (based on how the programmes are indexed by the broadcasters or the press) becomes oversimplistic in many cases, the balance between comedies (67) and dramatic series (64) among the 148 most popular ones is almost perfect (Figures 2, 3).



**Fig. 2:** Genres of the 30 most popular Greek TV series (1993-2018).

<sup>4</sup> The aforementioned characterizations derive from AGB Nielsen's Yearbooks but they are also available in TV programs.



**Fig. 3:** Genres of the 148 most popular Greek TV series (1993-2018).

c) Five programmes, all of which were produced for MEGA, reached and exceeded three million viewers for one episode: The dramas *To Nisi/The Island* (2010-2011), *Psithiroi Kardias/Whispers of the Heart* (1997-1998), *Anastasia* (1993-1994), the soap opera *I Zoi tis Allis/Somebody Else's [Fem.] Life* (2009-2012) and the comedy *Sto Para Pente/In the Nick of Time* (2005-2007). Of particular interest, also, is that – apart from *Anastasia* and *Whispers of the Heart*, which are productions of the 1990s – the most popular TV shows are produced in the period 2007-2012, a few years before and during the years of the economic crisis, at a time when Greek productions were considerably diminished and the available television series were by definition restricted (Vovou 2013).

d) There are only a few seasons during which Greek series did not deliver remarkable ratings (i.e. 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2003), a sign that indicates the generally steady and intense interest of the television audience in locally produced fiction. The comparison between Greek and foreign (even American) series proves that the 'national' product during the certain period surpassed the international (Vamvakas 2017). However, the ratings after 2012 do not reach very high levels (more than two million viewers for one series) since the economic crisis with technological changes affected both the entertaining content of Greek TV (towards reality shows) and the audience's shift towards other platforms of viewership (cable and internet TV, piracy of American series, etc.).

### THEMATIC CATEGORIZATION OF TOP GREEK SERIES

Although a generic classification of the 30 most popular series between 1993 and 2018 serves as an initial way of approaching them, it does not reveal much about their actual content. Furthermore, the shifts and blends that have taken place over the years render the classification of the series into groups and sub-genres a

not-very-informative filter of analysis (Mittell 2004). Although a thorough examination of the 30 most popular series is impossible in the present study, a first attempt towards identifying and classifying their central topics is ventured.

Based on the summaries provided to the press by these 30 series, the roles of the main protagonists in their plots, the journalistic critique and their characterization by internet users, we tried to approach their central topics, using the methodological tools of frame and thematic analysis. In other words, the intention of this study is to identify and analyse the dominant patterns (themes) within the aforementioned representations and data (Boyatzis 1998, Braun & Clarke 2006). By trying to interpret various aspects of the primary themes of the 30 most popular series – taking in account the reactions and/or responses they caused to the press or the internet fans – we also tried to see intertextually some narratives (not only concerning television) that are preferred and others which are excluded from the plots of these fictions (Aitaki 2018; Entman 1993).

The themes that are identified in this combination of data (plots, summaries for the press and comments) are a result of an inductive or ‘bottom up’ way and not a theoretical one. The studies that have already been performed with a similar direction mainly concern the genres of Greek TV fiction (Koukoutsaki 2003), an approach that does not appear to fully address fiction’s multiple ideological codes. As we are going to explain in the following lines, the basic themes of the most popular Greek series are: (a) paradoxical love, (b) multifunctional friendship, (c) old and new family crisis, (d) conflicts and overlaps between city and countryside life (Figure 4).

<b>Paradoxical love</b>	<b>Multifunctional friendship</b>	<b>Family crisis</b>	<b>Urban vs Rural life</b>
<i>To Nisi/The Island</i>	<i>Sto Para Pente/In the Nick of Time</i>	<i>Oi Vasiliades/The Kings</i>	<i>To Kafe tis Charas/Chara's Café</i>
<i>Psithiroi Kardias/Whispers of the Heart</i>	<i>Kai oi Pantremeni Ehoun Psyhi/Even Married Men Have a Soul</i>	<i>Piso sto Spiti/Back Home</i>	<i>Kliniki Periptosi/Clinical Case</i>
<i>I Zoi tis Allis/Somebody Else's Life</i>	<i>Peninta Peninta/Fifty Fifty</i>	<i>Hi Rock</i>	<i>Tis Agapis Machairia/Love's Wound</i>
<i>Anastasia</i>	<i>Me Lene Vaggeli/My Name is Vaggelis</i>	<i>Leni</i>	<i>Kato Partali</i>
<i>Mi Mou Les Antio/Don't Tell Me Goodbye</i>	<i>Ta Mystika tis Edem/Eden's Secrets</i>	<i>Eftyhismenoi Mazi/Happy Together</i>	
<i>Maria i Asximi/Ugly Mary</i>	<i>I Polykatoikia/The Block of Flats</i>	<i>I Ora i Kali/All the Best</i>	

<i>To Timima tou Pathous/The Price of Passion</i>	<i>Me ta Pantelonia Kato/With Pants Down</i>
<i>Dyo Ksenoi/Two Strangers</i>	
<i>Aggigma Psyhis/Touch of Soul</i>	
<i>Love Sorry</i>	
<i>Lakis o Glykoulis/Lakis the Sweetheart</i>	
<i>Eisai to Tairi mou/You Are My Soulmate</i>	
<i>Dis Examartein/ Twice Sin</i>	

**Fig. 4:** Central themes of the 30 most popular Greek TV series.

### ***A. Paradoxical Love***

The thematic category usually referred to by viewers and channel programming as an emotional drama or even a social drama is mainly centered around what we could call "paradoxical love stories". In the case of Greek series since the 1990s, erotic passions and emotional intrigues usually appearing in dramatic series or soap operas, do not record exceptional ratings on their own. The series that achieve the highest ratings and become reference points for Greek TV fiction are those that centralize the theme of love in the form of a strange social or cultural difference.

