Blame and Punishment? The Electoral Politics of Extreme Austerity in Greece

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Abstract (150 words)

Can governments that introduce extreme austerity measures survive elections? Contrary to economic voting expectations, the PASOK government in Greece initially appeared to cope quite well, claiming victory in regional elections in 2010 despite widespread anti-austerity protest. In this paper, we interpret this result with the help of a post-election survey, which also covered future voting intention. The explanatory power of models based on theories of economic voting and blame attribution as well as the electoral impact of the government's representation of the crisis as an existential threat are assessed. Our analysis challenges the interpretation of the 2010 election as an indication of support for PASOK's austerity policies and reveals weaknesses in its support base, which help contextualise its downfall in the 2012 Parliamentary elections. The paper also underlines the importance of studying the impact of crises discourses on voting choice, particularly since blame attribution receives little support in this case.

Introduction

The question of how political parties fare electorally after implementing austerity measures has been analysed over many decades, with welfare state retrenchment seen as a major risk factor. Despite increasing inequality and social tensions, the global financial crisis appears to be bad news for left-wing parties in government, with electoral defeats suffered by the Democrats in the USA and Labour in the UK during 2010 and Socialist parties in Portugal and Spain in 2011. There thus appears to be a strong prima facie case that the main electoral impact of the financial crisis consists of an anti-incumbent effect, with voters punishing whoever is in power at the time when decisions imposing severe austerity measures were made.

Such an interpretation would add renewed weight to the macroeconomic voting argument: voters will tend to reward the incumbent if the economy performs well during the election cycle but many will drop their support if the economy performs poorly. Yet, the literature on the electoral impact of austerity measures has shown that such a punishment is not automatic. Cross-national and cross-temporal studies find only an inconsistent or weak influence of economic voting (Powell and Whitten, 1993; Duch and Stevenson, 2008). Apart from contextual factors, such as institutional features (Powell and Whitten, 1993) and political conditions (Bengtsson, 2004), blame attribution has emerged as a crucial parameter in conditioning the ability of government parties to survive economic downturns and welfare state retrenchment. Governments that are successful in managing blame and convince voters that any measures, however painful, were not their fault, apparently can do well electorally (Vis and Van Kersbergen, 2007; Giger and Nelson, 2011).

The current economic crisis and the extreme austerity policies that have been implemented in various European countries provide a new impetus to test classical theories, such as economic voting and blame attribution, but also go beyond them. One factor that requires further elaboration in this context is the political discourse governments employ to justify the largely unpopular policy decisions taken. This commonly involves presenting austerity as the only possible solution to the crisis and acceptance of the measures as a matter of national survival (Clarke and Newman, 2012). Employing the rhetoric of existential threats is broadly equivalent to what in the international security literature is known as a 'securitisation' attempt (Wæver, 1995). The central aim of this paper is thus to examine the importance of government discourses for electoral behaviour: how decisive is the extent to which a government can prevail in framing contests over its opponents and dominate political discourse in swaying voting decisions at times of crisis, controlling for economic evaluations, ideology and blame attribution?

No national setting is better suited to analyse this question than Greece where the entire economy is in a severe crisis and virtually all citizens are adversely affected. The left-of-centre party PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement), which came to office in 2009, negotiated a 'bail-out' agreement with the European Union (EU) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in May 2010 in return for unprecedented austerity measures. Despite general strikes bringing life to a halt and demonstrators rioting in front of

Parliament, the Greek government appeared to have done rather well in its first electoral test in the form of local and regional elections that took place in November 2010.[1] Prime Minister George Papandreou had attempted to turn the elections into a referendum on his austerity policies. With overall results showing that PASOK lost support but remained the strongest party, he was able to claim victory and a renewed mandate for his policies. Nevertheless, this apparent electoral success in 2010 did not prevent the eventual fall of the Papandreou government, the formation of a coalition involving both major parties, and the collapse of PASOK's poll rating, leading to major losses in the general elections of 2012.

To understand these electoral developments and their broader comparative and theoretical implications, we analyse survey evidence representative of the Greek adult population that was collected in early December 2010, shortly after the regional elections had taken place. One way to examine the significance of this result is to compare the determinants of voting in the regional elections with the voting intention in a future general election. To what extent was the acceptance of the government's security discourse an important factor for voters in 2010 that may have enabled PASOK to withstand punishment for its austerity measures in the regional elections? What evidence, if any, was there already in 2010 about cracks in the support for PASOK that may help explain its eventual downfall? In order to answer these questions, we draw on theories of economic voting, blame attribution and the impact of government discourses on austerity, testing our model of vote choice with reference to two types of dependent variables: actual (recalled) vote in the regional elections of November 2010 and voting intention in a future general election.

The paper is organised as follows. We first discuss a range of theoretical perspectives potentially relevant to explaining the determinants of support for the incumbent party when the latter applies austerity measures, a question that is far from being settled. This is followed by a discussion of the data and the methodology used. As the questions of blame attribution and political discourse are of central importance, we then have a closer look at the structure of the attitudes of voters on these issues, before discussing the main results of our analysis on the determinants of electoral choices in Greece in 2010.

Theory: Economic Voting and Conditioning Effects
Any discussion of the electoral politics of extreme austerity has to start with theories of economic voting, which have played a dominant role in the electoral literature since the 1980s (cf. Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2007). The general notion of this approach is that voters punish the incumbent government party for worsening economic conditions. The dominance of the standard reward-punishment model of voting would be confirmed if

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[1] The 2010 local and regional elections were held on 7 November (first round) and 14 November (second round). Separate ballots were used to elect representatives for 325 municipalities and 13 regions. PASOK-supported candidates won control of seven regions and gained 43.6% of the council seats, thus allowing PASOK to claim victory (see Gemenis, 2012). For the remainder of the paper, the focus is on regional elections, which is a better indicator of support for particular political parties.

economic evaluations determined voting behaviour also in cases of extreme economic strain.

The literature distinguishes between different ways in which voters can evaluate the economic situation: sociotropic vs. egocentric, and retrospective vs. prospective (see Evans and Andersen, 2006). Yet, while a wide variety of studies have applied and tested these concepts, no consensus has emerged in terms of which of them could be expected to be associated with what particular economic circumstances. Previous analyses of voting in Greece (Nezi 2012; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau 2012; Lobo and Lewis-Beck 2012) have used sociotropic retrospective economic assessments, but these analyses apply only to periods up to 2008, preceding the austerity crisis. In the Greece of 2010, we considered the sociotropic retrospective dimension to be irrelevant as the extremely severe nature of the downturn in the general economic situation is not in doubt. The egocentric retrospective element, on the other hand, may be pertinent to our inquiry as the economic impact of the crisis at the individual level may show some significant variation. On the prospective front, expectations about future personal as well as national economic developments could also be expected to play a key role in voting decisions.

One aspect that is of particular interest here is whether voters may use different criteria to evaluate the economy, depending on the type of election held. On this, most influential has been Reif and Schmitt's (1980) distinction between 'first order' and 'second order' elections, with local and regional elections usually regarded as 'second order'. The key predictions are that 'second order' elections have a lower turnout, favour smaller and new political parties, and are likely to see incumbents punished. In terms of economic voting, we would expect the relevant economic evaluations in second order elections will be predominantly retrospective rather than prospective, an approach adopted by most empirical analyses of such elections (Lohmann et al., 1997; Gaines and Crombez, 2004; Gélineau and Bélanger, 2005). This is because in regional elections, voters can be thought to be "sending a message" to an existing government that will continue to be in office (cf. Kellermann, 2008). By contrast, voters asked about the voting intention in a general election may give a higher consideration to prospective economic evaluations.

