

## **Transformation of Policies and Politics in Greece towards and inside the European Union 1950-2012**

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### **Abstract**

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This paper reevaluates the European process of Greece since the end of the civil war until 2012 when the post – dictatorship party system seems to change in a fundamental way. The paper argues that the European perspective of the country is based mainly on political and not on economic criteria during both the dictatorship and the Metapolitefsi period, on the doctrine “Greece belongs to the West” in order to ensure that Greece will remain at the western economic system. After the fall of the dictatorship PASOK managed to express the radicalism of the Greek society for a new political party system and the strong opposition about the European prospect of the country. However, since the 1980’s the policy of the socialist party towards the EU has changed. Since then, drastic transformations take place in the Greek party system as the mass structure of the parties was undermined and the cartelization of politics became the basic paradigm, along with the strong influence of private mass media. The analysis concludes that the political crisis which coexists to the economic crisis seems to explain the collapse of the Metapolitefsi party system and the objections towards the EU.

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**Key Words:** European Union, Greece, Greek Party System, PASOK, Cartel Party.

### **1. The trajectory of Greek policies and politics on the road to the EU (1950s-1980)**

In Greece, the end of Second World War is followed by a full-scale civil war. Its end, in 1949, with the defeat of the communistic forces, indicates that the post-civil war period is influenced mainly by the cold war cleavages. In this frame, and in contrast to the Western European countries the party system as a whole is far from being called democratic. The communist party (KKE) is illegal and “parallel undemocratic structures cancelled out the very essence of parliamentary democracy – such as that of party change in government” (Spourdalakis&Tassis 2006: 497). The political parties are cadre parties, strongly influenced by their leaders the intraparty life is almost non-existent and other forms of representation such as Local Government and the Trade Unions functions cachectic (Nicolacopoulos, 2001).

In addition, since 1947 the Truman doctrine indicates the end of the British sovereignty and the beginning of the United States’ influence over the country with the purpose to ensure that Greece will remain inside the Western economic and political system. Thus, according to the “provisional long-term program of economic rectification of Greece”, in November 1948, the dominant opinion in Greece claims that the country should adopt a model of economic growth based on shipping, on agriculture, on tourism and on small businesses. The shipping sector seems to qualify as the sector with the comparative advantage of the Greek economy (Goulielmos, 1994: 14).

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The growth and the dynamics of the Greek shipping sector seem to indicate that Greece is not a typical example of an undeveloped peripheral country. On the contrary, Greece actively participates in the international division of labour, being in collaboration with the powerful western economies. As a result, the industrial sector was undermined and focused mainly on construction and on textile, due to the small size of the Greek market and the strong competition from the Western European countries (Tassis, 2009: 57). Thus, the policy of the post civil war right-wing governments is focused mainly on an economic program based on monetary stability, on public investments mainly in infrastructure, on the private sector, on the small agricultural property and on the maintenance of the labour cost in low levels in order to attract foreign investments.

In this frame, on 8 June 1959 the Greek government submits an official application to enter the European Economic Community (EEC), which sealed with the signing of the "Athens Agreement", in July 1961, between the Greek government and EEC (Botsiou, 2010: 10). This agreement indicates the policy of the Greek government to develop closer links with the western countries (Valden, 1991: 305-10). The statement of the Minister of Coordination Panagis Papaligouras during the Greek Parliament's Session for the ratification of the agreement in which supports that "we are in position and we want, we, the Greeks to become European" and that this agreement is not the end, but the beginning towards the European Union process (Botsiou, 2010: 26-7) seems to confirm that the agreement is justified mainly by political and ideological terms. Furthermore, this process is presented as "the new great vision" which could lead to the modernisation of Greek economy and society (Pezmazoglou, 1994: 360, 367-68). The European prospect of the country is acceptable from all the political parties in Greece with unique exception the party of the left [Ενιαία Δημοκρατική Αριστερά, United Democratic Left, EDA].