Although each case is different, the erotic motif generally comes to diminish or question the insuperable gap between two different social positions depicted as two different 'worlds'. At least 13 out of the 30 most popular television series can fit into this category, of which 4 reached and exceeded 3 million viewers per episode: *Anastasia* (1993-1994, MEGA) described the complicated – almost incestuous love – between a young woman and her boyfriend's father. *Whispers of the Heart* (1997-1998, MEGA) narrated the romantic but difficult love between a Romani pretty woman and a macho Greek man. *The Island* (2010-2011, MEGA), breaking every record when it comes to ratings, deals with love in historical terms representing feelings of affection within and outside the marginalized Spinalonga (a leper colony) population, where healthy and sick people retain or discover feelings of affection for each other. Finally, the adaptation of a Mexican series, *Somebody Else's Life* (2009-2012, MEGA) reinstates class belonging, an obstacle of love endemic to melodramatic narratives, which constitutes the main reason of attraction/tension between the protagonists.

Scriptwriter Mirella Papaekonomou and director Manousos Manousakis have left their mark on the specific thematic category. Mirella Papaekonomou is probably

the most important and successful scriptwriter during the period under examination. Although Papaekonomou started working already in the 1980s, almost all the original scripts she wrote during 1992-2005 contributed to the rise of a new dramatic genre in Greek TV fiction that we could categorize as *quality melodrama*. Manousakis is the other basic pole of paradoxical love as a central narrative device. He is the director of *Whispers of the Heart*, a series of momentous success. He also copies the story of the old foreign series *The Thorn Birds* (1983, ABC) and excites the interest of television audiences with *Aggigma Psyhis/Touch of Soul* (1998-1999, ANT1), a series describing the love of an orthodox priest with a beautiful young woman who is an icon painter. He also directs the series *Mi Mou Les Antio/Don't Tell me Goodbye* (2004-2005, ANT1) which chronicles the love of a Christian woman and Muslim man in Thrace, preparing the ground for the impressively successful entrance of Turkish soaps the following years in Greek television.

The dramatic content of such love stories is the basic factor of their overwhelming ratings but it is not the only one. The comical element is strong, especially when the represented social difference does not have religious, class or national characteristics but mainly cultural-aesthetic ones. Both *Love sorry* (1994-1995, MEGA), which encourages amusing misunderstandings on the basis of the love affair between a conservative physician and a laid-back plumber and *Dyo Xenoi/Two Strangers* (1997-1999, MEGA) which sarcastically portrays the stormy love between a bubbly television star and a grave theater teacher, playing on the symbolic and imaginative terms of a distinction based on different cultural capitals.

In the very successful series *Eisai To Tairi Mou/You Are My Soulmate* (2001-2002, MEGA), as well as in other more recent productions (adaptations of foreign formats), *Maria I Aschimi/Ugly Mary* (2007-2008, MEGA) and *Lakis o Glikoulis/Lakis the Sweetheart* (2008-2010, MEGA), the interest is placed upon aesthetic and ethical differences through the promotion of narrative patterns of good and ugly versus wicked and beautiful, resonating the norm of the silly but sympathetic figure of the poor in old Greek cinema. It is mostly social and historical dramas and soap operas, but also sentimental comedies, that become concerned with the issue of social difference and the possibilities of bridging it through love. A significant part of these series composes a distinct narrative code which has various points of reference: a) new Greek cinema (namely the 1970s and 1980s art cinema) with artistic expectations (*The island* is the most obvious case), b) European cinema and its shocking dramatic representations – the series *Anastasia* bears a strong resemblance to Luis Malle's film *Damage* (1992) –, c) the mixture of old Greek cinema comedies and modern sitcoms (*Two Strangers, Love Sorry*) and d) the narrative norms of soaps, enriched by a contemplation upon national identities and minorities (the series of Manousakis).

### ***B. Multifunctional Friendship***

The frequent presence of the theme of friendship in the most popular series over the last decade makes it a key concept in examining modern identities. One could of course detect its power from the very first steps of private Greek television with iconic examples such as *Oi Aparadekttoi/The Unacceptables* (1991-1993, MEGA) which is not recorded in the sample of AGB Nielsen that starts measuring in 1993-1994. However, the density of relevant cases seems to increase after the series *Kai oi Pantremenoi Ehoun Psihi/Even Married Men Have Soul* (1997-2000, ANT1) and to meet great popularity since then, significantly enriching the genre of comedies and sitcoms in Greece. Friendship is portrayed as a core expression of important social relationships by private television, with great recognition by viewers, but this representational code does not always have the same referent and the same aesthetic presuppositions. In two cases, the satirical emphasis is given to the oppressed/desperate sexuality of the unsatisfied middle-aged protagonists – *Even Married Men Have a Soul* and *Peninta Peninta/Fifty Fifty* (2005-2007, MEGA). In another case such as *I Polikatikia/The Block of Flats* (2008-2011, MEGA) a rewrite of the familiar – from 1970s Greek television fiction – representation of the social environment of the neighborhood is attempted, underlining the ir/rational and intimate relationships that develop in it (although it is adapted from a Spanish TV series). The most innovative and popular example in the certain thematic frame, exploring the dynamic of friendship between five completely heterogeneous persons, was *Sto Para Pente/In the Nick of Time* (2005-2007, MEGA) discussed in more detail later on.

