

GREECE: STIRRING UP OLD GHOSTS

Tassos Symeonides
(RIEAS Academic Advisor)

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For four decades after the fall of the junta that ruled the Greece for seven years beginning in 1967, Greek politics was dominated by the conservative New Democracy party (ND) and the PASOK socialists. But when Greece went bankrupt in 2010, and prostrated herself on the bare floor in front of her creditors, the post junta bipolar party system, discredited to the core, disintegrated with frightening speed.

To top the cake, in January 2015, Greek voters took the fatal step of pushing a most unlikely coalition of two miniscule extremist parties, the paleo-communist SYRIZA and the far-right ANEL, into power.

An initially cocky and arrogant “revolutionary” SYRIZA, with a cocky platform of breaking the stranglehold of the creditors, was quickly choked by Brussels into submission. As the European Left watched in anger and disbelief, SYRIZA somersaulted with lightning speed and completed without hesitation the [mortgaging of Greece](#) to the lenders for the next one hundred years.

With a straight face, SYRIZA now basks in the cascading (and hypocritical) kudos from the creditors. The latter, happily surprised by the servility of the Greek “left radicals,” now morphed into obedient “Europeanists,” watch as SYRIZA signs on the dotted line of every piece

of paper thrown on the table with heart-warming unbounded enthusiasm. This newfound honeymoon between the Greek “radicals” and the neoliberal lender cabals finally led the European Left to denounce SYRIZA as [“faux Left \[that\] is too far Right.”](#)

But SYRIZA’s metamorphosis is in reality only skin-deep and serves the specific purposes of obtaining the firm support previous governments did not succeed to elicit from Brussels. This is a carefully planned bamboozling operation for the benefit of the domestic audience.

SYRIZA’s true predilections – Stalinism, “permanent revolution,” anarchism, condoning leftist terrorist violence, “internationalist solidarity,” a love affair with dictatorial far-left regimes – have been never set aside and are now coming to the surface as its political fortunes dip sharply amid a basket case [wrecked economy](#) and a desperate society.

Consequently, clinging to power at all costs has energized SYRIZA’s anarchist instincts, which do not tolerate “right opposition” *“from no one, viz. the rest of the political parties and the rapidly rising majority of deeply pessimistic voters.*

After ruining what was left of the Greek middle class through back-breaking taxation to create budget surpluses demanded by its creditor overlords; engaging in an orgy of “adjusting” the corrupt public sector to their own aims; and obediently agreeing to ever expanding creditor interventionist and “monitoring” powers, embedded in terrifyingly complicated agreements that are rubberstamped by a hostage SYRIZA parliamentary majority, the incumbents are presently moving into darker areas of “modifying” Greek democracy in a desperate effort to preserve their shaky political fortunes.

In recent months, for example:

- the traditionally coarse and offensive street SYRIZA idiom is infiltrating official statements and announcements to deliver shrill accusations and calls to the “devout” to defend the emerging Madurist version of Greek “democracy.”

- In parliament, SYRIZA “spokesmen” unleash torrents of insults and abuse upon the opposition without the slightest fear of disciplinary action in or out of the national assembly.
- Aggressive interference with the “independent” judiciary is growing rapidly: judicial inquiries become subjects of SYRIZA insinuation in the media; prosecutors discover “mysterious” leaks of confidential information to the press; and the identity of supposedly protected witnesses is freely bandied about while SYRIZA denies all wrongdoing when the source of the leaks is obvious even to kindergarteners.
- Leaders and members of the opposition find themselves the regular targets of orchestrated defamation, insults, and innuendos via the press and party propagandists touring television stations daily.

Even worse, anarchist violence is increasing unimpeded. A new term has infiltrated the vernacular: “*syllogikotites*” is roughly translated into “collegialities,” an innocent term that fails to grasp what the *syllogikotites* are all about, namely anarchist agitation and hoodlam “justified interventions” to protect “people’s rights.”

So far, the *syllogikotites* limit themselves to bullying and threatening their victims with beatings, but it is only a matter of time before these “urban warriors” graduate to “sterner” methods of persuasion. Threats and “interventions” by these bullies go unopposed and unpunished **by direct order of the SYRIZA government**. In the rare instance of some of these thugs being detained by the police, senior government officials, including the national assembly speaker and the so-called “citizens’ protection” minister, order their immediate release.

Among the *syllogikotites* favorite pastimes is invading courtrooms to interrupt property repossession hearings; invading and wrecking the offices of notaries handling repossession cases; forcing their way into public buildings to terrorize employees, like tax officials, deemed “enemies of the people;” and attacking, vandalizing, occupying, and defacing foreign embassies.

The latest SYRIZA torpedo ploy is the exhumation of an old corruption case involving the Swiss pharmaceuticals giant [Novartis and the alleged bribing of senior politicians](#), all of

whom happen to be members of the opposition. Novartis, SYRIZA also alleges, oiled the pockets of thousands of Greek doctors to boost sales.

The timing of this sudden burst of righteousness dovetails perfectly with the expanding SYRIZA efforts to attack and discredit its opponents with allegations of corruption. Unsurprisingly, those being smeared, including a former prime minister and the incumbent Greek member of the European Commission, denounce the government and deny any wrongdoing.

But SYRIZA has also moved deeper in its efforts to impose “velvet solutions” that will secure its position as the dominant power broker in Greek politics short of an outright coup.

In 2016, it forced a parliamentary vote that changed the electoral law to a simple proportional representation formula. Proportional representation, in a country like Greece, guarantees political fragmentation to the point of ungovernability – something SYRIZA considers of strategic importance to its very existence because, given its performance in government so far, it is almost certain it will be catapulted back to the very political fringes where it came from if the current electoral law, benefiting disproportionately the first party past the post, had persisted.

Thus, Greece, in the era of bankruptcy, has graduated to a new stage in her long history of political instability and undemocratic “solutions.” SYRIZA, boosted by the support of Greece’s “friends” running the country as a debt protectorate, is delivering **a master class on how to subvert a political system from within** in order to secure its own authoritarian leftism as the country’s dominant political force well into what lies ahead.

With this bleak, uncertain, and dangerous future taking shape, Greeks, so fond of constantly invoking their glorious ancient history, should go back to the books to study [the works of their own “dead white males”](#) that established the foundations of Western political philosophy. If they do, they may finally discover the explanations of their current “democratic” political, social, and economic impasse and, perhaps, decide to punish and eject those who are busy trying to upend what is left of a “democratic” system in Greece.

