

The Disassembly of the Greek Welfare State under the Troika

By Yianni Tsesmelis*

Having broken from half a century of binary political choice between Greece's two established political parties, SYRIZA's rise to power in the 2010s represented an opportunity for the country's welfare state to resist intrusions by European entities and institutions. This paper analyses Greece's history and political interaction during this period, arguing that Greece has now, in folding to the EU, completed its transition from a relatively liberally-spending welfare state to what Wolfgang Streeck calls a "consolidation state." Relevant to this analysis is a set of historical details leading up to the SYRIZA election and the 2015 referendum—seen as the high-water mark of opposition to austerity and cuts to the welfare state. In turn, the impact of austerity on the Greek population is quantified and substantiated, demonstrating that austerity measures predominately impacted the welfare state, more often than not resulting in direct reductions to pension and other monetary payments to the citizenry. Finally, these factual conditions are squared with theoretical descriptions and conceptualisations of the welfare state as existing under neoliberalism. Ultimately, what can be drawn from this research is that Europe's institutions are unyielding in their prioritisation of an ordoliberal, single-market ideology over individual Member States' varying conceptions of locally implemented fiscal policy.

Keywords: Austerity; Consolidation state; Neoliberalism; Ordoliberalism; Referendum; Welfare state; SYRIZA

Introduction

In 2015, after battling with the European Union and its related institutions for the better part of five years, the Greek citizenry famously voted 'No' in response to proposed EU bailout and debt restructuring agreements.¹ Since Greece's descent into dictatorship from 1967 to 1974, a period that involved the en masse imprisonment of communists, leftist sympathisers, and political opponents in labour camps,² the country spent its forty years of post-dictatorship liberation operating under a two-party, centre-left and centre-right binary political system.³

Having established a party based on a platform of anti-austerity, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras may have been justified following the 2015 referendum in expecting the outcome to provide his government's negotiators with leverage to

*B.A. (Hons); J.D. (NYU School of Law). Email: yianni.tsesmelis@law.nyu.edu.

¹Arnett, Sedghi, Galastidas & Clarke (2015).

²Kaloudis (2000) at 41.

³Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015).

protect Greece from EU-imposed austerity measures.⁴ Indeed, while the actual results of negotiations with the EU were rarely positive for Greek citizens, Tsipras's Coalition of the Radical Left⁵ party at least nominally promised a platform that refused to cave in to European demands seen as unreasonable by the Greek citizenry.⁶ Rather, the specific focus of SYRIZA, as legitimated by both their successful 2015 election to power *and* by the result of the 2015 referendum, was to propose "an anti-establishment agenda whose main goal was to renegotiate austerity **at any cost**."⁷

In advancing such a position in its negotiations with the EU, SYRIZA's ill-fated promise was to restore the "independence, dignity, and sovereignty of the Greek nation."⁸ Rather than resulting in the feared "Grexit," SYRIZA's opposition to austerity was ultimately overpowered⁹ and overcome by pressures exerted by the EU and the Troika.¹⁰ Having miraculously broken forty years of binary political control by voting SYRIZA into power in 2015, the Greek citizenry was at the time optimistic about its potential to collectively organise opposition to EU-imposed austerity and to protect its once-robust welfare state from the ever-expanding reach of neoliberalism.¹¹ Anti-climactically, Tsipras's time as Prime Minister of Greece is most commonly associated not with his initial animated opposition to the political status quo in Greece, but instead with his capitulation to the Troika "just hours after [the] referendum on July 5, 2015 in which 61% of Greeks refused a fresh round of austerity."¹²

The intention in this paper is to analyse Greece's history and political interaction during the 2010s, arguing that Greece has now, in folding to the EU, completed its transition from a relatively liberally-spending welfare state to what Wolfgang Streeck calls a "consolidation state."¹³ Streeck describes the transition from tax state, to debt state, to consolidation state in Europe to have occurred as follows:

"Both the long-term increase in public debt and the current global attempts to bring it under control were intertwined with the "financialization" of advanced capitalism and its complex functions and dysfunctions. The ongoing shift towards a consolidation state involves a deep rebuilding of the political institutions of post war democratic capitalism and its international order. This is the case in particular in Europe where consolidation coincides with an unprecedented increase in the scale of

⁴Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 14.