In Greece, local and regional elections are typically seen as 'second order' and voters do not directly choose parties but only lists that are supported by parties. In 2010, much of the campaigning was indeed directed at local issues (Gemenis, 2010). In some instances, however, voters may not automatically perceive regional and local elections as 'second order' (Johns, 2011; Ervik, 2012). This may be particularly true in the Greek case, since two weeks before Election Day, Papandreou announced that he would call a snap general election if voters were not expressing sufficient support for PASOK candidates. In presenting the regional vote as a referendum on the government's austerity programme, he clearly attempted to turn it into a contest of national importance, with potentially immediate effects on the future of the national government. Our analysis of the determinants of vote choice can thus also help determine the extent to which this attempt was successful and therefore assess the broader implications of the 2010 result. A vote for the government party PASOK strongly influenced by support for the government's austerity discourses could be interpreted as the regional elections predominantly having

the character of 'first order' elections. A strong influence of retrospective economic voting may indicate a strong 'second order' character. If neither economic voting nor other factors connected to the austerity crisis are important, then Greeks made their choice on local or other factors.

Following the previous literature on the effects of contextual conditions on economic voting (Powell and Whitten, 1993; Anderson, 2000; Bengtsson, 2004; Hellwig and Samuels, 2007), we can expect that objective changes in a country's or an individual's economic circumstances are not the main predictor of an incumbent's electoral fortunes. It is the perception of actual economic performance that is of key importance (Tilley et al., 2008). Furthermore, the attribution of responsibility has been shown to play a crucial conditioning effect in the relationship between economic evaluations and vote choice: only voters who blame the government for the economic problems are likely to vote according to their economic evaluations (Vis, 2009; Hellwig and Coffey, 2011; Giger and Nelson, 2011).

A particularly potent strategy for governments to minimise electoral costs at times of crisis is to attribute responsibility for economic conditions to exogenous factors (Powell and Whitten, 1993; Hart and Tindall, 2009). Vis and van Kersbergen, writing several years before the Eurozone crisis, suggested that the removal of control over monetary policy from the nation state to the European level offers a new opportunity to pursue such a strategy: 'The European Central Bank emerges as the cause of tied hands and consequently blame can be shifted' (Vis and van Kersbergen, 2007, p. 167). More recently, Lobo and Lewis-Beck (2012) showed that the perception of the EU rather than national governments being responsible for economic problems led to reduced levels of economic voting in Southern Europe.

Studies evaluating the effect of economic globalisation on voting behaviour find similar patterns (Hellwig, 2001). Countries that are most integrated into the global economy and are subsequently perceived to be less able to exercise control over economic affairs experience a lower degree of economic voting (Fernandez Albertos, 2006; Hellwig and Samuels, 2007; Duch and Stevenson, 2008, 2010). In the Greek case, we would thus expect that voters who do not blame the government for the economic crisis and instead hold foreign actors such as the European Union or Germany responsible, are more likely to support the governing party, PASOK.

Further to blame attribution, a closely related aspect of framing concerns the ability of the government to deflect electoral costs for unpopular welfare state retrenchment by a policy of 'blame avoidance'. This concept has dominated the literature on the politics of welfare state reform since the early 1990s,[2] and various types of blame avoidance strategies have been identified (Weaver, 1986; Hering, 2008). In the politics of extreme austerity, perhaps the most successful blame avoidance strategy is to promote a narrative of the country facing an urgent, existential threat and with economic policies forced on the

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[2] Cf. Pierson, 1994, 2001; Starke, 2006; Vis and Van Kersbergen, 2007; Giger and Nelson, 2011.

government to which there are no alternatives (Weaver, 1986). We would thus expect the ability of the government to control political discourse and define austerity as being inevitable to be crucial in determining its electoral prospects (Hart and Tindall, 2009).

Using the rhetoric of existential threat to legitimise extraordinary responses is known in the international security literature is a 'securitisation' attempt (Wæver, 1995). Elites that can successfully, by means of an argument, convince an audience that there is an imminent threat to the survival of a key (national) value, are able to 'break free of procedures' they would otherwise be bound by (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 26). Compelling cognitive-psychological evidence shows that individuals are predisposed to accept such political arguments that emphasise avoiding losses, rather than realizing gains (Kahneman and Tversky 2000; Arceneaux, 2012). Therefore, as Weyland (2003, pp. 823-824) argues, deep crises and people's strong loss-aversion biases induce them 'to support bold, draconian, painful, and risky stabilization plans that promise a quick recovery', even when these have highly uncertain prospects of success.

Employing such security discourse was the cornerstone of Papandreou's strategy of maintaining adequate levels of support for the austerity measures, repeatedly arguing that 'we are in a race against time to keep our economy alive' and that 'the country is in a state of war' (*The Guardian*, 3 March 2010). As the Finance Minister George Papakonstantinou characteristically put it on the day the first bail-out agreement was signed (*BBC News*, 2 May 2010), the choice was "between collapse and salvation". The message to voters is therefore that they should support the government's measures regardless of how severe or even unfair these may be because the alternative would be far more catastrophic for the Greek economy and society. Exploiting the psychological cognitive predisposition of avoiding losses or other threats to survival may therefore provide the greatest legitimation for welfare retrenchment and act as a potent strategy for the incumbent to attract electoral support. We would thus expect that voters who accept the government's security discourse that the austerity policies are necessary for national survival are more likely to support the government party.

In evaluating the role of economic assessments, blame attributions and the acceptance of government discourses, we face the challenge of endogeneity. Economic assessments could be expected to be influenced by party choice (cf. Anderson, 2007; Tilley et al. 2008). PASOK voters may express a more hopeful view of the economic future of Greece as a way to provide a justification for their continued support of the party. Also blame attributions and evaluation of discourses could be expected to follow partisan cues (cf. Malhotra and Kuo 2007; Malhotra and Margalit 2010). In the absence of a panel design, which constitutes one of the main attempts to control for endogeneity (cf. Fraile and Lewis-Beck, 2010), we use a number of strategies to assess the extent to which our results might be affected by this problem.

First, we control for party identification with three variables measuring how close respondents consider themselves to be to the main parties, PASOK, ND and the parties of the far left. Several studies have highlighted the interrelationships between economic evaluations and partisanship (Rudolph, 2003; Marsh and Tilley 2010; Tilley and Hobolt,

2011). Partisanship may provide a perceptual screen through which voters attribute blame, assess economic conditions and consider political discourses (Campbell et al., 1960; Evans and Andersen, 2006) and we thus need to control for it.

Secondly, we control for a number of other variables that could be expected to determine vote choice, such as age, gender, education, trade union membership, and political ideology (left-right placement). Do we find any statistically significant effects of economic voting, blame attribution and austerity discourses, once we control for these variables? Finally, we test our hypotheses not only with a binary logistic regression contrasting PASOK voters with voters of other parties and abstainers but also by carrying out multinomial logistic regressions to examine the extent to which the effect of economic voting, blame attribution and austerity discourses varies between different vote choices, including non-voting.

Apart from serving as controls, ideological variables are also important on their own right for reasons to do with the specific socio-political context. PASOK started with a radical socialist programme after the end of the military dictatorship but mellowed in later years, promoting an agenda of 'modernisation' which was unsuccessfully challenged by traditionalists (Featherstone, 2005; Lyrintzis, 2005). The radical economic measures adopted by the PASOK government in response to the debt crisis further distanced the party from its traditional, socialist core. The greatest challenge to the government's discourse is thus likely to come from left-wing forces.