During a long period (1952-1972), despite the high rates of growth that the Greek economy manages to achieve (7% growth per year), the social traumas due to the civil war, are not healed. On the contrary, the low rates of unemployment are not based on the economic growth, but mainly on the high rates of immigration. Thus, objections are raised in the society and into the party system about the post – civil war growth, about the post – civil war model and as a result about the European perspective of the country as well. In this frame, EDA, which manages to become the main opposition party with 1958 elections, strongly opposes to the European perspective of the country. It considers that the Common Market is constructed on the collaboration of the European with the US capital. It claims that the Greek economy cannot handle international competition, because it has characteristics of a permanent underdevelopment process through its increasing dependency from the western European monopolistic economies (Botsiou, 2010: 26-7). Moreover, "the Greek application is seen as hasty because the Greek economy enters in the European competition with no prior preparation, without "the basic frame of a healthy industrial development" (Ioannidis, Kalogirou & Lymperaki, 1994: 354). Thus, for EDA, Greece should avoid any linkage of its economy to the Common Market and proposes as an alternative that Greece should adopt an independent economic policy through the evolution of trade relations with the Eastern European countries (Ioannidis, Kalogirou & Lymperaki, 1994: 353). Moreover, the party of the Centre [Ενωσή Κέντρου, Centre Union, CU] since 1961 when it was formatted, while it supports the European perspective of the country, it stands critical towards the right – wing governmental handlings. Moreover, CU stands critical on the positive effects over the Greek economy, pointing, as EDA did, to the underdeveloped character of the country. Consequently, when the CU comes to power, in 1964, it attempts to introduce a Keynesian economic policy, to liberalize the state and to attract foreign direct investments, mainly from the European capital. The basic goal of this policy is to change the orientation of the Greek economy and bring it closer to the European capital and also to re-define the relations of the country with USA (Spourdalakis, 1984: 41).

At the same time, a radical approach is raised inside C.U. which is expressed by Andreas Papandreou. Although he accentuates the modernizing prospect of the country, due to the connection with the EEC, he underlines the necessity for economic and social democracy: "The survival of Greece in the Common Market requires rapid rate of economic growth and rational choice of specific, direct objectives. It requires a consistent program and a modern state. However, the renaissance of a state requires national effort in a large scale. In the 20th century, economic growth means mobilization of all forces of nation, especially the youth" (Kathimerini, 1964). Furthermore, he emphasizes the necessity for the Common Market to support the underdeveloped regions of Europe. The political discourse of A. Papandreou becomes more radical in 1965 when the Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou (senior) is forced by the palace to resign. He claims that the unilateral orientation of the Greek trade towards the countries of the Common Market will have a negative impact on the Greek trade balance of payments and he proposes the nationalization of the basic sectors of the Greek economy and the redistribution of income.

This political choice is justified because, since the agreement with the EEC, the imports of Greece from the Western European Countries have been rapidly increased, while the Greek exports decrease. Furthermore, he blames EEC for not meeting the terms of the agreement with regard to the prices of the Greek tobaccos, the financing of the developmental project for the reduction of the gap between the European economies and the Greek economy and for excluding Greece from the discussion on the shaping of a common European rural policy" (Pezmazoglou, 1994: 368). With the imposition of dictatorship, in 1967 the EEC decides to "freeze" the agreement, while Greece is compelled to follow its obligations. The policy of the colonels is to fulfill all the obligations from the Greek part and to activate the agreement. Moreover, they 'accused' EEC that it intervenes in a sovereign state's issues and that the Greek side, thanks to the specific economic policy is prepared to fulfill all the necessary criteria in order to apply as a full member of the EEC in a short time (Pezmazoglou, 1999: 100).

The fall of the dictatorship in 1974 indicates that the Greek political scene is characterized by the effort of political parties to keep substantial political, structural and ideological distances from the pre-dictatorship party system, in order to introduce a substantive renewal of the political scene (Lyrantzis, 2005: 242). The conservative party is transformed as New Democracy [*Νέα Δημοκρατία*, ND], the centre party functions under the name Centre Union-New Forces, the Communist parties are legitimized and the centre-left is expressed by a totally new political party, Pan Hellenic Socialist Movement [*Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα*, PASOK].