⁵"ΣΥΡΙΖΑ" in Greek, translated and referred to as "SYRIZA" in English and throughout this paper.

⁶Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 17.

⁷Ibid. (Emphasis added).

⁸Ibid. at 14.

⁹Varoufakis (2020).

¹⁰The "Troika" is the word used to refer to the group of creditors with which Greece was primarily negotiating for improved bailout conditions. Ordinarily, the Troika refers to the European Central Bank, the European Union, and the International Monetary Fund. See Mexi (2018) at 98.

¹¹Varoufakis (2020).

¹²Ibid.

¹³Streeck (2015).

political rule under European Monetary Union and with the transformation of the latter into an asymmetric fiscal stabilization regime.”¹⁴

This paper first sets out additional relevant historical details leading up to the SYRIZA election and the 2015 referendum—seen as the high-water mark of opposition to austerity and cuts to the welfare state. Next, the impact of austerity on the Greek population is quantified and substantiated, demonstrating that austerity measures predominately impacted the welfare state, more often than not resulting in direct reductions to pension and other monetary payments to the citizenry.¹⁵ Finally, the paper concludes by attempting to square the factual conditions introduced earlier with theoretical descriptions and conceptualisations of the welfare state as existing under neoliberalism.

Greece’s Political History as Relevant to its Welfare State

Despite political choice in Greece operating solely as a binary between relatively moderate centre-left politics and centre-right politics,¹⁶ this is not to suggest that Greek political parties prior to SYRIZA were unconcerned by EU pressure to impose austerity measures upon the country. Indeed, in circumstances eerily similar to the lead up to the 2015 referendum, in 2011, PASOK Prime Minister George Papandreou called a national referendum on proposals related to a Eurozone bailout for Greece, with the consequences of accepting the proposals including lengthened periods of austerity and other EU-imposed policies that would be applied internally in Greece.¹⁷

Just days after Papandreou’s announcement, what resulted was a barrage of EU pressure, exerted not only behind the scenes but also outwardly and overtly through European media: then-French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel were reported as extending to the democratically elected leader of Greece both *warnings* and *ultimata* contingent upon an outcome that Europe deemed favourable from the referendum.¹⁸ In fact, the ultimatum posed by Germany and France boiled down to the following: if Papandreou could not ensure that Greeks would vote *as Europeans* rather than as local Greek constituents, EUR 8 billion of bailout funds would not be extended to Greece. The

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 14.

¹⁶See generally Chryssogelos (2015) at 29. Chryssogelos reaffirms the notion that the key feature of the Greek political party system is its binary polarisation. Although the parties have somewhat fluctuated in their political orientations since the 1967-74 junta, New Democracy (“ND”) has most commonly occupied space as a centre-right party whereas Panhellenic Socialist Movement (“PASOK”) occupies space as a centre-left party. Note, however, that both ND and PASOK have given in to EU pressures to impose austerity measures within Greece, dating back to at least 1986 and being exacerbated by Greece’s adoption of the euro in January 2002. See Carpenter (2003) at 263.

¹⁷Vogel (2011). Note that, while “austerity” and “austerity measures” are not substantiated here, specific examples of cuts to the welfare state and of implemented policies will be introduced in the section entitled “The Greek Welfare State, as Affected by Austerity.”

¹⁸Treanor et al. (2011).

specific reported language states that the bailout funds would only be extended if there was a “swift yes vote in the referendum.”¹⁹

In stark contrast to the binary system that had dominated the 20th century in Greece, the rise of SYRIZA was received as a political breakthrough in Greece, particularly in the 2012 national election where the party earned 26.89% of the votes, falling only 3% short of the votes earned by the evergreen and omnipresent ND.²⁰ Only three years later, in the 2015 national election, SYRIZA, led by Tsipras, gained 36.34% of the national vote, entitling them to 149 seats in parliament, just two shy of forming a majority government.²¹ Again, even before the idea of a referendum was considered, voters understood SYRIZA as having promised an anti-austerity platform that primarily meant “standing up” to European-imposed policies and ultimata in exchange for bailout funding.²² What the Greek vote in the general election of 2015 indicated was that Greek citizens were ready and willing to mobilise behind a political sensitivity that rejected neoliberal governance by austerity, where costs were routinely shifted from the public sector to the private sector,²³ and, once the private sector collapsed in Greece due to the Global Financial Crisis (“GFC”), onto the struggling Greek family.²⁴

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 15.