In any case, old and new forms of friendship, that is to say, forms of modern emotional proximity, come into the spotlight, as is often the case in American and other television fiction. Some of the relevant cases that make up a distinct genre and became quite popular in Greece are *Fame* (1982-1987, NBC/Syndication), *Beverly Hills, 90210* (1990-2000, Fox), *Friends* (1994-2004, NBC), *Desperate Housewives* (2004-2012, ABC) etc. It is no accident that the series *My Name Is Earl* (2005-2009, NBC) was adapted in Greek television (*To Onoma Mou Einai Vaggelis/My Name Is Vaggelis*, 2011-2012, MEGA) exactly as an attempt to negotiate friendship in an americanized moral and funny way.

The peculiarity of the Greek case is that friendship is mainly depicted as a longstanding, almost perpetual matter. What we are witnessing, mainly, is representations of long-lasting friendships that are almost transformed into (usually) 'brotherly' or (more rarely) 'sisterly' relationships, often emphasizing satirical references to old political ties between the protagonists-friends (*The Unacceptables, Even Married Men Have Soul*). Even the popular soap *Ta Mistika tis Edem/Eden's Secrets* (2008-2011, MEGA) represented the complexities of diachronic friendships and the evolution of a group of persons from their youth to midlife. An exception to this trend, as noted, is the case of the successful series

*In the Nick of Time* where friendship functions in a revealing and liberating way between unfamiliar and diverse (in cultural and generational terms) persons, since the creation of the relationship between them is a matter of the present and not the past (and the traumas it generated).

### ***C. Old and New Family Crisis***

It is important to admit at this point each of the above series, classified within the two aforementioned thematic categories, may incorporate additional themes – even the main themes of the other categories. What we have tried to do is to identify the main thematic frame within which the leading roles are called upon to unleash their attitudes. This is all the more so for the case of the third frame, that of family, which appears, in one way or another, in all four categories. In the 30 most popular series, family becomes a key element mainly in certain comical series that do not focus on the paradigm of the nuclear family (6 out of 30 series). The upbringing of children whose parents are divorced and, in particular the relationship between divorced parents and their children, became a very frequent subject of reference in popular series such as *Hi Rock* (1992-1994, MEGA), *Eftihismenoi Mazi/Happy Together* (2007-2009, MEGA), *I Ora i Kali/All the Best* (2004-2007, MEGA).

Multiple forms of family life and the possibility of a second opportunity (wedding) is often satirized, but at the same time presented as an inevitable (if not desirable) reality of contemporary times. Although family in these series is portrayed in external (economic) or internal (psychological) crisis, e.g. the cases of *Piso sto Spiti/Back Home* (2011-2012, MEGA) and *Oi Vasiliades/The Kings* (2012-2014, MEGA), it is not depicted as a theme of arbitrary patriarchic power as seems to be the choice made by modern Greek weird cinema (Nikolaidou & Poupou 2017; Komninou & Lambrou 2015). Neither is the sanctity of the Greek family fully deconstructed, as has happened in the past in the American sitcom *Married with Children* (1987-1997, Fox).

The convergence of childish/adolescent and parental/adult attitudes is often a matter of funny depiction. The problems of new professional roles and obligations in family life are mentioned, but in these series the family and especially the parent-child relationship remains an undisputable bond while being enriched with less patriarchal connotations. A very popular comedian, Giannis Bezos (e.g. *Happy Together*), is a noteworthy figure in Greek television comedy, often typecasted in the role of a father unsuccessfully trying to exercise patriarchic power. The drama *Leni* (2003-2004, MEGA) deserves a special mention too, as it is the only series from the top 30 that refers to the family topic in an innovative manner; it centralizes (by Mirella Papaekonomou's script) the unusual – for Greek TV – topic of a single-parent family placing Katia Dandoulaki in the leading role of an adoptive mother.

### ***D. Conflicts and Overlaps between Urban and Rural Family***

Related to erotic diversity and family crisis but also distinct due to its considerable repeatability, it is the theme of contradiction between city and countryside, i.e. urban and rural culture (4 out of 30 series). In this case, great successes mainly belong to the genre of comedy with the most important example being *To Café tis Charas/Chara's Café* (2003-2005, ANT1). The series reverses the old Greek cinema motif of the countryman who relocates to the city and follows instead a divorced woman of the city (Renia Louizidou), who moves to the countryside along with her little daughter (Efi Rassia) and chronicles the conditions of her (non) acceptance. The basic context of this particular comedy is the world of the countryside, which is probably unrealistically depicted as being far away from modern behavioral and moral evolution. A similar case can be identified in the hero that Giannis Bezos incarnates in the series *Kliniki Periptosi/Clinical Case* (2011-2012, MEGA), with the cosmopolitan air of a doctor who has lived in the USA colliding with the simple life of the small village where he moves to. In the same context but in a completely different direction, the dramatic series *Tis Agapis Mahairia/Love's Wound* (2006-2007, ANT1) dealt with the power of tradition, addressing the issue of Cretan feud and violence, restoring in some ways the adventurous and melodramatic tones of the cinematic mountain adventure of the past (Dermentzopoulos 2002).