The first years of the '*metapolitefsi*' are characterised by political radicalism. In this frame, the government of ND has adopted an economic programme known as 'radical liberalism' which is an effort to combine economic stability and social cohesion, in a scent of mixed economy, which expands the role of the state in economy, as it introduces nationalization practices, in private companies and in the banking system (Lavdas, 2005: 308). On the EEC issue, Konstantinos Karamanlis (senior) strongly supports the European perspective of the country. Thus, on 12 June 1975 Greece applies for full membership. As in the pre-dictatorship period, the relationship of the country with the EEC is seen mainly under the perspective of the doctrine "we belong to the West" and was again justified not only with economic terms. In this frame, K. Karamanlis considers that EEC guarantees the consolidation of the infant and fragile democracy and the participation of the country as a full member will upgrade its role in the balance of power in the Mediterranean region especially in relation with Turkey. As a result, in July 1976 the negotiation process between Greece and EEC begins and three years later, in May 1979 it is successfully completed and is ratified by the Greek Parliament on 28 June 1979 (Verney, 1987; 253-270).

At the same time, there is a strong opposition from both PASOK and the communistic Left against the European perspective of the country. Especially PASOK and its leader Andreas Papandreou have adopted a radical anti-Nato, anti-European and anti-Western discourse. In its founding document, the *Declaration of September 3rd (1974)*, PASOK argues that: "the root of disaster is found in the dependence of our country. The seven medieval years of the brutal military dictatorship and the Cypriot tragedy, constitute the ruthless dependence of Greece on the imperialistic "establishment" of the USA and the NATO" (PASOK 1974). For this reason emphasis is given on the consolidation of the National Independence, the nationalisation of key industries of the Greek economy and the formation of a mass party. (Spourdalakis&Tassis, 2006: 497-8). A. Papandreou's political thoughts are decisive influenced by the 'Dependence Theory'. In this frame, he adopts the Metropolis – Periphery cleavage, and classifies Greece as a peripheral and dependent country. About the Greek case A. Papandreou states: "To understand the post-Civil War history of Greece, one must bear in mind that the political life of the country was closely supervised, when not directed, by the United States.

The Washington formula for Greece was simple. It included the direct penetration of the Greek state machinery, all the way through to the Palace; unconditional support for an affiliated, dependent political party, the party of the Right, which was supposed to win all elections" (Papandreou, 1974: 14). Moreover, assessing the economic policy of the period 1950-1967 he considers that it was a reflection of the early phase of the takeover by foreign capital after the country was "safe and stable" for investment. Economic growth was built on a pattern of dependent, peripheral capitalist development".(Papandreou, 1974: 18). The radical rhetoric of the socialist party is affirmed with the adoption of the political slogan "Greece belongs to Greeks".

This slogan which will remain as the primary party's slogan until the end of 1980's indicates the political differentiation of the Greek socialists from the doctrine of the conservative party that "Greece belongs to the West". About the European prospect of the country, A. Papandreou considers that is a negative development. He characterizes EEC, "*as another guise of NATO*", as he believes that its structure is based on the USA monopolistic capital. Moreover, he argues that the global capitalism through inflation and economic stagnation transfers the negative results of the global economic crisis to the working class of the countries. As an alternative, he proposes the creation of the Mediterranean Common Market. (PASOK 1978). Therefore, PASOK abstains from the signing of the admission of Greece in the EEC in 1979.

### 1. Greece in the 1980's: From 'National Independence' to the EU Prospect

The period of the early 1980's is characterised by the political and electoral dynamic of the Southern European Socialist parties (Greece, France, Spain and Portugal) which appear to constitute a radical tendency among the European social-democracy. At the same period, the social-democratic parties of the Western Europe being in government, have adopted restrictive choices in the economic policy, being confronted with the international economic crisis, and the pressure of economic neoliberalism of the British Conservative Party, under the leadership of M. Thatcher, which comes into power in 1979, and the election of R. Reagan in USA in 1980.

