



GPSG Fieldwork Competition Prize 2010

Greece Beyond the Crisis

As part of its **Greece Beyond the Crisis** series, the Greek Politics Specialist Group (GPSG) recently launched its first research fieldwork competition. Applications were sought for any type of fieldwork on any aspect of the complex economic and social crisis facing Greece.

Following a highly competitive field of applications and a rigorous selection process, the Executive Committee of the GPSG is delighted to announce that the winner of the **£400 prize** is

Ms Eleni Christodoulou

ESRC Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Political Science and International Studies,
University of Birmingham.

The panel commended Ms Christodoulou on a very strong and topical bid with a transparent and robust framework, a feasible research timeframe and a clear link between the funding and the primary research.

A report on the findings of this research project will be published under the **GPSG Working Paper Series** (<http://www.gpsg.org.uk/workingpapers.html>) in the summer of 2011.

GPSG Fieldwork Competition 2010 – Abstract of winning project

Greek Politics and Passion(s): Reconstituting National Identity in the Midst of Financial Crisis

Eleni Christodoulou, University of Birmingham

Claudia Aradau (2004) has noted how the discipline of International Relations (IR) has not sufficiently dealt with the importance of emotions in driving governance strategy. Nor has IR, however, taken stock of the emotional models present in public re-action to particular crises, and in particular financial crises. The aim of this research is to examine the significance of emotions, and their role in (re)constituting national identity in the wake of the recent Greek socio-economic crisis. Through the lens of social constructivism, and by adopting a methodology of discourse analysis I explore the role of emotions in Greek public discourses, as these have emerged post-December 2009 (this month marking the official revelation to the public of the severity of the financial crisis as well as the announcement, by the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou, of the programme of tough public spending cuts). In particular, I want to examine the presence and

investigate the importance of 'shame', 'fear' and 'discontent' in public articulations of issues related to the financial crisis and how, in turn, these emotions affected interpretations, perceptions and meanings associated with Greek national identity. Have the previous twelve months been a period of intense domestic criticism and 'national' self-reflection for the Greek people? Have the crisis conditions in Greece led to a reinforcement, a re-imagining, or a disintegration/disorientation of Greek national identity?

Assessing the impact of the economic crisis on what it means to be 'Greek' through emotional phenomena present in discursive political representations will highlight the constitutive and productive power of emotions and potentially illustrate the 'emotional contagion' (Izard and Tomkins, 1966; Gibbs, 2001) of the crisis across the socio-political spectrum of Greek society. Hence, this conceptual framework could open up avenues of exploring the 'movement' of feelings within the public domain but also enable political scientists to borrow from the theoretical insights of the psychoanalytic approach to help shed light on how it is (if at all) possible that emotions can foster new identity antagonisms or commonalities in the face of financial crises. It is important in times of socio-economic hardship to step back to examine and reflect upon the political dynamics at work, and to step forward to offer some alternatives for navigating through these re-actionary trends of a national (identity) crisis.

The data of analysis of this study will involve public discourses, as these are manifested in newspaper articles; television programs; political speeches but also in new media. These research findings will then be cross-examined with further qualitative research in the form of semi-structured academic interviews.