Interestingly, the re-emergence of the contradiction between city and countryside occurs in TV comedy mainly over the period 2005-2015 (it does not appear in terms of popularity during the 1990s), a phenomenon which can be attributed to at least two reasons. The first has to do with the stereotypical construction of the countryman (mainly through local language) and the picturesque areas and morals it stands for. The second has to do with a real or imaginary trend to return to the roots and the social or natural landscape of the countryside, to the beauty and the simplicity it contains. Many successful emotional dramas (Mirella Papaekonomou has written a considerable number of successful stories utilizing such landscapes) use such peripheral areas (mainly islands) of Greece as background to highlight or imply a romantic escapism outside the "inhumane" living conditions of the city. In the popular comedies that follow the same thematic path, representations associated with escapism are not dominant. There, the relocation of the city man or woman to the village emphasizes either the impossibility of returning to the past or the final blend of tradition and modernity through the filter of love. Finally, it is worth adding that, regarding comedies, the pattern of tension between urban-rural representation appears to be a narrative trope much closer to the conventions of the old Greek cinema (Soldatos 1990; Sotiropoulou 1995), while in the case of the dramatic series the existential obscurity that prevailed in the new Greek cinema (1970s and 1980s) seems to find in television a more understandable narrative form.

## MODERNIZING TRADITION

Apart from the four thematic topics that appear to be most prevalent in Greek series of the period 1993-2018, the implicit or explicit representation of traditional and modern types of social roles and situations is quite stable in them. It is not only in the case of the juxtaposition between urban and rural life that these representations are explicitly exposed. Even in the series that primarily concentrate on paradoxical love, family crisis or friendship, the balanced or unbalanced relations between traditional and modern characteristics of Greek culture are depicted. The following sub-sections focus specifically on these fictional elements of the four most popular series (one out of each thematic category) which incorporate the dualism of modern and traditional attitudes in Greek society. The question that traverses the following analysis is about whether modernism absorbs traditionalism or traditionalism prevails over modernism.

### A. The Island: The Hermeneutic Aspect of Tradition Historicized

*The Island* is the most popular series of the period 1993-2018 overall. Based on the English bestselling novel written by Victoria Hislop, the story deals with the old leper colony of Spinalonga in Crete, which operated during 1905-1957. The series is one of the very few historical TV dramas that achieved such high viewership although other series in the past included more easily recognizable heroic protagonists of the Greek history.<sup>5</sup> A noteworthy observation about this series concerns its aesthetic familiarity with other representations of social history both in terms of Greek cinematic auteurs (e.g. Angelopoulos, Voulgaris etc.) and in terms of the quality romantic narratives that popular series delivered especially during the 1990s. A fact that should not be overlooked is that Mirella Papaekonomou, the successful scriptwriter of artistic romances was responsible for the book-to-TV adaptation).

The specific expensive TV production is exemplary for the study of popular representations in Greek iconography, particularly when it comes to marginalized social groups of the past (immigrants, rebetiko etc.), as it compromises the whole deposit of romantic images concerning them in Greek films and TV productions at least since 1980s. *The Island* achieved general acceptance because it promoted two modern values in a historical perspective and in a traditional cultural context: one was about “uncompromised love” (Giddens 1991) and the other about “scientific therapy”. More specifically, it depicts the past and its most underestimated dramatic moments but primarily explores the power that the modern world has invested to the meaning of “love by choice” and the scientific remedies that cure individual and social traumas (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). The love between healthy and sick persons,

---

<sup>5</sup> For example: *Junkermann* (2007-2008, ANT1), *To Deko/The Ten* (2007-2008, ALPHA).

between lepers and scientists, connects the bonds of solidarity and affection that prevailed in small local communities with those following the idealistic perception of humanitarian science.

*The Island*, was perceived by the press as a metaphor for the Greek crisis and the stigmatization of the Greek society by the 'healthy' – in economic, political and cultural terms – Europeans. Victoria Hislop made this link explicit in her interviews about the series. This metaphor maintained a central role in public discourses of that period (in Greek press, social media)<sup>6</sup> and can explain both the success of this show and the need to conceive the (cruel) present through the (cruel) past. In the case of *The Island* this took place in romantic aesthetic forms but in modernized cultural values (unconditional love for the other, belief in scientific progress etc.).

### ***B. In the Nick of Time: The Identity Aspect of Tradition Collectivized***

The topic of friendship is exemplified in the popular series *In the Nick of Time* (2005-2007, MEGA). For many viewers the series has been received less as a typical comedy and more as a mixture of adventure and mystery with comical elements. As we can see from the brief summary of the series, the characteristics of a comedy are not at all underlined: "Five strangers witness the death of a former government official in an elevator of a luxurious hotel and they soon find themselves tangled in a huge mystery".<sup>7</sup> Giorgos Kapoutzidis was the scriptwriter of the series who managed to produce humoristic but also dramatic scenes in a very unusual way for Greek standards, bringing a lot of innovations in terms of narration which echo American mystery series and cartoons. For example, we could easily find similarities of the series with the *Scooby-Doo* legacy, since the story revolves around a group of five unspecialized persons that are accidentally involved in a (political) thriller and are called to solve crime mysteries in a funny way.