Related to this is the question about the electoral relevance of involvement in trade unions and anti-austerity protests. Despite PASOK's historically strong ties with the trade unions, more so than any other party in Greece (Mavrogordatos, 1997), the central involvement of trade unions in the organisation of a series of general strikes and demonstrations against the government's austerity measures could be expected to have undermined their loyalty to PASOK. We would thus expect that voters who position themselves ideologically on the Left, participated in protest actions and are trade union members would be more likely to vote for parties to the left of PASOK.

Finally, one aspect of voting behaviour that goes beyond party choice is non-voting.[3] A central part of the electoral politics of austerity could be anticipated to be political alienation and 'anti-politics', leading to a loss of support and an 'anti-party' sentiment (e.g. Poguntke, 1996; Dalton, 2004). The question is to what extent non-participation in the electoral process can be seen as a product of a general political disinterest that may have preceded the austerity crisis or an active form of protest. Examining the effect of political interest and education should help us interpret the motivation of those who did not participate in the regional elections and of those who reported they intended not to vote in a general election.

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[3] According to Article 51 of the Greek constitution, voting is compulsory. While non-voting was never effectively sanctioned, in 2001 the provision to impose sanctions was removed from the Constitution, thus making the obligation to vote merely an aspiration, see Malkopoulou 2011, p. 206.

In order to assess the effects of economic and political evaluations on vote choice at times of extreme crisis, we present two separate analyses, namely of actual (recalled) voting behaviour in the regional elections in Greece that took place in November 2010 and of voting intention in a future general election. Both are different phenomena but the comparison of the two should shed further light on the interpretation of the 2010 regional election results. Was Papandreou successful in turning these into a 'first order' election, with voters indicating, 'referendum-style', whether or not they supported his austerity policies, or were these predominantly a 'second order' election, of no direct significance for the fate of the national government? If the determinants of voting behaviour for the regional elections are essentially the same as of voting intention in a general election, we could conclude that the 'referendum' aspect was, indeed, the dominant feature. If however there are major differences, particularly in the importance of the government's discourse, blame attribution and economic voting, when other aspects such as party identification are controlled, then the relative success of PASOK in 2010 will in itself be of less comparative value for austerity politics.

Data

A telephone survey was conducted by Kappa Research, Athens, in early December 2010.[4] A stratified quota method was used to survey the adult Greek population, aiming to be representative of all Greek citizens aged 18 and above. The quota system ensured that the sample reflected the results of the last (2001) Greek census in terms of age, gender and regional distribution. One interview was conducted per household, with dialling codes selected randomly with the aid of computer software. In this way, a dataset with 1014 valid responses was generated.

For the purposes of analysing electoral behaviour, we compared survey responses to actual results in the regional elections that had taken place shortly before the survey was conducted. This revealed some disparities. Voters in the Attica region as well as PASOK voters were overrepresented while the share of non-voters was far lower than it should have been according to the official election statistics. An attempt was therefore made to weigh the data to match them as closely as possible to the actual results of the 2010 regional elections, region by region. All analyses of regional election behaviour presented in this paper are based on data weighted to reflect the actual results of the 2010 regional elections in terms of the share of voters in the 13 regions, turnout and the choice of parties.

According to our calculations based on official election returns[5], PASOK won 34.6% of valid votes, ND 32.6%, KKE 10.9%, and SYRIZA 4.5%. As 39.1% did not vote and a further 5.5% returned a blank or spoilt vote, the 2010 result indicated that PASOK had lost a lot of support. In terms of the share of the vote in relation to all registered voters, PASOK had received the support of 30.3% in the 2009 general elections but only 19.2% in the 2010 regional elections. An analysis of voter movements between 2009 and 2010 reveals that relatively few 2009 PASOK voters had switched their support to other parties: just 7% had voted for the second main party, ND, and 6% had voted for parties of the left, with non-voters forming the biggest group of PASOK defectors with 29%.

Turning to voting intention in future national parliamentary elections, the picture was quite similar. Few 2009 PASOK voters defected to either ND or the other left-wing opposition parties. 27% of former PASOK voters said they would not vote, 9% indicated a blank or spoilt vote, and 17% said they were undecided. Overall, only 40% of respondents indicated a party preference, and just 12.6% said they would vote PASOK in a future general election. This percentage is quite close to the actual share of the vote achieved by PASOK in the May 2012 (13.2%) and June 2012 (12.4%) parliamentary elections.[6]

In the remainder of the paper, we first try to model voting choice in the regional elections and then continue to analyse voting intention in a future national election. Before we explore these in greater detail, we have to discuss the structure of public attitudes to the austerity crisis, which will define some of the independent variables to be used in the analysis.

Blame attribution and austerity discourses
In order to analyse the dimensionality of attitudes to the 'blame' question, which previous studies of the electoral consequences of welfare state cuts have considered to be crucial, we invited all respondents to indicate whom they blame for the economic crisis from a range of institutions in Greece and abroad. The results of a principal-components (factor) analysis are summarised in Table 1.[7]

--- Table 1 about here ----

Three factors were identified from this. The first factor mainly loads on allocating blame to foreign economic and political actors, such as the European Union, Germany, foreign

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[5] Own calculations on the basis of election results in each of the 13 regions, as published by the Ministry of the Interior; http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/dn2010/index.html [accessed 20 April 2011]

[6] Official election results published by the Ministry of the Interior, see http://ekloges.ypes.gr [accessed 12 November 2012]

[7] In order to limit the number of missing cases, in particular for the subsequent regression analyses, we allocated a neutral response (3 on a 1-5 scale) to all non-respondents. This did not affect the overall result of the factor analysis.

investors and 'globalisation' generally. 42% of respondents (moderately or extremely) blamed the EU, 50% Germany, 66% foreign investors/speculators but only 34% the Euro.

The second factor is mainly defined by blame attached to Greek governments. About 41% (moderately or extremely) blamed the PASOK government that came into power 2009, and 64% blamed the ND government that was in office from 2004 to 2009. Interestingly, blaming the PASOK government loads on the same factor as blaming the ND government. Irrespective of which party is to blame, placing responsibility on the large parties constitutes a dimension of its own.

The third dimension of blame attribution is mainly defined by reference to corruption in Greece and the responsibility of individual Greek citizens. 74% of respondents blame corruption as 'extremely' responsible for the economic crisis, while the perception of the blame attached to 'each and every one of us' is rather more varied, with just 20% placing everybody in the category of those 'extremely' responsible.

Turning from the allocation of blame to broader attitudes on austerity, we constructed a battery of questions that was mainly intended to capture the level of agreement with the discourse promoted by the government but also included items that are an essential part of the opposition discourse, such as the question of the fairness of the distribution of the burden of the austerity measures. The results show that Greeks are deeply divided: 46% of the population agrees that the austerity measures are necessary for the country's survival but 41% disagree. In order to analyse the dimensionality of attitudes, we again conducted a principal-component analysis, and the results are displayed in Table 2.

--- Table 2 about here ---

This analysis also resulted in three factors. The first factor appears to be a good measurement of the level of agreement (or disagreement) with the government discourse. The main elements the factor loads on are the reference to 'national survival' and the lack of any alternative course of action for the government. 39% agree that the government had no option but to introduce these measures; 54% state that the crisis can be seen as an opportunity to move forward. Also a negative attitude to protest loads on this factor but only 24% of respondents disagreed with the statement that people should protest against austerity measures. Two-thirds of respondents agreed that people should protest, which also includes some of those who considered the austerity policies as unavoidable.