In this frame, with the 1981 elections, PASOK comes to power and introduces a classical Keynesian economic policy with basic choices to increase the real wages of the workers and the pensioners, in order to decrease the economic and social inequalities, and to control the prices of the basic goods and public services. Moreover, through the introduction of the Business Reconstruction Organisation (OAE), through the Supervisory Councils and the socialisation of DEKO (Public Corporations and Entities), the state undertakes the ownership of the problematic private firms in the sectors of mining, medicines, shipyards and national defence (Tsakalotos, 1991: 242-262).

On the European issue, PASOK does not keep its pre-election position as it supports the European perspective of the country and justifies this choice with technocratic criteria based on the cost-benefit analysis; the cost from exiting from the EEC is presented as higher than the cost from staying as a full member. The strategy of the party focuses on the minimisation of the negative repercussions for the Greek economy, through a partial negotiation on the terms of the agreement. Finally, after hard negotiations, the Greek government achieves the signing of the Memorandum in 1982, which introduces protective measures for the Greek agricultural sector and a program for regional development through transferring flows from the Community funds to Greece. PASOK argues that it had no alternative as Greece was already a full member of the EEC when the party came to power. The Greek government presents the Memorandum as an important success which increases the vital interests of the country in the international level. However, the impact of the Memorandum is not only economic with the impact of the 'Mediterranean Programs' (MOP) over the Greek economy, but it strongly influences the political orientation of the party of Greek socialists as well. Hence, since 1985 there is a clear distinction of PASOK's political orientation towards the EEC. The project of the construction of a Mediterranean Economic Union was abandoned and the party adopted a clear European perspective. (Kazakos, 2010: 334-5)

Moreover, on 11 October 1985 the socialist government introduces the "stabilizing economic program" designed by the then Minister of National Economy Kostas Simitis. The basic issues of this program are the 15% devaluation of the Greek drachma, the introduction of economic incentives for the foreign and Greek capital and the restriction of the wages' increases. The austerity program which marked the necessity for a more realistic approach implies that the dominant view inside PASOK considers that the Keynesian political and economic choices have no longer positive results for the Greek economy (Simitis, 1989: 13-14).

Thus, PASOK approaches the monetary policies of the Western European countries. Its policy focuses mainly on the economic effectiveness, undermining the social character of the party. During this process, the party shifts its political orientation towards Europe. In this frame, the decision of the European Summit to increase EEC flows to the Greek economy, is presented by PASOK as huge success and the party actively participates at the Single European Act in 1986. This agreement constitutes the beginning of a further integration in the EEC which will lead to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The result of this process is that since the end of the 1980's, the party of the Greek socialists has been transformed into a party with a clear European orientation.

The active participation of the party in the discussions for the common manifesto along with the European socialist, social-democratic and labour parties for the next European elections leaves no doubt. Moreover, the pre-election program for the 1989 national elections, sets as central political issue of the party, the country's participation in European Union's integration process, constitutes (PASOK 1989: 24).

At the end of the 1980s, all political parties in Greece, including the left wing party *Synaspismos (Coalition) of the Left* in which the Communist party participates in, adopt the European orientation of the country (Verney, 2010: 193).

## **2. 1989-2001: Modernization, Europeanization, and Economic Liberalism**

With the elections of 18 June 1989, a coalition government is shaped between the New Democracy and *Synaspismos of the Left*, and with new elections in November 1989 an ecumenical government is shaped, as the Greek economy faced bankruptcy. During this period, the fall of the communist regimes in the Eastern European countries has significant effect in the political agenda. Thus, the neoliberal arguments seem to be as the "appropriate" tools for the governmental policy with basic policies the privatisation of public enterprises and the introduction of flexibility on labour relations. Moreover, in the Greek case, the establishment of the private Mass Media, which takes place in this period, contributes decisively to this direction (Vamvakas, 2006: 94).