Although there is a very interesting political dimension in the series, by means of indirectly revealing the complicity of various levels of political power in contemporary Greece (government, police, justice, press, mafia), the basic pillar of the story is the friendship that develops between the five completely different protagonists who find themselves involved in a story of excessive intrigue and danger. The five heroes realize in the end that their meeting was not so accidental after all, since a fatal fact of the past (a crime) interlinks their life

---

<sup>6</sup> An interview of Victoria Hislop in the paper *Ethnos* (20/1/2013) about the contemporary crisis in Greece is titled 'Greece is Spinaloga of Europe'. Available at <https://www.newsbeast.gr/greece/arthro/476270/i-ellada-einai-i-spinaloga-tis-europis> (last access 25/10/2019).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0491739/> (last access 25/10/2019).

paths. What seems to be the most important thing though, is the fact that they manage to form a mutually understanding group of friends consisting of people with completely different origins of social position, age, and culture.

The five heroes of the show are: a naive millionaire who prefers to live in the world of telenovelas rather than enjoying her privileges; a religious widow who comes from Serres (countryside) to live in Athens in order to take care of her infant grandson; a withdrawn student of accounting, who lives with his grandmother and has to continuously deal with her and her friend's hyperactive life; a young resourceful journalist whose role model is MacGyver; and a young undisciplined woman that left home to live on her own by the time she was 14 years old, constantly changing jobs and locations. All of them are quite complex characters, and as the adventure unfolds, they acknowledge that the romantic and the realistic, the uneasy and the passive, the traditional and modern mentality are necessary not only as ingredients of a paradox balance between friends but also as a precondition of self-awareness. As a matter of fact, each protagonist proves to be a melting point of these two theoretically oppositional characteristics (tradition-modernism), whatever his or her basic inclinations are. The post-modern story that *In the Nick of Time* narrates is exactly about subjects ready to question their certainties under the risks they employ in order to solve the big mystery of the plot which is not only the disclosure of the criminal case, but also that of their own identity, their past and future biographies.

### ***C. Back Home: The Normative Aspect of Tradition Satirized***

The comedy *Piso sto Spiti/Back Home*,<sup>8</sup> broadcasted weekly by MEGA Channel between 2011-2012, described the life of a Greek family during the economic crisis. The main protagonists are a recently retired couple and their three children who are all in their late 20s and early 30s. The crisis affects the family in terms of unemployment and lack of prospect for the younger members, forcing them to return to their family house, bringing their own families with them. The key concept of the series revolves around the troubles that begin when the family house is put on mortgage by the son-in-law who is an unsuccessful businessman. In order to save their home, the family decides to borrow money from the youngest son's girlfriend, Angela, a half-German wealthy young woman who is determined to efficiently deal with the problematic economic affairs of the family.

Although *Back home* is a serialized comedy fiction primarily taking place within a domestic environment and the protagonists are connected with family ties, the plot works as a metaphor for many public affairs evolving in Greece during the

---

<sup>8</sup> The series *The Kings* that registers higher ratings in the family topic, is not analyzed here because the script was an adaptation from an Argentinean series and certainly has less reference points to the contemporary Greek reality than *Back Home*.

crisis. It could be said that *Back Home* uses the stage of the private sphere (family) in order to connote the events that followed the announcement of Greece's bailout agreements, the danger of financial collapse and the opportunity of the external help they were given. According to Aitaki's concrete analysis (2018: 116-117):

The Greek household becomes the root of the problem, but also the platform on which economic policies are applied. [...] [T]he family's house, apart from its representation as a dysfunctional financial unit, is also recreated as a space which hosts a number of individuals who carry with them, in one way or another, behaviors which have become associated with deficiencies of the Greek society and culture within various media coverage of the Greek crisis. [...] The above traits and behaviors are intensified and acquire a cultural mantle through their juxtaposition with the character of Angela. Although half-Greek, Angela embodies all the popular German stereotypes; she believes in the value of discipline, punctuality and rules.

In this sense the theme of an extended family is used as an entry point to discuss intrinsic problems of contemporary Greek culture and society (idleness, corruption, unreliability). The traditional strong relations between the members of a Greek family prove to be not only links of solidarity but also bonds of insecurity, fraud, superficiality, and overprotection. The Greek family in *Back Home* is unable to restore its life without under-the-table deals, the repetition of an "endless loop of carelessness and malpractice" (ibid: 123).

In this series, the traditional locus of Greek society, the shelter where one can find affection and protection, the family home, is used as a connotation of multiple deficiencies and dysfunctions. The strict surveillance personified by the German girlfriend – bearing the first name of the Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel – is not the solution and it is something that can be avoided through the power of traditional practices of disorder that in a mysterious way always allow the Greek family to survive in all circumstances. The series has as its main purpose to satirize this ability of the most important cell of the Greek society – the family – to remain alive without any serious change, although it has seen total disaster coming.