²¹Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 14.

²²Ibid.

²³See generally Kamekis & Tzagkarakis (2017). Their focus is on the deleterious effect that the deregulation and subsequent privatisation of the Greek welfare state has had for beneficiaries dependent upon its services. While the focus of this paper is on the interaction of politics, the EU, and the Greek welfare state particularly and limited to the 2010s, they convincingly analyse the relationship between conditions for entry into the Eurozone and austerity measures, whereby the Greek government in the early 1990s was encouraged to shift public spending away from the welfare state in order to satisfy the Eurozone’s condition that entering countries satisfy a 3% level of public deficit. While deregulation might have ultimately played a part in Greece’s accession to the Eurozone, they lament the fact that deregulatory practices were rarely, if ever, paired with rational and effective policy changes in order to ensure that deregulation could coexist with an “economically and institutionally rationalized system.”

²⁴The issue of the dynamics between member states and the EU as an entity is, while interesting, not within the scope of this paper. For literature focused on how the Greek executive representative has been dulled in their dealings with the EU and on why this might be significant, given Greece’s relatively recent adoption of its modern constitution in 1975, consider Kalyvas (2000) at 1533-34 as well as Tassopoulos (1999) at 227. To put it briefly, these articles, when put in conversation with one another, work toward building an argument that, by requiring legitimately-elected Greek politicians to choose between ultimata issued by the EU and national insolvency, the Greek sovereign—the people—had their sovereign will abrogated and nullified. More problematic is the likelihood that the Troika not only abrogated the popular sovereign will of the Greek people, as manifested through their executive representative, but also insisted upon austerity measures whose effectiveness or damaging impact upon the Greek people was entirely unknown by the IMF. Žižek (2015) at 25.

The Greek Welfare State, as Affected by Austerity

The Welfare State prior to the 2000s

Partially due to Greece's late industrialisation as compared with many other European countries, the Greek welfare state is characterised as temporally lagging far behind its counterparts in Northern and Western Europe.²⁵ In categorizing the country's welfare state as either liberal, conservative, or social democratic,²⁶ Maria Petmesidou, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy at Democritus University of Thrace, describes the ways in which Greece's welfare state is properly considered to be a hybrid regime. Firstly, the Greek regime depended upon income transfers, most commonly pensions, arranged in line with the Bismarckian model of continental Europe;²⁷ that is, a conception of social insurance that has as its objective the tempering of the workers' revolutionary potential rather than affecting any redistributive purpose.²⁸ Even this element of the Greek regime was not without its problems: as Petmesidou describes, the early Greek social insurance system was "highly polarised and fragmented," meaning that the social insurance to which a Greek citizen was entitled and its conditions of receipt would be almost entirely contingent upon which social insurance fund—out of as many as *one hundred and thirty* funds—was applicable.²⁹

The Greek regime developed toward including aspects of the social democratic regimes following the end of the junta in 1974. Indeed, Petmesidou recognises this trend as having spread throughout all of Southern Europe whereby, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, national healthcare systems were introduced to the Southern European countries, including Greece.³⁰ Again, these services were not rolled out without flaws: while the intention was for services to be free at the point of use, Greece's shift to universal healthcare remains somewhat incomplete due to gaps missing in public coverage, the continuous filling of these gaps by a generally expanding private health sector, and public social health insurance schemes that are highly fragmented.³¹

Finally, Greece's welfare state can safely be characterised as liberal (in the classical liberal sense) due to its underdevelopment of social care services and social assistance. Rather than providing the poorest Greeks additional benefits through means-testing or other similar mechanisms, both Greece's past austere political orientation combined with Greek Orthodoxy's historical stranglehold over social policy has precluded expansions in these areas.³²

²⁵Livaditi & Petmesidou (2018).