In this frame, ND, which comes to power with the 1990 elections, attempts to introduce a neoliberal economic program which includes an extensive privatization program. Moreover, in the issue of the participation of the country in the EMU process, ND supports the tendency inside EEC which insists in imposing stricter criteria for entering EU. As the Minister of National Economy Timos Christodoulou remarks, "when the discussion about the criteria has started in 1991, only Greece does not fulfil them. When, later, the Germans proposed stricter criteria for the Maastricht Treaty, Greece immediately supported this, with the hope that having at least eight years in order to adjust, there would be a fair time for Greece to manage. Moreover, if many countries could not fulfil the new strict criteria, there is opportunity for a different negotiation process" (Kazakos, 2001: 447-448). However, "The government of Konstantinos Mitsotakis had been very optimistic in believing that it could establish a rapid convergence. In reality, it failed to meet the conditions for the EU aid provisionally allocated to Greece. It had also been thwarted by strong union opposition to its neo-liberal reforms" (Featherstone, 2005: 227).

Thus, since 1992, PASOK appeared to be the only political party in the Greek party system which can guarantee the participation of the country in the European Union. The economic policy of New Democracy is considered as ineffective for the European prospect of the country, and the parties of the left do not manage to present an alternative. The party of the Greek socialists has adopted a modest political orientation. The political moderation of PASOK is indicated by the adoption of the new declaration "For the rebirth of Greece, for the rebirth of Hellenism". Although it appears that PASOK maintains the basic elements of the dependence theory, as it refers to the necessity to overcome the economic inequalities, the radical discourse of the previous period has disappeared; the absence of any reference to the "socialist perspective" is a characteristic element. The new declaration confirms that Greece's strategic position is in Europe. Moreover, it makes particular references to the Greek presence in the Balkan territory, through the Greek private capital, with the economic support from the Greek state. The target of this policy is to make the country a pole in the negotiation process between the European Union and the Balkan countries, recognizing, in the same time, the importance of the private sector (PASOK, 1993).

Thus, when PASOK comes to power with the 1993 elections, the political agenda is dominated by the demand for the participation of Greece in the hard core of the EU through the fulfilment of the criteria of the Maastricht Treaty. In this frame, the economic policy of the party focuses on this demand underlying its European orientation. However, instead of the privatization of the state firms that the government of New Democracy had focused on, PASOK provided as an alternative a shareholding policy up to 49%. What's more, emphasis should be given on the competitiveness, the decrease of the public sector deficits, the reduction of inflation, the guarantee of the real income of workers, the reduction of unemployment and the reduction of tax evasion (Papandreou, 1993: 20-22). Moreover, in opposition to the first governmental period, the governmental affairs become autonomous from the "party".

A. Papandreou stresses that PASOK should not be involved with the state affairs. Moreover, PASOK has changed its political and ideological orientation "from a radical renewing Movement [...] to a European socialist party" (Papandreou, 1994: 24). On the EU issue, A. Papandreou declares his intention to introduce a "revised program of convergence" to secure the participation of the country in the EU.

Although he argues that "the Maastricht Treaty and the EMU do not correspond in the developmental needs of the country and will overwhelm systematic effort to reverse its monetary approach into a progressive perception" (Kathimerini, 1994: 1), this differentiation does not become an action. On the contrary, the socialist government introduces a program for the period 1994-1999, which is approved by the European Union. This program indicates that PASOK's economic policy is fully adjusted to the Maastricht Treaty.