#### ***D. Chara's Café: The Traditional Authority Deconstructed***

The last example comes from the thematic frame of the urban-rural juxtaposition where the significance of tradition and modernity is by definition present. The most popular series of this category is *Chara's Café* (2003-2005, ANT1). The series is about a single mother, Chara, who moves with her daughter to a small village named Kolokotronitsi where life seems to have stopped 50 years ago. Chara was a victim of her boyfriend and fellow co-worker in an advertising company who stole her ideas. That's why she decided to leave Athens, quit her

job and accept an inheritance (a house and a shop) in a remote village. The basic premise of the story is the relationship between Chara and the mayor of the village, Periandros Popotas, an extreme personification of conservatism, who tries to exclude every modern aspect from the small community in order to retain the basic values he stands for, namely 'order and morality'. The fact that the young mother comes to the village, opens a modern café and questions many of the old-fashioned beliefs of the village, makes her a target for the mayor who unsuccessfully tries to turn everyone against her. As we have already mentioned, an interesting observation about this series is that it reverses a very old popular motif of post-war Greek cinema; the internal immigration towards the cities was an increasing phenomenon and a lot of films represented it in a comical manner.

The countryman coming to the capital was a funny story in 50s and 60s, employed to display the difficulties of an important part of the Greek society to adjust with the modern attitudes of the rapid urbanization because of their cultural difference or low socio-economic status (Delveroudi 2004). However, the intruder in the new world was met with sympathy and compassion, even when his (usually a male) otherness was completely unsuitable to the situation. In *Chara's Café*, the intruder is a woman arriving at a conservative community in her effort to avoid male manipulation of the city life and to create her own business. In the past, the place of juxtaposition between rural and urban environment that created problems of adjustment was usually the modern city. In *Chara's Café* the place of action is the village, a community stuck in the past, maintaining traditional ethics in a quite irrational way. The comical element in both cases is concentrated on the silly image of the traditional man but the big difference is that in the case of the old Greek films he was representing a receding way of life, whereas in the recent series he stands for extreme conservatism, almost puritanism.

Agricultural tradition and its conflict with the urban modern world becomes a stable worry of the Greek audiovisual culture. The variations that we can notice have to do with: a) the almost obligatory reality of urbanization and the new formal and informal rules that someone has to obey in order not to be a funny stranger (old Greek cinema in 1950s and 1960s), b) the concealed traumas that internal immigration generated (new Greek cinema in 1970s and 1980s) and c) the revisiting of traditional environments either for escapism from the problems of massive city life (artistic TV dramas in 1990s) or for reaffirming liberal values as in the case of comedies like *Chara's Café*. By the end, the village composing the scenery of the series under examination proves to employ a hypocritical conservatism, as nobody can stay unaffected by the modern way of life. Even the strict mayor soon falls desperately in love with the liberal woman he first despised.

## DISCUSSION

Popular Greek TV series raise a number of issues for the sociology of communication and popular culture. The fact that they composed for almost 30 years the most important mode of entertainment in Greece – especially during a period of peaceful prosperity, somehow unusual in its history – makes them a very significant area of study able to inform our understanding of the potential changes that have occurred in social stances and attitudes in comparison to the past. The proliferation of national productions in the field of TV fiction these 30 years, is not just an opportunity to examine the power of Greek television in the pluralism era, nor simply an ideal occasion to study elements of influence and resistance towards the global-American example, but also a way to explore the various intertextual modes of audiovisual creation in contemporary Greece. The basic presupposition is to look away from the usual criticism about the commercialization and trivialization of TV fiction and comprehend which motifs of representations have been more popular.

This paper works in this direction and names four topics of thematic routinization in the Greek series during the period 1993-2018. Paradoxical love, family in crisis, friendship as a remedy (or a metonymy of family) and the reinvention of rural culture are themes that have mostly attracted the Greek television audience, although their ideological framing is not the same as well as the genre they usually comply with. One of the ideological and cultural meta-frames that can quite steadily be traced in the representations of the most popular Greek series is that of signs of tradition and modernism. Signs that introduce questions for “what is transmitted and handed down from the past” (Thompson 1995: 181) and signs that discuss matters of individual or collective liberation, autonomy, and innovation.

By examining the four most popular series of each thematic topic, a first conclusion that can be reached is that traditional patterns of identification are always somehow present in TV fictional representations. A matter of interest is not so much the insistence of tradition in popular Greek series but the existence of cases in which the depiction of the past becomes dominant and destabilizes modernized beliefs and roles. In the four cases that we briefly examined, tradition comes to play basically what is known in Thompson's (1995) analysis as its hermeneutic and identity role.

The hermeneutic aspect of tradition, a set of background assumptions that are taken for granted by individuals, not as a normative guide but as an interpretative scheme, is mostly present in the historical drama *The Island*. There, the communitarian ethos of the Spinalonga residents (lepers) comes in many ways to interpret sickness in religious or unfortunate terms although the political and scientific reasoning is gradually gaining ground. The traditional way of thinking is there, at times hiding leprosy or hesitating in front of the new

remedies of scientific research, but ready to adjust with what is proper for individual surviving and staying together with the loved ones.

The identity aspect of tradition – all these assumptions, beliefs and patterns of behavior handed down from the past providing symbolic materials for the formation of individual or collective identity – is more obvious in the adventurous comedy *In the Nick of Time*. What is old and what is new, what is traditional and what is modern is not foreclosed in this series. The most representative example is one of the main protagonists of the series (personified by the scriptwriter Giorgos Kapoutzidis himself), the reserved young man who lives with his grandmother who proves to be more active, risky, and open-minded than him. The five protagonists compose a band of different but eventually supplementary characters, underlining the relative and bridgeable nature of their differences, whether these are around traditional and modern ethics or attitudes that seem to be outdated or updated.

