

THE EUROPEANIZATION THROUGH MEDIA IN THE SOCIETY OF TENDENTIAL MODERNITY

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Abstract: *The goal of the paper is to broaden the knowledge of the process of Europeanization through media. I analyze the Europeanization, especially its effect on the Romanian society. The Europeanization of the society is a complex long lasting process in a national framework with an identity shaped by a historical and geopolitical specificity. The national contexts influence the actions of different social and political actors at national level.*

I approach a domestication of the news released by mass media about the European events and the EU decisions. The paper emphasizes the idea that mass media stand for important ways of information diffusion about Europe, and, at the same time, they can shape the behavior of the Romanian citizens regarding Europeanization.

My empirical study examines the news about Europe, released by three Romanian televisions during the campaign for European parliamentary elections in June 2009. The research data show that the national television in Romania - TVR – focused on news about EU less than the private television channels.

In my vision, the Europeanization of the Romanian society through media takes place in the transition process from the tendential modernity which characterizes the Romanian society, to the structural modernity of the European community.

Key words: domestication, Europeanization, European integration, mass media, tendential modernity.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article aims to analyze the European integration and the expectations towards the Europeanization through media. The question is whether the national media have the capacity to reflect the new tendencies of the European identity and the differences in the EU public sphere. Mass media are an important agent for expressing the citizens' problems towards the Europeanization process. As a result, the research of the Romanians' requirements concerning the Europeanization and of the different paths through which these expectations are transmitted and known, becomes necessary.

The Europeanization of the Romanian society is a complex long lasting process in a national framework with an identity shaped by a historical and geopolitical specificity. The national contexts influence the actions of different social and political actors at the national level. This is why the European issues are adapted to internal situations and are presented in different formulation manners and debates.

The Europeanization of the Romanian society is a reality in a full process of construction, a process established until now mainly with formal mechanisms. Although the European Union has institutional structures, its values and symbols are not adopted unconditionally by Europeans through pro-European attitudes and behaviours.

All things considered, in the first part of the paper, I present the concept of Europeanization. In the second section, I analyze the domestication of the European speech and of the European events. Finally, I argue the phenomenon of news domestication about Europe and Europeanization, by highlighting the research data and the inherent conclusions.

2. EUROPEANIZATION

The analysis of the Europeanization has at least three levels: what is Europeanization, how is the Europeanization produced and why does the Europeanization take place. In the analysis of Europeanization, many authors have started from the definition of Robert Ladrech: "Incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC Political and Economic Dynamics becoming part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making" (Ladrech 1994:69). By "organizational logic", Ladrech means "Adaptive processes of organizations to the changed or changing environment" (Ladrech 1994:71).

The term Europeanization is used as a tool to understand or explain processes and national institutions, which are influenced by EU processes and institutions. Ladrech's perspective offers a way to distinguish the concept of integration from that of Europeanization. While European integration represents the process of giving up sovereignty from national to European level, the Europeanization is limited to the opposite process: anything that comes from the EU and generates an internal change is called Europeanization.

A distinction between European integration and Europeanization is necessary due to the multiple processes undergone by the European Union. The European integration is the act of strengthening the influence and decisional power of the European community, the sovereignty being passed on from the national to European level. The Europeanization means the change in the internal context of each country through the imposition of community models, norms and policies involving major changes in the national policies and institutional framework for adopting and implementing them.

As Timm Beichelt (2008) states there is a variety of meanings for Europeanization (Cowles / Caporaso / Risse 2001; Olsen 2002; Featherstone / Radaelli 2003; Graziano/Vink 2006). Europeanization means changing through and into fundamental institutions of the European Union, and through and into European identity. One way to understand Europeanization is the separation of various phenomena related to the concept. There are five possible processes of Europeanization (Olsen 2002): 1. *Europeanization as changes in external territorial boundaries*. The European continent becomes a single political space, and Europeanization means extending its borders; 2. *Europeanization as development of governance institutions at European level*. This approach refers to a center with capacity for collective action, which involves a certain degree of political coordination and coherence; 3. *Europeanization as central penetration of national and sub national governance systems*. Europeanization involves the division of responsibilities and powers between different levels of government. Europeanization implies the adaptation of national and sub-national governance systems to the decisions of the European political center and European norms; 3. *Europeanization as the export political organization forms and governance* that are typical and distinct for a Europe beyond the European territory. Europeanization refers to the relationship with non-European actors and institutions and to how Europe finds its place in a larger world. Europeanization means a positive balance of import-export i.e. non-European countries import more from Europe than vice versa and European solutions have a greater influence in international institutions; 4. *Europeanization as a political project helps building a unified and stronger Europe*. The level where Europe becomes a more important political entity is linked to the territorial space, the internal adaptation, and to how the European developments have impact and are influenced by systems of government and events outside Europe. Out of these processes of European production result a variety of meanings for Europeanization that will not be insisted on.

