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## Greece: a Capitulation Bearer of Deadly Threats

By Yorgos Mitralias  
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What is most frightening in the current Greek situation is that the entire leadership of the Greek left seem to have grasped neither the scope nor the depth of the disaster already brought about by the Tsipras government's capitulation before the creditors of the country. Actually, the election campaign is taking its course with the invective and the crooked deals of well-established tradition, without anyone so much as mentioning this disaster, or particularly to its consequences in the medium and longer term. And more serious, without anyone making the slightest reference to the practical and urgent tasks that this disaster demands from the Greek left and its activists.

And yet, it is impossible that the current twilight of the landscape of the Greek left goes unnoticed because it is obvious. On one side, the hemorrhage suffered by the present "genetically modified" Syriza already exceeds the worst fears of the promoters of its "normalization". Day after day, hundreds of its key workers, deputies, members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, youth leaders, trade union fraction and other party organs slam the door and walk out, violently denouncing the "treason" of the Tsipras government.

If the overwhelming majority of those who walk out of the party stick to the newly constituted Popular Unity, the same does not go for the thousands upon thousands of "anonymous" people who are walking on tip-toes, completely disorientated, disappointed, or outright enraged. The result of all this is already in front of our eyes: collapse of the Syriza in the polls and real

resurrection of the traditional right wing of New Democracy which is already working to bring down this prematurely aged discredited Syriza.

On the other side, the Popular Unity leaders of the Syriza Left Platform split, do not seem to be any kind of inspiration either to the disappointed crowds or to the other political forces opposed to Memoranda who, one would “normally” have expected to join them. The campism of its main leader (Lafazanis) mixed with a certain condescension toward far left groupings with less electoral influence (Antarsya and others), is already putting off potential partners and reinforces not only the electoral break up of the anti-memorandum left, but also the general demoralisation which is forcing an important part of the people of the left and especially of those who joined Syriza at the last elections, to turn their backs on politics and political parties and to withdraw into themselves.

If one adds to all that the fact that the Greek Communist Party (KKE) has made the Popular Unity and of Lafazanis its main enemy which it attacks day and night with expressions of exceptional violence, and that Antarsya has decided to present its own lists to the next election, one can well understand why the word “disgust” keeps on cropping up in the discussions between people of the left and (ex) Syriza voters. Then, given that all the indications are now that after the election this “genetically modified” Syriza will be part of a coalition government with one or more of the neoliberal parties (Tsipras has just named PASOK as a possible government partner), and that the program of this government will be to apply the third – and toughest- memorandum, the bolt will be fastened so that the near-universal “disgust” will be replaced by a nightmarish “everything the same” and “everything rotten ” state, which is – of course – the ready change of the extreme right, and in the case of Greece, of a ‘Golden Dawn’ already well established, ready ad waiting.

This lackadaisical attitude of practically all sections of the Greek Left will not surprise us if we bear in mind that this Greek Left (with a few exceptions) only discovered what a deadly threat posed by the neo-nazi ‘Golden Dawn’ after its electoral breakthrough! In reality, the leaders of Syriza have never understood that their own electoral success was no more than the other side of the coin of the success of the Golden Dawn, because the enormous advances of these two parties were – both of them – the product, and also the examples of the desperate search for radical solutions, at the two ends of the political spectrum, on the part of the majority of an impoverished, radicalized and angry Greek population.

The leaders of Syriza never understood any of this and that is why they have always believed that their success was due to their extraordinary political and other skills. This huge misunderstanding had no great practical importance so long as everything was fine and the upward momentum of Syriza continued. But now at the moment of truth, when the time has come to settle accounts with history and when tomorrows that no longer sing, it is quite different. In this Greek society which has been looking for a long time like two drops of German water from the dying Weimar Republic , the next move of the pendulum could well lead to the far right! Especially since the radical left government has just proven its inability to meet the expectations of the population and since traditionally very conservative Greek society is very quickly rediscovering its old reflexes which ensured that the Golden Dawn ... not fall from the sky.(2)

The conclusion is also a warning. Only an awareness of the exceptional extent of the disaster caused by the capitulation of Syriza and its government could lead what is left of the Greek radical left to define – at the utmost speed – tasks to match the urgency of the moment . Time is not for triumphalism but for rigorous analysis of the situation created after the surrender of 13 July and the consequences it has and will have on the political and social behavior of the Greek population and especially the ruined and radicalized middle classes. In this context, all sectarianism which leads to the current extreme fragmentation of the radical left forces is equivalent to a veritable act of committing suicide which lays the ground for the neo-Nazi far right.

Similarly, any conciliatory attitude towards the party which capitulated and is going through the process of social democratization is also tantamount to suicide because it leaves the ground for the far right who can buzz around with a big slogan “everything the same –everything rotten”. In short, now is the time, more than ever, that the radical Greek left should heed Gramsci’s appeal to combine “the pessimism of reason with the optimism of the will” (3)

#### **Notes .**

1. For the indifference of Syriza leaders towards the terrible international consequences of their capitulation, see [the article](#) “*The devastating international consequences of the announced surrender of Syriza*”
2. To the question of a thorough investigation of the Greek public opinion conducted shortly before the elections of January 25, “*which institutions do you trust most,*” over 80% of respondents placed the army, and more 70% the police! Note that the same respondents expressed at that time mainly support for Syriza. The results of this survey caused no shock in Greece as confirmed by dozens of others and especially by what the Greeks have seen around them for the last few decades.
3. “*Il pessimismo della ragione e l’ottimismo della volontà*”