The normative and legitimation aspect of tradition according to Thompson's analysis (1995) also makes a strong denotation in popular Greek series but this seems to be framed mostly by the humorous and satirical genre of comedies. In the case of *Back Home*, the familial deficiencies that are being portrayed are attributed to a strong cultural inclination. Idleness, corruption, unreliability are represented as part of a set of assumptions, forms of beliefs and patterns of action handed down from the past that serve as a normative guide for the present. The Greek family's ability to survive on a thin line between normality and lawlessness is satirized by the series as a (traditional) force, unchangeable even when the family members face complete catastrophe. Family as a metaphor of Greek society in general, remains unable to follow new (westernized) patterns of rational management and keeps on looking for social and political unorthodox ways to achieve prosperity and cohesion.

The legitimation aspect of tradition, the case of traditional authority in which obedience is owed to the person who occupies and expresses the sanctity of immemorial traditions, is being portrayed in a humorous way in *Chara's Café*. The mayor of the village that Chara moves to stands for the satirical incarnation of traditional authority, a mode of power totally out of fashion and unable to remain unaffected by the modern way of life.

The hermeneutic and identity aspect of tradition and its modernized survival is connected to the thematic frames of love and friendship. The satirical confrontation of the normative and legitimation aspect of tradition is linked to the topics of family and rural-urban juxtaposition. There is a lot of work to be done in order to not only confirm the existence of such connections in the four most popular examples discussed in this paper but also to generalize drawing from all the successful Greek series of the last 30 years. It is also important to

study the past of Greek fiction when the condition of state monopoly prevailed in Greek television and confirm the existence of these basic topics or spot important shifts and changes. Finally, it is necessary to compare these topics that Greek TV production promoted in the past with the representations of foreign and especially European modes of TV fiction and study their representations concerning the relationship between traditional and modern ways of life and conceptualizing reality. Nevertheless, this first effort can be used as a map in order to reach, without intentions of idealization or demonization, the most important ideological matters addressed by Greek TV fiction.

## REFERENCES

- Aggigma Psyhis/Touch of Soul* (1998 – 1999) ANT1.
- Aitaki, G. (2018), “‘All Good People Have Debts’”: Framing the Greek Crisis in Television Fiction’, in M. Patrona (ed) *Crisis and the Media: Narratives of Crisis across Cultural Settings and Media Genres*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 107-126.
- Anastasia* (1993 – 1994) MEGA.
- Bauman, Z. (1987), *Legislators and Interpreters*, Oxford: Polity Press.
- Beck, U. and Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2002), *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences*, London: SAGE.
- Beverly Hills, 90210* (1990 – 2000) Fox.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998), *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Braun V. & Clarke V. (2006), ‘Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 2, pp. 77-101.
- Charalabis, D. and Demertzis N. (1993), ‘Politics and Citizenship in Greece: Cultural and Structural Facets’, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 11: 2, pp. 219-240.
- Cresswell, T. (2006), *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*, New York: Routledge.
- Damage* (Malle, 1992).
- Delveroudi, A. (2004), *Oi Neoi stis Komodies tou Ellinkou Kinimatografou 1948-1974/Young People in Greek Film Comedy 1948-1974*, Athens: Centre for Neo-Hellenic Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation, Historical Archive of Greek Youth.
- Dermentzopoulos, C. (2002), ‘Paradosi kai Neoterikotita ston Elliniko Kinimatografo: Oi Tainies tou Eidous tis Oreinis Peripetias/Tradition and Modernity in Greek Cinema: The Films of the Genre of Mountain Adventure’, *Optikoakoustiki Koultoura*, 1, pp. 79-98.
- Desperate Housewives* (2004 – 2012) ABC.
- Dyo Xenoi/Two Strangers* (1997 – 1999) MEGA.
- Eisai To Tairi Mou/You Are My Soulmate* (2001 – 2002) MEGA.
- Eftihismenoi Mazi/Happy Together* (2007 – 2009) MEGA.