The second and third factors mainly load on one statement only, namely that 'nothing' can be done to resolve the crisis for the second factor and the unfairness of the distribution of the burden of the austerity policy for the third factor. The second factor indicates a feeling of 'fatalism' that even a change of government would not make any difference, and that Greece is helpless and unable to do anything to recover from the dire economic situation it has found itself in. However, only a fairly small minority, 18% of respondents, take that attitude.

The third factor provides an indication of the perception of unfairness. This is a major element of the opposition discourse and indicates an attitude that is very widespread in Greece: 89% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement, 51% strongly agree. The government in 2010 clearly had not succeeded in convincing its own supporters that the burden of austerity was distributed fairly. It is perhaps surprising that this variable does not load strongly on the first factor representing the main dimension of support of and opposition to the government discourses on the austerity programme. Again, as in the case of attitudes to protest, we find that a substantial number of people who considered the austerity policies to be without alternative and necessary for national survival agree with the statement that the burden of the measures is not distributed fairly.

The main question we are interested in is the impact of these attitudes on voting behaviour. To what extent does blame attribution and the nature of public attitudes to the austerity programme affect the way people voted in the regional elections and their voting intention in a future general election at the end of 2010?

Determinants of voting choice
Having generated a number of factors that represent the main dimensions of the thinking of voters on the austerity measures, we can now proceed to our models of their electoral choice. Separate models were estimated for the behaviour of voters in the November 2010 regional elections (Table 3) and their voting intention in a future parliamentary election at national level, as recorded in our survey conducted in December 2010 (Table 4). The main independent variables are designed to test the theories outlined earlier in this paper; details of question wording and coding are given in the Appendix. In each case, we first estimate two binary logistic regression models, in which 2010 PASOK voters are contrasted with all others, including non-voters. In the first model (column 1), we only enter variables representing economic voting, blame attribution and attitudes to the austerity crisis. In the second model, controls are added to assess the extent to which any effects found in the first model are independent of factors such as party identification, ideology and socio-demographics.

In the second stage, the binary logistic regressions are supplemented by the results of multinomial logistic regressions, in which 2010 PASOK voters are the reference category. Voters of other parties or independent candidates, non-voters and, in the case of voting intention, those that declare themselves to be 'undecided', are compared with 2010 PASOK voters.[8]

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[8] In our multinomial regression models, we are constrained in our analysis by the low number of cases associated with some electoral choices, requiring a slight simplification of the dependent variables used. For regional elections, we contrast PASOK voters (N=182) with ND voters (N=171), voters for parties left of PASOK, i.e. KKE, SYRIZA and DIMAR (N=92), those voting for independent or smaller parties (N=32) and those who did not vote at all or returned an invalid vote (blank or spoilt, N=420, all weighted). For voting intention, the same categories were created, with the addition of a new category for 'undecided' voters (PASOK voters, N=178; ND N=91; Far Left N=111;

What did we find? Starting with economic voting, our analysis sheds doubt on the universal applicability of the economic voting model. For voting PASOK in the regional elections, only future economic expectations were significant predictors of voting choice in the model without controls. The co-efficient is not statistically significant any more once control variables are applied. The result of the multinomial logistic regression showed that this is also true for all categories of voting choice. We could thus not find any support for the notion that voters in the regional elections would vote according to their retrospective economic evaluation. Overall, concerns about the national economy did not weight particularly heavily when voters made their choice in regional elections. The situation is very different, however, when it comes to voting intention in elections at national level: here, economic expectations are a major factor, both in terms of retrospective and prospective evaluations. PASOK voters have a less negative view of their past economic experience and more positive expectations about the economic future, while the reverse applies to most of those intending to vote for other parties or not intending to vote at all.[9]

Turning to blame attribution and political discourses, not blaming Greek governments but blaming civil society are significant predictors of a PASOK vote in regional elections, although the co-efficient for blaming civil society is not statistically significant once control variables are included. However, contrary to expectations and the dominant assumption in the literature, we find that questions of blame attribution do not have a significant impact on voting intentions at national level. Even more impressive is the rejection of the hypothesis that blaming foreign actors, such as the European Union, would have an impact on voting choice. For both regional and national elections, it is very clear that this variable plays no role whatsoever.

Turning to attitudes to the austerity crisis, the main variable that makes a difference is the acceptance of the government discourse on the necessity and inescapability of the austerity measures. This is a significant predictor for voting PASOK in regional elections. Its impact is particularly impressive in the various models of voting intention at national level for the whole range of electoral choices. The inclusion of control variables reduces the size of the effect but it remains statistically significant. There is little difference in the degree of opposition to the government discourse among different groups of voters not supporting PASOK in national elections. By contrast, neither a fatalistic attitude nor concern about the unfair nature of the distribution of the burden of the austerity programme figure as significant predictors for voting choice.

Undecided N=186; Non-voters N=382). The category of voters intending to vote for a range of small parties (N=51) was removed.

[9] These findings apply to sociotropic prospective evaluations only. Expectations about the personal financial situation (egocentric prospective evaluations) had no impact on voting behaviour (results not shown).

Of potential political importance are the results on the firm rejection of the government's securitisation discourse not only by those who supported the parties further to the left of the spectrum but also by the group of 'undecided' voters. Most PASOK 'defectors' who voted for the party in the 2009 general elections did not switch their voting intention to other parties but declared themselves to be 'undecided' or indicated they would not vote at all. In our survey, undecided voters are as committed to an alternative discourse as the supporters of left-wing parties and non-voters. Despite the relatively good result that PASOK achieved in the regional elections, these results on the determinants of the voting intention variables demonstrate the difficulties PASOK was already facing in winning back previous voters who had turned their back on the government party.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of non-voting. For regional elections, non-voting is mainly explained by a combination of rejection of the government discourse on austerity, blaming Greek governments, not having a member of a trade union in the household, having attended university and not identifying with PASOK. Thus, in the regional elections, there is a strong political dimension. For national voting intention, in addition to attitudes to government's discourse and lack of party identification with PASOK, there is also a strong effect of economic voting and of lack of political interest, while trade union membership and education are not significant predictors. Those intending not to vote in a general election are as alienated as others not supporting PASOK; compared with the 'undecided', a lack of political interest sets non-voters apart, while in comparison with ND and Far Left voters, non-voters do not locate clearly on either left or right in the political spectrum. On balance, it appears that non-voters have become decoupled from the party political system in general and may be difficult to motivate to take part in future elections. Our survey points thus towards a dominant interpretation of 'non-voting' as a function of lack of political interest rather than activism.

Looking at other 'control' variables for possible alternative explanations of electoral support, we find that left-right positioning is important for ND and Far Left voters, particularly for national voting intentions. Perhaps the only unexpected findings are the roles of trade union membership and participation in anti-austerity protest. For regional elections, union membership is a statistically significant predictor for voting PASOK and negatively associated with voting ND or non-voting, while for voting intention it is insignificant. Despite the fact that unions played a very important role in organising anti-austerity protest, the main effect is thus still in support for PASOK. Also having taken part in any anti-austerity protest does not show up as a significant predictor for any type of electoral choice.

