

Crisis Discourse and the Greek Case

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Shifting our focus from the financial and geopolitical parameters of the crisis condition to the way this condition is narrated in the Media, we will be able to observe a crisis discourse mediating primary information in a particular manner: the texts and official documents at the disposal of all the Media constitute a huge reservoir of information/primary material that functions as a springboard for commentary in the social media, the creation of works of art etc.

In the case of Greece, the crisis is mediated using a variety of tools, following various avenues and with divergent intentions and aims. It is paradoxical, however, that all these mediations coincide on a rather dense meaning, apparently shared by all. The Greek version of the crisis, with all its particularities (historical, cultural, political a.o.) as it becomes a narrative it produces a rather common, dense, collective and catalytic political meaning embraced by several heterogeneous and diverse social groups and individual subjects, notwithstanding their dissimilar experiences of the crisis. The multiplicity of experiences is, so to speak, reduced to a single experience, the experience of the crisis.

There is an impressive lack of noise in the master narrative established by the traditional Media (television, radio, the press) through their filtering/mediation of material, information and political speeches. After the traditional media, the new media, including social networks, also adopted this narrative, aestheticized it and, following different paths, helped this common meaning become entrenched.

We could cite a number of films by young Greek filmmakers who, touched by the crisis, excelled abroad and earned awards in festivals, as well as other arts projects, and artistic collectives that re-contextualized this common meaning by adopting viewpoints different from those of the Media; these always led to the same result though. Even on the linguistic level, the crisis, being a Greek word, created its own vocabulary and grammar, leading to an extensive use of metaphors to acclimatize people with the unfamiliar experience of the crisis and creating meaning on what crises mean; these metaphors were drawn from tragedies, Biblical narrative schemes, medicine, even Hollywood movies, like the *Titanic*.

Furthermore, the crisis gave rise to studies and crisis observatories; a plethora of books were published on the subject, adorning the bookcases of bookstores across Greece. The crisis is everywhere and always; it possesses a common, condensed and unified meaning dictating the specific mode in which it should be experienced; that mode is the mode of frustration that traverses the social field.

Frustration (as a dictated/conditioned emotional state) and dichotomisation (as the upshot of frustration) are two concepts we will elucidate further on.