- Entman, R. M. (1993), 'Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm', *Journal of Communication*, 43: 4, pp. 51-58.
- Fame* (1982 – 1987) NBC/Syndication.
- Featherstone, M. (1995), *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity*, London: SAGE.
- Friends* (1994 – 2004) NBC.
- Giddens, A. (1991), *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Giddens, A. (1994), 'Living in a Post-Traditional Society', in U. Beck, A. Giddens and S. Lash (eds), *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 56-109.
- Hi Rock* (1992 – 1994) MEGA.
- I Ora i Kali/All the Best* (2004 – 2007) MEGA.
- I Polikatikia/The Block of Flats* (2008 – 2011) MEGA.
- I Zoi tis Allis/Somebody Else's [Fem.] Life* (2009 – 2012) MEGA.
- Jenkins, H. (2006), *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York: University Press.
- Junkermann* (2007 – 2008) ANT1.
- Kai oi Pantremenoi Ehoun Psihi/Even Married Men Have Soul* (1997 – 2000) ANT1.
- Kliniki Periptosi/Clinical Case* (2011 – 2012) MEGA.
- Komninos, M. and Lambrou, Y. (2015), 'Textuality, Language, and the Family in the Era of Post-Modernity: The Case of Greek 'Weird Wave' Cinema', in P. Drummont (ed), *The London Film & Media Reader 3. The Pleasures of the Spectacle*, London: The London Symposium & Academic Conferences London, pp. 499-509.
- Koukoutsaki, A. (2003), 'Greek Television Drama: Production Policies and Genre Diversification', *Media, Culture & Society*, 25: 6, pp. 715-735.
- Koukoutsaki-Monnier, A. (2003), 'The Production of Meaning in Contemporary Greece: Reflections on the Evolution of Greek Television Drama', Online Papers of the *1st LSE PhD Symposium on Modern Greece*, London School of Economics and Political Science, London.
- Lakis o Glikoulis/Lakis the Sweetheart* (2008 – 2010) MEGA.
- Leni* (2003 – 2004) MEGA.
- Lerner, D. (1958), *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.
- Love Sorry* (1994 – 1995) MEGA.
- Maria I Aschimi/Ugly Mary* (2007 – 2008) MEGA.
- Married with Children* (1987 – 1997) Fox.
- Mi Mou Les Antio/Don't Tell me Goodbye* (2004 – 2005) ANT1.
- Mills, B. (2010), 'Invisible Television: The Programmes no one Talks about even though Lots of People Watch Them', *Critical Studies in Television*, 5: 1, pp. 1-16.

- Mittell, J. (2004), *Genre and Television: From Cop Shows to Cartoons in American Culture*, New York: Routledge.
- My Name Is Earl* (2005 – 2009) NBC.
- Nikolaidou, A. and Poupou, A. (2017), 'Post-Weird Notes on the New Wave of Greek Cinema', *Non-Catalog 58th Film Festival Thessaloniki*, pp. 88-107.
- Oi Aparadekttoi/The Unacceptables* (1991 – 1993) MEGA.
- Oi Vasiliades/The Kings* (2012 – 2014) MEGA.
- Panayotopoulos, P. and Vamvakas V. (2013) 'Acrobats on a Rope: Greek Society between Contemporary European Demands and Archaic Cultural Reflexes', in B. Temel (ed), *The Great Catalyst: European Union Project and Lessons from Greece and Turkey*, Plymouth: Lexington Books, pp. 113-134.
- Papathanassopoulos, S. (1997), 'The Politics and the Effects of the Deregulation of Greek Television', *European Journal of Communication*, 12: 3, pp. 351-368.
- Papathanassopoulos, S. (2001), 'Media Commercialization and Journalism in Greece', *European Journal of Communication*, 16: 4, pp. 505-521.
- Paschalidis, G. (2013), 'Entertaining the Colonels: Propaganda, Social Change and Entertainment in Greek Television Fiction, 1967-74', in P. Goddard (ed), *Popular Television in Authoritarian Europe*, Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, pp. 53-70.
- Peninta Peninta/Fifty Fifty* (2005 – 2007) MEGA.
- Piso sto Spiti/Back Home* (2011 – 2012) MEGA.
- Psithiroi Kardias/Whispers of the Heart* (1997 – 1998) MEGA.
- Soldatos, Y. (1990), *Istoria tou Ellinikou Kinimatografou/History of Greek Cinema*, vol. 3, Athens: Aigokeros.
- Sotiropoulou, C. (1995), *I Diaspora ston Elliniko Kinimatografo/Diaspora in Greek Cinema*, Athens: Themelio.
- Sto Para Pente/In the Nick of Time* (2005 – 2007) MEGA.
- Ta Mistika tis Edem/Eden's Secrets* (2008 – 2011) MEGA.
- The Thorn Birds* (1983) ABC.
- Thompson, J. B. (1995), *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Tis Agapis Mahairia/Love's Wound* (2006 – 2007) ANT1.
- To Café tis Charas/Chara's Café* (2003 – 2005) ANT1.
- To Deka/The Ten* (2007 – 2008) ALPHA.
- To Nisi/The Island* (2010 – 2011) MEGA.
- To Onoma Mou Einai Vaggelis/My Name Is Vaggelis* (2011 – 2012) MEGA.
- Vamvakas, V. (2017), 'I Parallili Pragmatikotita: Sinthikes Paragnorisis kai Anagnorisis tis Amerikanikis Tileoptikis Mithoplasias stin Ellada (1966-2015)/ The Parallel Reality: Conditions of Misrecognition and Recognition of the American TV Series in Greece (1966-2015)', in V. Vamvakas & A. Gazi (eds), *Oi Amerikanikes Seires stin Elliniki Tileorasi/American Series in Greek TV*, Athens: Papazisi, pp. 311-360.

- Vamvakas, V. and Paschalidis, G. (eds) (2018), *50 Chronia Elliniki Tileorasi/50 years Greek Television*, Thessaloniki: Epikentro.
- Vovou, I. (2013), 'Krisi kai/sta MME: I tileoptiki "Koultoura tis Krisis"/Crisis and/in media: The TV "Crisis Culture"', in G. Plios (ed), *I Krisi kai ta MME/Crisis and Mass Media*, Athens: Papazisi, pp. 313-347.
- Vovou, I. (ed) (2010), *O Kosmos tis Tileorasis/The World of Television*, Athens: Irodotos.
- Webster, A. (1984), *Introduction to the Sociology of Development*, London: Macmillan.