--- Table 5 about here ---

In order to assess the relative influence of economic voting, blame attribution and attitudes towards austerity for the outcome of the regional elections and possible future behaviour in a general election, we conducted some further post-estimation analysis. In Table 5, we compiled a range of indicators of goodness of fit and relative model quality

to assess the importance of key variables. Starting with the base model combining variables such as party identification, ideology and political activity as well as the basic demographics, the table displays the way the indicators change when we add variables relating to economic voting, blame attribution and government discourses. For regional elections, these results demonstrate quite impressively that the factors relating to the austerity crisis do not appear to have been that important. The pseudo-r^2 co-efficient changes only by a few points, and particularly the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) suggests that the model including economic voting, blame attribution and acceptance of government discourse is not preferable to the base model. This analysis provides the strongest evidence that regional elections were, on the whole, decoupled from national politics.

The picture is rather different for the analysis of voting intention. Here, the inclusion of economic evaluations and the acceptance of government discourse leads to a substantial improvements in the explanatory value of the model, while blame attribution does not play a role. This suggests that economic voting and attitudes to the government's discourse on austerity politics are important and independent predictors, even when controlling for party identification and other variables associated with electoral choice.[10]

This contrast in the determinants of vote choice between the two depended variables would suggest that Papandreou's late attempt to turn the regional elections into a referendum on austerity by adopting particular security rhetoric of existential threats was unsuccessful. At most, austerity variables played only a marginal role in swaying voters to support PASOK. The regional poll of 2010 does not fit either the model of a 'second order' election or that of a 'national referendum'-type 'first order' election very neatly. This would suggest that apart from traditional predictors of PASOK support such as party identification, trade union membership and education, a substantial share of the variance in vote choice must be due to other factors, such as the specific qualities of individual candidates and regional conditions, or other variables not accounted for in our survey. Our model is thus is far better suited to explain voting intention in a national election rather than voting in the regional elections.

--- Figures 1 and 2 about here ---

Where does this leave the role of acceptance and rejection of the government's security discourse on electoral behaviour, which has been the central focus of our analysis? In

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[10] A further consideration of how to address the endogeneity problem with cross-sectional data is suggested by Nezi (2012, p. 503), namely to consider the influence of endogeneity in terms of an omitted variable and estimate the size of the effect necessary to invalidate the findings. In Nezi's case, she considered it unlikely that an odds ratio of 1.8 for the effect of an economic voting variable, controlling for party identification, ideology and socio-demographic variables, would be due to endogeneity effects. In our case, the odds ratio for the effect of the acceptance of government discourses on voting PASOK in a general election, with a similar range of control variables, is 2.7, thus suggesting that is should be even more unlikely to be the result of an endogeneity effect.

order to assess the importance of this discourse variable more thoroughly, we analysed the predicted probability of voting PASOK. Figures 1 and 2 plot the relationship between the probability of voting for PASOK and the acceptance of the austerity discourse, holding constant (at their mean) all other variables included in the binary logistic regressions displayed in Tables 3 and 4 (Column 2). Once again, the results are quite revealing, confirming the earlier picture. For regional elections (Figure 1), there is a positive relationship between the probability of voting PASOK and accepting the government discourse, as was suggested by the regression analysis. However, the graph shows the weakness of that relationship, with a fairly flat curve and a widening confidence interval towards the higher end of the acceptance range. By contrast, the curve is leading fairly steeply upwards in the case of the probability of expressing an intention to vote PASOK in a general election (Figure 2).

These results underline the importance of assessing the impact of austerity discourses as an independent predictor for vote choice at times of economic crisis. This variable made a statistically significant, if only minor, overall contribution to the support received by PASOK in the 2010 elections – hardly enough to justify an interpretation of the 2010 as confirming public support for the government's austerity programme. In voters' minds at the end of 2010 was, however, a clear relationship between attitudes to the government discourse and the decision to support PASOK or not in national electoral politics. Defection from PASOK is strongly related to rejection of the government's discourse. Subsequent events appear to suggest that the party was unable to cope with the political challenge posed by this relationship.

Conclusion

Despite a high level of protest, the 2010 regional elections appeared to suggest that the PASOK government was doing quite well to maintain a sufficient level of support, against the norm of seeing incumbents punished at times of economic downturn and unpopular reforms. Our analysis of survey data of voting behaviour, however, poses considerable doubts about the interpretation of the regional vote as an expression of support for the government's austerity policy. To understand the importance of the 2010 result and its implications, we need to consider its contested character as a first or second order election by comparing the determinants of vote choice between our two dependent variables, namely recalled vote in the regional elections and vote intention in a future national election.

For voting in the regional elections, economic evaluations were of little importance, while a combination of not blaming governments but Greek civil society and acceptance of the government's political discourse were significant predictors of support for PASOK. The government party lost a lot of support, which is in line with the theory of 'second order elections', but otherwise Greek voters did not behave as expected, particularly since economic evaluations appear to have been irrelevant for voting choice. On the other hand, for voting intention in a future general election, the role of economic evaluations and blame attribution were reversed, with attitudes to the government's

rhetoric found to be even more important. These distinct differences in the drivers of vote between the two variables demonstrate that Papandreou was unsuccessful in his attempt to turn the 2010 election into a referendum on austerity.

Furthermore, our analysis of the 2010 regional result reveals significant weaknesses in PASOK's support base. The party had lost a substantial number of voters compared with the general elections of 2009 but few of them switched to other parties, perhaps because of their inability to provide a convincing alternative at that time. Those voters rejected the government's policies but were not quite sure where to turn next. The ultimate destination of the 'undecided' is obviously unclear without panel data. However, the fact that this group of former PASOK voters firmly rejected the government's austerity discourse suggests that the party by the end of 2010 was already facing major problems in winning them back. The cracks in PASOK's popularity, which contributed to its eventual collapse in the double Parliamentary elections of May/June 2012, were thus evident, despite claiming victory following the 2010 regional result and interpreting it to indicate confirmation of support for its austerity policies.

What are the theoretical implications of our analysis for our understanding of the electoral politics of extreme austerity more generally? We could find some support for the theory of economic voting, as egocentric and prospective evaluations made a difference, at least for voting intentions. On the contrary, blame attribution variables were not as successful as predicted, despite being identified in the literature as crucial conditioning factors of economic voting. A major reason for this could be found in the structure of public perceptions relating to the austerity crisis. Our results on the dimensions of public attitudes to austerity suggest that the perception of 'unfairness' is extremely widespread in the population but does not appear to have any impact on electoral behaviour. Also, blame for the economic crisis attributed to foreign actors, such as the EU, Germany or the IMF, did not feature at all as predictors of voting choice. The lack of political impact of these two main elements of the opposition discourse must be seen as surprising. Other forms of blame attribution played only a minor role. The role of blame attribution in the politics of extreme austerity may thus have to be revised.

Crucially, our analysis underlines the importance of persuasion as 'the key currency of crisis management' (Hart and Tindall, 2009, p. 23). Our result that acceptance and rejection of the government's security discourse was an independent predictor of voting behaviour for both regional and national elections is a significant finding. As this variable thus contributes to an explanation of voting choice in Greece, it needs to be taken account of – alongside economic evaluations and blame attribution - in any future analysis of the electoral fortunes of governments facing the electorate after implementing extreme austerity policies.

On the whole, a comparative implication from the Greek case is that the relative success of PASOK in 2010 was not a reflection of a successful government strategy which could be seen as a model for other countries to follow when confronted with similar economic challenges. Although acceptance of the government discourse made a – small – contribution to the PASOK vote, factors relating to the evaluation of the austerity crisis

were not that important in the overall analysis. This suggests that while there was considerable doubt about the position of the government, no compelling alternative narrative had yet been established in the mind of many voters. Ultimately, voting in 2010 was not so much a question of blame and punishment as of uncertainty and indecision - the voter did not seem ready to come out firmly on one side or another of the austerity debate.