Beichelt (2008) attempts to reduce the variety of meanings of the term Europeanization to three models: 1. Inappropriate model, where the political processes and institutions are changing in relation to impulses coming from the EU; 2. Macro process model, where the EU is seen as integrated structure in domestic and transnational political processes and in institutions; 3. Mixed model (between the two).

For most researchers, the inappropriate model means that the Europeanization is a mismatch between the national and EU leverage as the central parameter for internal transformation based on the EU's influence (Cowles / Caporaso/ Risse 2001). The

concept of inadequacy expresses the compatibility of the internal structures towards the Europeanization pressure: the less compatible, the greater the pressure to adapt the internal structures. There is a discrepancy between the Europeanization and the domestic structures, which results in the pressure of adaptation from the EU's side (Börzel / Risse 2003:69). Timm Beichelt states that the model has obvious limitations. The concept of Europeanization is used to designate the beginning of the process. Europeanization seems to simultaneously express the initial condition and the process as a whole.

The transformation model conceives "Europeanization as a transformation". Europeanization is designed as an extension of the top-down model as a result of the European impulses idea, with a major role in internal change. The difference lies in establishing the importance of domestic factors for internal change. The discussion over this type of Europeanization is justified by the issues related to the new members of the EU, derived from their historical and civilization legacies.

The two models cited above neglect the effects of the action of EU nation states on the EU level. The model of Europeanization as a macro-process underlines the fact that the EU influence on the internal institutions for Europeanization is not seen as a linear process of adaptation, but an interlacing of mutual effects resulting from EU action on domestic institutions and from the action of the national states on the EU.

Radaelli conceives Europeanization as a process of "construction, diffusion and institutionalization" of EU rules shaping "the internal discourse, the identities, the political structures and the public policies" (Radaelli 2003:30). Europeanization as a macro-process leads to the assertion of Europeanism directly within the framework of a national state. Undoubtedly, the European values, Europeanism and everything that is related to the European culture and civilization have circulated and circulate in the national framework of the natural process of acculturation, with a long lasting tradition in the entire European area. The selection criteria and the options for Europeanism belong to the individuals and groups beyond their belonging to a national community and the existence of political regimes.

From a different perspective, the Europeanization knows two other models: the model of Europeanization through innovation and the model of Europeanization through imitation. The first derives from the intimate association between the internal government decision and the policy of European development of the national society. The second reflects the transgovernmental process of imitation beyond the ministerial decision on Europeanization (Trond 2005).

3. NATIONAL AND DOMESTIC IN MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Finding out the national significance of the media discourse on Europe stands for a main direction of research, taking into account the media impact on the Europeanization process. At this level, the present work attaches the proper importance

to the domestication of the news released by mass media about the European events and the EU decisions.

The role of media in shaping attitudes towards the EU arises from the process of adjusting Europe's problems to the requirements of the citizens from a country. This adaptation has been called "domestic adaptation with national colors" (Risse et al. 2001:1). Due to the lack of news and public debates about Europeanization within the national framework, citizens cannot participate in debates on European issues. Also, people do not know the work of actors and institutions within the EU. This would be one explanation why few citizens of the EU space recognize themselves through the European identity.

The phenomenon of Europeanization domestication occurs: "It is likely that this domestication of European politics with national colors will continue as long as national politicians need to cater to national electorates for winning elections and so long as national media depend on the attention of national audiences in order to stay in business" (Adam 2008:94).