The election of Kostas Simitis as Prime Minister in January 1996 and later as President of PASOK with the adoption of the modernising "Third Way" (Giddens, 1998), indicates the transformation of the socialist party to a "cartel party". The modernisation project influences the European social-democracy and indicates the acceptance of neoliberal model and the conservative turn of the European social-democracy (Bradford, 2002: 145-161). In this frame, the governmental party is based on the correlation between the party and the necessities of the state, as the state provides all the necessary resources for the maintenance of parties in power. Moreover, the role of the "party on the ground" is undermined while the "party in public office" is strengthened. This trend is strongly supported by the strong influence of the private Mass media (Katz & Mair, 1995: 5-28). Kostas Simitis appeared to be the only politician who could guarantee the European perspective of the country and as a result, the electoral success of the party. Since then, the role of the political parties in Greece in shaping the political agenda, in the renewal both party and governmental elites and in the mobilisation of the society is undermined. All these factors consist now a privilege of private media and of experts and technocrats in the field of marketing and communication, (Spourdalakis, 1988: 67-71), a trend which has been called as the 'Americanization of Greek politics' (Kotzaivazoglou & Ikonou, 2005).

The new leadership of PASOK sets as exclusive goal the participation of the country in the European Union, undermining the social character of the party. And this process is justified again on political rhetoric and not on economic issues. As K. Simitis stresses "I have the vision that one day our nation will be in a high level among the society of European states. I have the vision of the powerful Greece. I have the vision of a proud Greek" (Simitis, 2000). As characteristically referred, "the 'modernisation' period proved a turning point in PASOK's course; it marked a shift from the socialist-populist period to one characterized by pragmatism, a managerial discourse and a technocratic approach all packed in a project for the modernization, rationalization and Europeanisation of the Greek society and economy (Lyrintzis, 2005: 250). Thus, since 1996 the socialist government uses the privatization process for the state firms, as basic tool for its policy. The privatization process is appeared as the necessary one, which would lead to economic development and could guarantee the participation of the country into the Euro-zone (Spourdalakis & Tassis 2006: 501-502).

However, the privatization policy has a huge impact over Greek economy and society. As characteristically is referred, "of all policies that impact on the state-market balance (financial deregulation, market liberalization, reduction of public expenditure, etc.) privatization is probably the most salient and direct. Not only does privatization amount to a radical redrawing of the public-private boundary but it also constitutes a momentous reversal of the entire post-war policy paradigm" (Pagoulatos, 2005: 358). During this period of time, a European country in order to participate in the EMU, it has to introduce a specific economic policy which targets to the abolishment the state control over important economic sectors such as telecommunications, energy, finance and air transport (Pagoulatos, 2005: 360). Moreover, the liberalization process of the economy which is accompanied by international organizations such as the OECD and the IMF is identified by the privatization process. However, this happens not only through the "pressures" of an external international environment [EU, OECD, IMF], but also by the political views of the political personnel in Greece. "In the Greek case, those identifying themselves as pro-EU 'modernizers' supported the privatization agenda [...] The EU legitimized an agenda that it did not directly mandate" (Featherstone, 2005: 232). Thus during the period 1996-2004, almost all the basic state enterprises are partial or fully privatized through the stock-market. At the end of the day, Greece, under the socialist government, applies officially for the European Monetary Union process in March 2000 and it adopts Euro as the official currency of the country in 2001.

### 3. Greece in the Eurozone (2001-2012): The Great Expectations Collapsed

Since Greece enters the Eurozone, it faces the issue of entering in an economic zone in which the monetary policy is defined by the European Central Bank, which has an autonomous role and is only partially influenced by the elected governments. The independent role of the national Central Banks was an obligatory criterion for the countries in order to enter the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)(Koutsiaras 2005: 19).

However, these restrictions on economic policy and the fact that the Greek economy, a relative small economy, enters in an economic zone with the same currency and has to compete with countries of more open and stronger economies such as Germany, France, Italy etc., do not diminish the euphoria of the country. During this period, in Greece it is considered that merely the participation of the country in the Eurozone would bring positive effects for the Greek economy and for the Greek private firms as well, because they would have the opportunity to improve their performance due to the lower interest rates and the decreased inflationary rates. However, the participation of the Greek economy in the Eurozone, along with the loss of the tool of the exchange policy seems to create structural problems on the competitiveness of the Greek economy and to worsen the trade balance of payments of the country (IMF, 2007: 4-29).