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Table 1: Allocation of 'Blame' for Economic Crisis among 2009 PASOK voters (Principal Component Analysis)*

Q. Who is to blame for the crisis? How responsible for the crisis would you say each of the following is? (Scale: 1 Not at all responsible, 2 Slightly responsible, 3 Somewhat responsible, 4 Moderately responsible, 5 Extremely responsible – mean in parentheses)	Factor 1 (Foreign actors)	Factor 2 (Greek governments)	Factor 3 (Greek civil society)
The current PASOK government (3.21)	.1300	**.7526**	-.1276
The previous ND government (3.91)	.0781	**.7409**	.2606
The European Union (3.23)	**.7454**	.2792	.0278
Germany (3.39)	**.7325**	.2657	-.0288
The Greek Banks (3.53)	.4998	.2914	.3600
Foreign investors/speculators (3.89)	**.6430**	-.0144	.2814
The European Currency (EURO) (2.83)	.5841	-.0156	.0036
Globalisation (3.22)	**.6598**	.0051	-.0078
Corruption in Greece (4.58)	.0736	.3039	**.6463**
Each and every one of us (3.24)	.0166	-.1540	**.7840**
Eigenvalue	3.05	1.22	1.08
% of Variance (cumulative)	30.5	42.7	53.5
N	1041		

- Cell entries are rotated factor loadings; principal component analysis, Varimax rotation (orthogonal), with Kaiser normalization; coefficients > .6 or < -.6 highlighted; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy: .7796 (overall).

Table 2: Attitudes to Economic Crisis among 2009 PASOK voters (Principal Component Analysis)*

Q. I will read out some things that people have said about the economic measures. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them? (Scale 1 Strongly disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neither agree or disagree, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly agree – mean in parentheses)	Factor 1 (Acceptance of Government Discourse)	Factor 2 (Fatalism)	Factor 3 (Unfairness)
The austerity measures are necessary for our national survival (2.95)	**.8252**	.0394	.0201
The burden of the measures is not distributed fairly to all citizens (4.26)	-.0233	-.0005	**.9816**
If another party was in power, the austerity package would be less severe (2.25)	-.3585	.2000	-.0709
The government had no option but to introduce these measures (2.76)	**.7933**	.2316	-.0673
People should protest against these measures (3.65)	**-.7068**	.0487	.2055
The crisis can be seen as an opportunity for Greece to move forward (3.23)	**.6308**	-.1923	.0829
There is nothing anybody can do to solve Greece's economic crisis (2.26)	-.0200	**.9565**	.0167
Eigenvalue	2.35	1.06	1.00
% of Variance (cumulative)	33.6	48.7	63.0
N	1041		

- Cell entries are rotated factor loadings; principal component analysis, Varimax rotation (orthogonal), with Kaiser normalization; coefficients > .6 or < .6 highlighted; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy: .7519 (overall).

Table 3: Determinants of Electoral Choice, Regional Elections, November 2010 (Binary and Multinomial Logistic Regression Models)*

	Reference: Non-PASOK voters (Binary Logistic Regressions)		Reference: PASOK voters (Multinomial Logistic Regression)			
	Voted PASOK	Voted PASOK	Voted New Democracy (ND)	Voted Far Left (KKE, SYRIZA or DIMAR	Voted Independent/ Other party	Did not vote/ invalid vote
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Economic Voting						
Retrospective personal economic evaluation (much worse than 12 months ago)	1.041 (.208)	1.062 (.239)	1.623 (.475)	**.363*** (.143)	.770 (.293)	.912 (.233)
Prospective national economic evaluation (much worse in 12 months)	**.548**** (.107)	.693 (.166)	1.094 (.346)	1.165 (.474)	1.677 (.576)	1.596 (.419)
Blame Attribution						
Blame: Foreign Actors (EU, Germany etc.)	1.054 (.117)	.914 (.122)	1.167 (.199)	.916 (.179)	.931 (.198)	1.073 (.157)
Blame: Greek Governments	**.748**** (.075)	**.652***** (.077)	1.200 (.178)	**2.251***** (.413)	.925 (.145)	**1.633***** (.172)
Blame: Greek civil society (everyone, corruption)	**1.247*** (.112)	1.201 (.119)	**.748*** (.101)	1.120 (.200)	.801 (.123)	.826 (.093)

Attitudes to Economic Crisis						
Acceptance of Government Discourse	**2.126*** (.258)	**1.427*** (.215)	.699 (.129)	**.615*** (.135)	.939 (.207)	**.680*** (.117)
Fatalism	1.076 (.104)	1.025 (.125)	.879 (.133)	.809 (.158)	.794 (.140)	1.052 (.141)
Unfairness	.925 (.086)	.947 (.101)	1.176 (.156)	1.049 (.166)	1.017 (.161)	1.018 (.117)
Controls						
Strength of Party Identification – PASOK	-	**3.242*** (.660)	**.195*** (.077)	**.285*** (.088)	**.405**** (.118)	**.334*** (.083)
Strength of Party Identification – ND	-	**.283**** (.104)	**6.047*** (2.354)	1.556 (1.061)	1.909 (1.084)	2.082 (.848)
Strength of Party Identification – KKE/SYRIZA	-	**.560*** (.142)	**5.77e-06*** (3.52e-06)	**4.770*** (1.587)	.794 (.466)	.918 (.291)
Age	-	1.010 (.007)	.987 (.009)	.998 (.010)	.991 (.010)	.990 (.008)
Gender (male)	-	1.025 (.222)	934 (.260)	1.080 (.396)	1.398 (.504)	.926 (.221)
Education (university)	-	**.506**** (.117)	1.070 (.327)	**2.699*** (1.117)	1.413 (.499)	**2.187**** (.567)
Left-wing	-	1.133 (.292)	**.323**** (.128)	2.047 (.811)	1.261 (.532)	.921 (.251)
Political Interest (high)	-	1.127 (.124)	1.009 (.142)	1.168 (.220)	1.279 (.194)	**.761*** (.090)
Union Member in Household	-	**2.049*** (.598)	**.326**** (.136)	.869 (.382)	.814 (.358)	**.403**** (.136)
Taken part in anti-austerity protest (2010)	-	1.082 (.246)	.690 (.208)	1.689 (.696)	1.410 (.531)	.840 (.206)

Constant	**.274*** (.036)**	**.093*** (.037)**	2.516 (1.428)	**.149* (.115)**	**.127** (.080)**	**9.644*** (4.036)**
Log pseudolikelihood	-390.948	-302.367	-826.930			
McKelvey and Zavoina's (Pseudo-) r²	.268	.515	-			
Cragg-Uhler (Nagelkerke) (Pseudo-) r²	.222	.457	.615			
N	902	899	883			

- Cell entries are odds ratios (columns 1 and 2) and relative risk ratios (Columns 3-6); robust standard errors in parentheses; tests of statistical significance: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001; data weighted to account for misallocations based on actual regional election results.