Mass media operates in the context of historical and cultural diversity, as a result of the belonging to a nation. The content and the transmission of the news on the Europeanization requirements, depend mainly on the internal institutional resources and on traditions, as well as on the stability of the internal institutional structures within a nation. The Europeanization of the media has an impact on the national domestic realities, as demonstrated by the field studies: "the press focused on national perspectives for those issues where the decision-making power rests with national institutions. This is not to say, however, that the media would not support EU integration" (Pfetsch 2008:36).

The communication of the European issues through the national media can strengthen the specific, local vision on Europeanization. This effect is reflected in the segmentation of Europeanism in a variety of Europeanizations: "To domesticate something means to transport it across a border, from an outside to an inside; from the outside of the nation-state – into the nation-state." (Slaatta 2006:12). Because they release information about European events and decisions in the light of European national interests, mass media shape the national identity in this way. The discourse on Europe cannot be separated from the reaffirmation of national identities. Mass media cannot avoid European values, but at the same time, they release news about the attitudes expressed by certain groups or individuals. Presenting the resistance to Europeanization and the anti-European positions of the internal public is in fact a media support of the Europeanization process. The thesis about the necessity of vision change towards the media impact on the Europeanization is argued in this respect.

The idea about mass media as being responsible for preserving the national values must be changed: "In short, quality newspapers raise the "European voice" against the undecided, hesitant and particularistic attitudes of the national governments and sometimes even against the Euro-scepticism of their own readers" (Trenz 2004:2). It must be mentioned that Trenz' thesis is valid mainly for western quality press. There are

few references to studies about the media support for the Europeanization in Eastern countries.

The Europeanization of the national society highly depends on the ability of the national media to communicate news about Europe as a community of all its citizens beyond existent differences, within the national framework, through the proper attitudes towards Europeanization paths. Mass media cannot present Europe as a community if they are not supported by the public and by the national elites: “Consequently, one should not overestimate mass media’s potential to integrate Europe as their picture of Europe largely depends on the domestic adaptations of common European policies. Such adaptations are difficult, if there is a gap between national elites and the public” (Adam 2008:109).

National media may include in their broadcasts news and debates about actors and institutions from the European level. In this way, they contribute to the Europeanization of public debates in three ways: “*Supranational Europeanization*: an increased role for actors and institutions from the European level in public debates in national news media. *Vertical Europeanization*: when national actors address or refer to European institutions, issues, legal frameworks, norms and identities; *Horizontal Europeanization*: increased attention for actors and institutions from other European countries in national news media” (Koopmans 2007:186).

Regarding Europeanization, national media can act as advocates for the European space if they release news on the transnational problems of interest to the public throughout Europe. At the same time, they could impede the process of Europeanization if they decide to restrain public debate within the national framework. The public grants credit to the media broadcasts which show debates on Europeanization fields of interest for the citizens. This interest varies from one field to another. In areas where EU directives (monetary and agricultural policies) must be applied by domestic actors, public debates are highly Europeanized. In the other issue fields - immigration, troop deployment, pensions and retirement, and education – “Europeanization tendencies were much less strong” (Koopmans 2007:187). In areas where EU competencies are reduced, media presents their problems, especially as national requirements.

4. DIMENSIONS OF THE TELEVISION’S IMPACT ON THE EUROPEANIZATION OF THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY

In this section, I present arguments for the phenomenon of domestication of the news about Europe and Europeanization by exploring the data and the conclusions of

the research: “The Media Construction of Europeanization as a public problem in the context of European integration of Romanian society”¹.

I emphasize the idea that mass media are important ways of spreading information about Europe, and, at the same time, they can shape the Romanians' behaviour regarding Europeanization. In this context, I try to establish whether the Europeanization process can be explained through the television coverage, the paper focusing on the use of television in Romania during the Euro-parliamentary election campaigns from June 2009. Using the collected data, I examine the structure of the European election campaigns on the national TV channel in Romania.

5. OBJECTIVES, HYPOTHESIS AND METHOD

One of the specific objectives of the research is to identify specific types of the Romanians' requirements, regarding Europeanization and the ways these requirements are transmitted and made public. The research stage from 2009 focused on the study of national television as an important agent of expressing the citizen's issues towards the Europeanization process. I mention that TVR1 is clearly a generalist channel, while Realitatea TV and Antena 3 are specialized in providing news. I emphasize that this paper does not compare a public generalist channel with private *generalist* channels.