Moreover, in an open and highly competitive environment, the majority of the Greek private firms, especially those which face efficiency problems, will either 'forced' to merge or to leave the market(Keramidou&Mimis, 2011: 681, Keramidou, Mimis&Pappa, 2011: 445). These arguments never come at the top of the political agenda. The result of these policies is that despite the fact that the economic policy of the period 1996-2004 presents events as important successes such as the entry of Greece in the Eurozone, the Olympic Games and the entrance of Cyprus in the EU, (Featherstone, 2005: 224), yet it presents substantial social deficit as, despite the increasing rates of economic growth, the unemployment rates remained in high level and 20% of the Greek population lived under the poverty standards (Vernardakis, 2011:31-35). In this way PASOK weakens its ties with the society (Moschonas, 2001: 24). Therefore, with the 2004 elections the new government of ND comes to power. Although through its pre-election promises for a different role of the state, ND seems to continue the same policy with the previous government. As a result, in 2009 when the global economic crisis hit the Greek economy the government budget deficit reaches the unprecedented level of 15% of the GDP,.

However, until 2009, the global economic crisis, which began in the USA as a crisis in the Real Estate, in August 2007, does not seem to influence the Greek party system. On the contrary, the economic crisis is considered as a temporary one, which would not cause any serious problems to the Greek economy. But, in May 2010 the socialist government which has come to power with the 2009 elections, having a huge electoral win of 11,5% on its main rival ND, signed with IMF and the EU through ECB the Memorandum agreement (Lyrintzis, 2011: 12). This Memorandum and the relative agreements since then, introduced austerity measures, especially on the civil servants, the employees of the private sector and the pensioners, the reduce of the social benefits and the transformation of the labor relations. "Greece accepted a complex agreement, which ended the country's capacity to decide on its fiscal policy and provided for a large number of harsh measures in almost all areas of social and economic life" (Lyrintzis, 2011: 13). As a result, the imposing economic policy which focuses on the "internal devaluation" in a very short period of time, led to a severe recession of the economy with negative rates of economic growth, due to the fall of investments, the fall of private consumption and the boost of the unemployment at the levels of 27%. Moreover, the reduction of the wages and pensions, along with the increase of taxation and the increase of the prices over the basic goods, has as a result almost 35% of the population lives under the poverty standards.

This policy led to mass social mobilizations and finally to the resignation of the elected Prime Minister George Papandreou and his replacement by Lucas Papademos a technocrat professor and former chairman of the Greek Central Bank. Moreover, the coalition government which is shaped by PASOK, ND and the radical right-wing party LAOS indicated that the crisis in Greece is not only economical, but also a political one, referring to the weakness of the political elites and the political parties to offer satisfactory solutions and to maintain the social cohesion of the country (Lyrintzis, 2011: 20). Instead, the political parties seem to "have no vision for the future. [They] are therefore limited to the management of everyday politics.

In fact, they present their ability to provide better management as their major asset; management, administration and deliberation are the key words in their political discourse" (Lyrintzis, 2011: 21). This process seems to simulate the Greek case to the structure of the USA political parties and seems to confirm the analysis of L. Epstein who since 1967 argues that the European parties will adopt the structural model and practices of the political parties in USA (Epstein, 1967). Moreover, the focus of the governmental needs and the exclusive dominance of technocrats, specialists on communication and marketing in the political agenda of the party, lead to the substantial fade away of the party on the ground, a process that has been characterized as "party less democracy" which undermines the role of the political parties in western democracies (Mair, 2000: 21-35).

Moreover, the replacement of the elected Prime Ministers both in Italy and in Greece, followed by outside pressure from the international stock and markets towards the prospect for a possible default, seems to strengthen the political crisis of the country. The combination of the negative performance of the Greek economy along with the political crisis seems to be the crucial factors for the dismantle of the Metapolitefsi Greek party system as PASOK, the major political party of this period, seems to collapse, and to be replaced by the left-wing SYRIZA. Moreover, the political and electoral dynamic of the right wing fascist party of Golden Dawn implies that there is an increasing negative trend among Greece society towards politics and Europeanization as well.

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