Table 4: Determinants of Voting Intention in Next General Election, December 2010 (Binary and Multinomial Logistic Regressions)*

	Reference: Voting Intention: Not-PASOK (Binary Logistic Regressions)		Reference: Voting intention PASOK (Multinomial Logistic Regression)			
	Voting intention: PASOK	Voting intention: PASOK	Voting Intention: New Democracy (ND)	Voting intention: Far Left (KKE, SYRIZA or DIMAR)	Voting Intention: Undecided	Voting intention: Will not vote/ invalid vote
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Economic Voting						
Retrospective personal economic evaluation (much worse than 12 months ago)	**.494**** (.122)	**.399**** (.135)	**2.663*** (1.197)	1.309 (.567)	**2.930**** (1.039)	**2.539**** (.901)
Prospective national economic evaluation (much worse in 12 months)	**.291***** (.069)	**.310***** (.095)	**4.837**** (2.277)	**3.116**** (1.257)	**2.428**** (.820)	**3.711***** (1.216)
Blame Attribution						
Blame: Foreign Actors (EU, Germany etc.)	1.138 (.122)	.977 (.125)	1.136 (.264)	.865 (.159)	1.040 (.151)	1.090 (.147)
Blame: Greek Governments	.833 (.092)	.789 (.106)	.859 (.175)	1.301 (.232)	1.142 (.168)	**1.421*** (.210)
Blame: Greek civil society (everyone, corruption)	1.195 (.136)	1.081 (.154)	.797 (.164)	1.015 (.198)	.847 (.133)	.995 (.152)

Attitudes to Economic Crisis						
Acceptance of Government Discourse	**4.247***** (.606)	**2.696***** (.485)	**.231***** (.063)	**.317***** (.080)	**.393***** (.077)	**.385***** (.074)
Fatalism	1.141 (.139)	1.136 (.198)	.983 (.232)	.786 (.174)	.850 (.158)	.933 (.166)
Unfairness	.829 (.091)	.936 (.126)	1.285 (.263)	.987 (.175)	1.061 (.157)	1.086 (.152)
Controls						
Strength of Party Identification – PASOK	-	**4.327***** (.620)	**.260**** (.104)	**.291***** (.080)	**.295***** (.045)	**.186***** (.038)
Strength of Party Identification – ND	-	**.249*** (.162)	**13.493**** (10.387)	2.630 (2.247)	3.564 (2.759)	2.283 (1.739)
Strength of Party Identification – KKE/SYRIZA	-	.732 (.414)	**.00003***** (.00002)	3.526 (2.520)	.549 (.430)	.555 (.394)
Age	-	.995 (.008)	1.012 (.012)	1.005 (.011)	1.012 (.009)	.997 (.009)
Gender (male)	-	.785 (.207)	1.288 (.537)	1.276 (.493)	1.273 (.367)	1.206 (.341)
Education (university)	-	.771 (.200)	1.993 (.883)	1.201 (.469)	1.434 (.418)	1.235 (.342)
Left-wing	-	1.037 (.317)	**.040***** (.030)	**2.534*** (1.010)	.750 (.251)	.949 (.308)
Political Interest (high)	-	**1.411**** (.185)	.813 (.160)	1.140 (.212)	.813 (.117)	**.557***** (.079)
Union Member in Household	-	.778 (.356)	.630 (.423)	1.234 (.677)	1.566 (.752)	.815 (.394)
Taken part in anti-austerity protest (2010)	-	.669 (.248)	1.389 (.737)	1.636 (.771)	1.543 (.624)	1.311 (.503)

Constant	**2.071*****	**.079*****	.234	**.224***	**1.754****	**17.378****
	(.035)	(.039)	(.201)	(.161)	(.954)	(9.448)
Log pseudolikelihood	-316.520	-211.453	-852.521			
McKelvey and Zavoina's (Pseudo-) r^2	.546	.718	-			
Cragg-Uhler (Nagelkerke) (Pseudo-) r^2	.430	.660	.721			
N	999	996	946			

- Cell entries are odds ratios (columns 1 and 2) and relative risk ratios (Columns 3-6); robust standard errors in parentheses; tests of statistical significance: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001; data weighted to account for misallocations based on actual regional election results.

Table 5: Evaluation of Logistic Regression Models of PASOK Support*

	Regional Elections (recalled vote)			General Elections (voting intention)		
	Pseudo-r^2	AIC	BIC	Pseudo-r^2	AIC	BIC
Base model (Party Identification, Ideology and Demographics)	.449	669.761	722.575	.575	543.257	597.199
+ Economic Voting	.468	662.798	725.214	.659	493.399	557.148
+Blame attribution	.504	644.500	721.320	.669	489.072	567.532
+Acceptance of Government Discourse	.515	642.733	733.958	.718	460.906	554.078

*Cell entries include: Pseudo-r^2 = McKelvey and Zavoina's r^2; AIC: Aikaike's Information Criterion; BIC: Bayesian Information Criterion (both AIC and BIC are reported in the version as 'used by STATA', cf. Long and Freese, 2006, pp. 110-113). The higher the pseudo-r^2 (range 0 to 1), the better the model fit, and the lower AIC/BIC, the better the model; differences in BIC of less than 2 constitute only weak evidence to prefer one model over another; differences of 10 or higher provide very strong evidence.