I present the analysis of the news about the EU, broadcasted on the national television, TVR, compared to those of the private televisions. As a public television, TVR broadcasts news about EU in order to provide information and support programs for the Europeanization process of the Romanian society. Unlike the public television, private televisions have the freedom to deliver only those news about the EU which could attract the target-audiences, with a view to gaining profit.

In this section, I will only refer to the work hypothesis, namely that the Romanian public television - the TVR 1 channel releases more news about the EU than the private television channels, Realitatea TV and Antena 3. I also address the question whether television news about the EU are as prominent as other news.

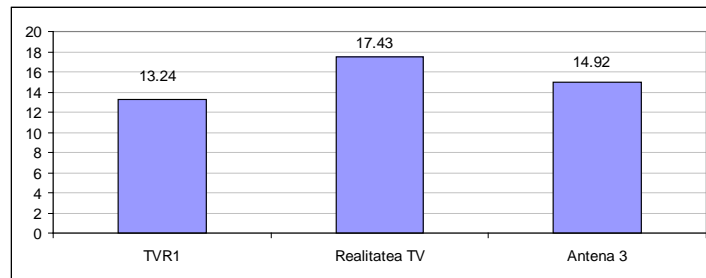
6. RESULTS

EU news presence in the evening newscasts have been studied by content analyzing 1271 news released by the Romanian news channels TVR1, Realitatea TV and

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Antena 3. Out of the 1271 news analyzed, most of them were released by the channel TVR 1 (740), followed by those submitted by Realitatea TV (350) and Antena 3 (181).

Out of the 1271 news released by the three television channels, 186 (14.6%) contained a reference to the EU, and 144 (11.3%) to countries or organizations outside the EU. Most news referring to the EU have been released by Realitatea TV - 17.4%, followed by Antena 3 -14.9%, and then TVR 1 - 13,2%.



Percentage of total EU-related news about the EU on each channel

The research data indicate that a large number of news referring to the EU are presented in the *headline* (15.7%) or in *promos* (9.8%) and very little in the news bulletin.

Another indicator for the prominence of the news containing European themes is given by their position in the news bulletin structure. The research shows that if we only refer to TVR 1, the percentage of news dedicated to the EU, placed in the first third of the news stands at 36.3%, and in the first two-thirds at 61.5%. Even though TVR releases less news dedicated to the EU than the news channel Realitatea TV and Antena 3, at TVR 1 these seem to be more prominent because they are placed to a larger extent in the first third of the show.

Out of 225 EU related issues present in 186 news, the one referring to the European Parliament is the most numerous (37.3% of subjects), followed by news referring to the Euro currency and the economy (12%), structural funds (11.6%), EU policies (10.7%) and European identity (9.3%). Out of the 26 themes coded to "Other issues" (which is 11.6%), six were dedicated to Europe Day.

The great difference between the distribution of topics in the news journals from TVR1 and the two private news television channels Realitatea TV and Antena 3 should be emphasized. Topics such as the euro currency and the economy, or EU policies were more addressed by the public television TVR 1 than by the private televisions. In contrast, Realitatea TV and Antena 3 released news about the European identity and the European Parliament.

Social topics such as the freedom of travel, living and working in the European Community space and the non-discrimination of the Romanian citizens, in particular, were less approached in the news from TVR 1.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study has as a main focus the analysis of the national mass-media role in the Europeanization of the Romanian society. My purpose was to identify the types of requirements regarding the Europeanization that the Romanian citizens have and the ways these requirements are transmitted and known. The empirical study examined the news about Europe, released by three televisions in Romania during the campaign for European parliamentary elections, in June 2009. In this research, I insist on the news on the EU broadcasted by television.

The public television represents, in any society, the main channel of transmission of the citizens' requirements, including the ones regarding the EU and the Europeanization. The research about television news on the 2004 campaign for European Parliament elections in all 25 EU countries shows that media play a crucial role in the act of choice of each country's representatives. The research found that in 2004 EP elections visibility was greater in the 10 new EU member states than in older member states. Compared with previous elections in 1999, in 2004 the level of visibility of the European Parliament elections in the 15 older EU member states increased (De Vreese *et al.* 2006:495).

