

Title: *Greece as a ship in a journey: Icons, metaphors and meanings of crisis in contemporary political discourse*

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The paper adopts the methodological and theoretical perspective of discourse analysis and seeks to explore the meanings of crisis promoted by several political agents in contemporary Greece. To this end, it mainly focuses on speeches from electoral campaigns that took place from 2009 till 2015, and also on parliament debates at the same period. It argues that the various meanings of crisis by several political forces connected to actual “practices of discourse” that form their political identity and profile. Thus, the significations of the current multifarious crisis are connected, among other things, with beliefs regarding the historical presence and the role of the country in the EU and the global environment in general; with ideas about national identity and social cohesion; with reflections about governing and the role of leadership; and also with assumptions concerning the best policies for domestic economic and social development.

Furthermore, these “practise of discourse” specified in rhetorical devices that construct arguments for political competition. The political discourse about the crisis includes interpretations regarding its causes and blames specific social and political agents as responsible. It also includes statements concerning the past and the future, and furthermore it contains references to several potential risks in case one does not conform to the proposed policy proposals. Thus, it forms the identity of “we” against “they” or “others”, and tries to increase partisanship in order to earn votes and political support.

The rhetorical and discursive performance of political discourse is searched in metaphors, metonymies and modalities of (political) language. Metaphors are privileged devices that build meanings regarding abstract notions and complex situations, and they have a distinct ideological operation as well since they put emphasis on concrete aspects against others. They are not tools of a language activity, but mainly reflect modes of thought. As such, they serve to sustain given relations of power and social inequalities through reproducing specific point of political and social views. Thus, a set of crucial research issues are raised here. How do political forces represent metaphorically the current multifaceted crisis? How do they frame it and what possible solutions they declare? What are the broader interpretative schemes that are formed regarding the causes of the crisis? How do they describe the future and the past of the country? What alarms and risks they invoke in order to promote their political and economical plan? The study of these issues offers a comprehensive view of the broader political and ideological character of political forces, and also helps to identify deeper convergence and/or differentiation between them.