Figure 1: Predicted Probability of Voting PASOK in Regional Elections in relation to Acceptance of Government Discourse
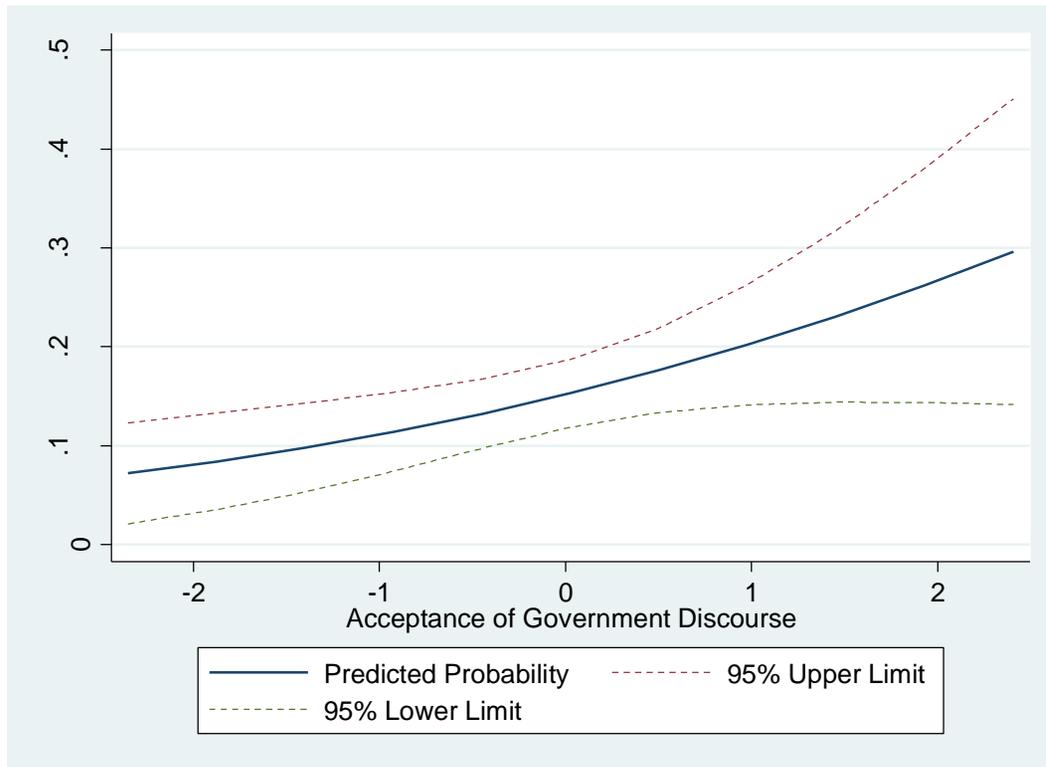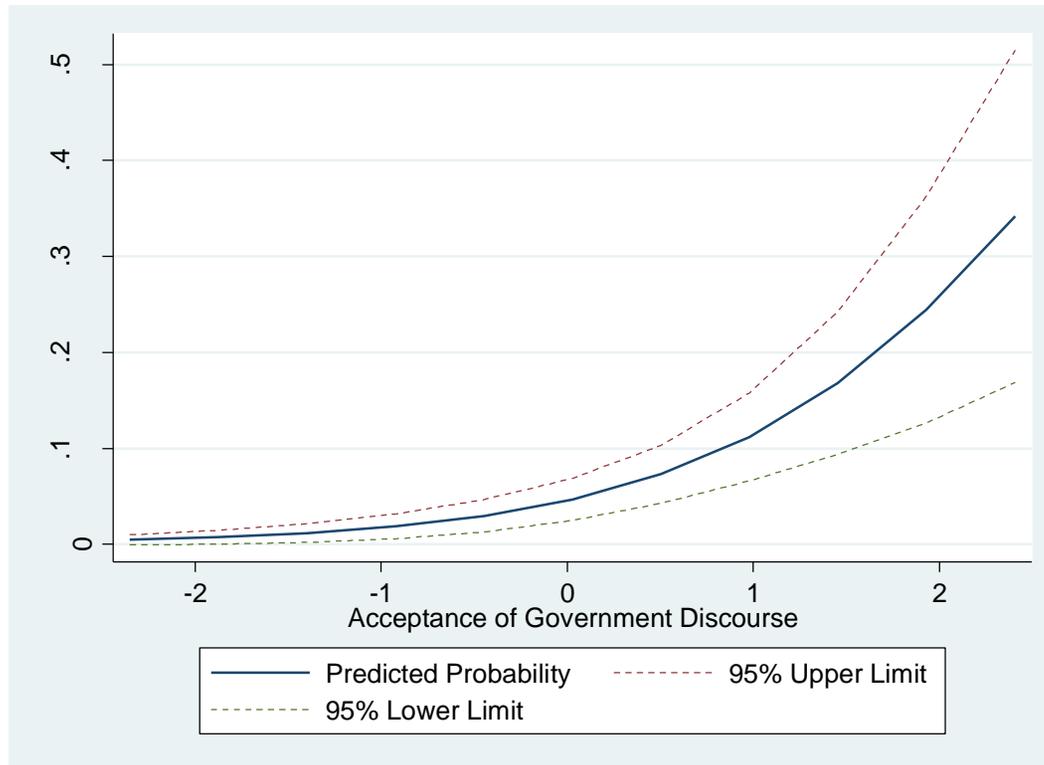
Figure 2: Predicted Probability of Voting Intention PASOK in a future General Election in relation to Acceptance of Government Discourse

APPENDIX

Documentation of Variables Used[11]

<u>Dependent Variables</u>

- Voting Regional Elections
Q. Many people did not vote in the local and regional elections of November 2010 whereas others voted. Did you vote in the recent elections or not?
(1) Yes I voted (2) No I didn't vote
IF YES
Which party supported the candidates you voted for in the first round of the regional elections on 7 November, or maybe there were independent candidates?
(List of Parties)

- **Voting Intention General Elections**
Q. Lastly, if there were a national election this Sunday, which party would you vote for?
(List of Parties, Blank/Spoilt Vote, Will not vote, Undecided/don't know)

 [Recoded: 0 other voters and non-voters 1 voting intention for specific party]

<u>Independent Variables</u>

- Financial situation –last twelve months
Q. Compared to a year ago, your financial situation is …
1. Much worse, 2 A bit worse, 3 About the same 4. A bit better, 5. Much better
[Recoded as:
0 Much better/A bit better/About the same/A bit worse 1 Much worse]

- Economic situation over future 12 months
Q. How do you think the economy will be in 12 months?

1. Much worse, 2 A bit worse, 3 About the same 4. A bit better, 5. Much better
[Recoded as:
0 Much better/A bit better/About the same/A bit worse 1 Much worse]

- **Blame Attribution** and **Attitudes to Economic Crisis**: See Tables 3 and 4.

- Strength of Party Identification (PASOK and other parties)
Q.: Is there a particular party you feel closer to than all the other parties?
No, Yes

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[11] In order to avoid the major loss of cases through listwise deletion in the regression models reported in Tables 5 and 6, non-response, where possible, was coded as a middle/neutral response or as mean (for age). All regressions were run with or without the application of this policy, and no significant differences in the results were found.

If Yes: Which one?
How close do you feel to this party? Do you feel you are
1. very close, 2. quite close, 3. Not very close
[Recoded as:
0 no party identification, 1 yes but not very close, 2 Yes quite close 3 Yes very close]

- Age
In which year were you born?
[Age computed as 2010-year of birth]

- Gender
What is your gender? 1. Male 2. Female
[Recoded Female 0 Male 1]

- Education

Q.: What level of education have you completed or are currently studying for? (1) Primary school, (2) Secondary (3 years), (3) Secondary, Lyceum (6 years), (4) Post-secondary trade/vocational school; (5) University, undergraduate, (6) University, postgraduate), (7) Nothing [Recoded as: 0 Nothing to Post-secondary trade/vocational school, 1 University, undergraduate and postgraduate]

- Left-wing
Q. In politics people sometimes talk of 'left' and 'right'. Where would you place yourself on this 0-10 scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?
0 Left – 10 Right
[Recoded:
0 5-10 1 0-4 (all positions left of the middle point, 5;
as item non-response was quite high, an attempt was made to enter a value for the left-right scale for these missing cases on the basis of two attitude questions which have generally been regarded as providing a good approximation of left-right position:
Q. It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high income and those with low incomes
Q. Private enterprise is the best way to solve Greece's economic problems
(Scale: 1 Strongly disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neither agree of disagree, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly agree).
Those who take a position of either/or pro-redistribution and anti-private enterprise and do not take a anti-distribution and pro-private enterprise position are coded 1 (left wing), others are coded 0 (centre right); 3 cases with no response on either question were coded as missing.]

- Political Interest
Q. How interested are you in politics?
1 Very interested, 2 Somewhat interested, 3 Not very interested, 4 Not at all interested
[Recoded as:
0 Not at all interested, 1 Not very interested, 2 Somewhat interested, 3 Very interested]

- Union Member in Household

Q. Are you yourself or anyone else in your household a member of any of the following organisations?

    a.   Trade Union or Labour Organisation

    1. Yes I am 2 Yes someone else is 3. Yes both me and someone else are 4 No

[Recoded as:

0 No 1 Yes I am/Yes someone else is/Yes both me and someone else

- Taken Part in Anti-Austerity Protest

Q. In protest against the austerity measures..

a) Have there been strikes in the town or community where you live? (1) No (2) Yes

b) If so, have you taken part in any of these strikes? (1) No (2) Yes

c) Have there been any demonstrations in the town or community where you live? (1) No (2) Yes

d) If so, have you taken party in any of these demonstrations?

e) Did you take part in any demonstrations outside your town or community?

[Recoded as: (0) not taken part in any strikes or demonstrations (1) taken part in either strikes or demonstrations or both