My empirical research data show that the national television in Romania - TVR did not present news referring to the EU to a larger extent than the private television channels. Due to the period when we investigated the role of television - the campaign for European Parliament elections - public television should have provided a greater volume of news about the EU and Europeanization of Romanian society. For example, public Romanian television should present more news about social topics such as the freedom of travel, living and working in the Community space, precisely the non-discrimination of Romanian citizens. However, the time assigned to the news referring to the EU in the journals from TVR 1 is very similar to the duration of the same kind of news, on public television in the Netherlands, France, Germany, Denmark, and United Kingdom (Peter *et al.* 2003).

The national media from the countries that recently joined the EU, like Romania, fail to cover topics on the European issues. During the campaign for European Parliament elections, in June 2009, the Romanian television discourse about the EU and the approach of European issues in electoral shows were limited. In the news journals the distinction between European and national theme was irrelevant, due to the inadequate media discourse on the European perspective of Romanian television. Topics about Europe are approached without a real connection with the Europeanization process of the Romanian society. This explains why the reference to the European topic remains

rather neutral in the televised debates. Television talk-shows have had a broader audience than the news broadcasts in the European Parliament election campaign, due to the fact that they approached especially the internal problematic.□

The newscasts tend to be aligned to topics of national interest. They release those news on European issues which are related to the internal politics agenda. One of the causes, which determine media to emphasize the national dimension, is represented by the actions and ideas of the major actors in the Romanian society. It has been found that televisions in Romania have released news about national institutions and actors.

Romanian media releases opinions rather than information. We may say that television maintain, not rarely, rumors based on non-credible sources. The rumor is transmitted through the media channels because it is appropriate for one group or another. We are witnessing in the Romanian media the tendency of social actors to occupy the public space by any possible means in the absence of the necessary argumentation in support of their point of view, and respect for the other's opinion (Schifirneț, 2009).

In my vision, the Europeanization of the Romanian society takes place in the transition process from the tendential modernity which characterizes the Romanian society to the structural modernity from the European community (Schifirneț, 2009a). The impact of the Europeanization on the Romanian society takes place in a certain type of modernity, the tendential modernity. In Romania, the modernity has been and still is a process of political institutional construction, prioritarly to the economic development. The tendential modernity derives from the acts of modernization within the framework of a national state and it represents the extent to which the national state produces modernity. In the historical evolution, the Romanian state has given priority to the national construction and to the problems concerning the economical while the social development have been postponed or subordinated to the national issue. The main issue remains shaping a national identity in the geopolitical context in which the Romanian nation lives.

The Europeanization of media is a process with two directions: one from top-to-bottom, orchestrated from Brussels, through normative acts, and one from bottom-to-top, generated by citizens and member states. The achievement of a media Europeanization faces some difficulties, especially in small countries, the most important difficulties being: the power on national states to regulate the mass media systems, the absence of an international union of televisions, the absence of global practices of publicity and the perpetual importance of linguistic and cultural barriers.

Romanian media reflects only to a small extent, or sometimes in a distorted mode, peoples' difficulties in adapting to the transformation challenges of the society due to Romania's EU accession. The European integration process is reflected in new models of social, economic and political organization. All these changes have a direct effect on the daily lives of each individual. For many individuals, these changes have not had beneficial consequences for their lifestyle, while for others, quite few, they have brought real opportunities and benefits in their lifestyle. The Europeanization of the

Romanian society takes place in the context of inequalities between individuals, social groups and country regions, created by new structures and institutions which appeared since the accession. Media reflect these changes either in ways taken over from the Western media or by a strictly local approach. In both cases, the real issues of the Europeanization of the Romanian society are avoided.

The research on the national media has to examine the contexts in which they become European. As long as there is no European media, a strategy is necessary for the national media to provide permanently news on the EU and the Europeanization. In fact, the national media are European to the extent that European issues are part of their editorial policy. Media themselves are national actors of Europeanization. From this position, the media can play a very important role in the European communication and in the European integration.

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