²⁶See generally Esping-Andersen (2014).

²⁷Livaditi & Petmesidou (2018).

²⁸Van Kersbergen & Vis (2013) at 38-43.

²⁹Livaditi & Petmesidou (2018).

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

The Welfare State during the 2000s

For a fleeting moment immediately following the GFC, income inequality between the top 10% and bottom 50% of income earners found itself at its lowest point (meaning the least inequality) since the junta.³³ However, once both the United States and European governments bailed out failing industries following the aberration of the GFC, the status quo was resumed with the bottom 50% enjoying an average of just 17-18% of the country's pre-tax national income from 2010 to 2015.³⁴ In that same time period, the top 10% had seen their earnings increase from a proportionate low of just ~32% of the country's pre-tax national income in 2011 to closer to ~38% in 2015.³⁵

While the GFC increasingly became a memory of distant history for the nation's top earners, the average Greek citizen found the aftermath of the GFC pushing them into higher degrees of dependency upon the welfare state. Further highlighting the increased dependency upon the welfare state in Greece, beginning with the GFC unemployment skyrocketed across all age groups, initially at a contextually reasonable 9.6% in 2009, doubling to 17.9% in 2011, and almost tripling the 2009 figure by reaching 27.5 % in 2013—or, to truly appreciate the gravity of such a figure, one in four Greeks capable of work found themselves unemployed by 2013.³⁶

Greeks' willingness to accept a relatively radical leftist platform in 2015 can be rationalised against this context. Such a platform was welcomed by the Greek constituents, who had suffered through the brunt of the economic crisis followed by the insulting blow of added, foreign-imposed austerity measures in exchange for the mere economic survival of the country itself. Outside of unemployment, austerity measures meant palpable and often drastic changes to local policy: increased taxes on income and property, increases to sales taxes, decreases to tax concessions and the tax-free threshold, etc.³⁷ Large increases in property taxes impacted the middle class most acutely, causing many Greeks to lose their homes at the hands of EU-imposed austerity.³⁸ Public-sector, private-sector salaries, and pensions alike were ruthlessly slashed, with public-sector salaries and pensions reduced en masse in some cases by up to 50%.³⁹

To provide more specifics as to the changes made within the Greek welfare state in the 2010s, consider the changes made just three days after the July 2015 referendum to reject austerity measures. On the 8th of July 2015, the SYRIZA government, fearing national insolvency, agreed to an adjustment of its existing obligations to creditors on the condition that VAT and pensions be reformed in order to reduce public spending⁴⁰ and increase public revenue.⁴¹ One of the most

³³World Inequality Database.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou (2015) at 14.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Note that, while the focus of this paper is not to pinpoint the exact meaning of “neoliberalism” as applied to a criticism of EU policies, it is still helpful to explain more carefully what is meant by the

significant changes to Greek life came in the form of the enormous reduction in the number of Greeks employed by the public sector as opposed to the private sector. In 2010, Greece's public sector employed a considerable ~28% of the population, compared to just ~18% in 2015.⁴² As a percentage, just over ~53% of public sector employees in 2010 remained employed in the public sector in 2015.⁴³ As a result, any enhanced benefits associated with governmental work either have been abandoned due to shifts in employment by sector, or are now reliant upon the private sector for their disbursement. Of course, in the face of shifts away from enhanced benefits reserved for governmental employees, another potential solution would be for the welfare state to intervene in one of several methods.⁴⁴ Even if Greece's welfare state may have been able to absorb such a shift in responsibility over benefits *prior* to the economic and social crisis of the 2010s, the welfare state could not possibly bear the cost of any shift in responsibility over benefits during the 2010s considering the way in which the already underfunded scheme had been

word "neoliberal" throughout this paper. Generally, I have attempted to describe the real-world change made by an austerity measure rather than to first classify it as neoliberal. As such, here, an example of an austerity measure is a requirement that pensions be slashed in order to reduce public spending. Now, it is far easier to match this description with one of the four more specific conceptions of neoliberalism as provided by Rodgers (2018). Most notably, the imposition of austerity in Greece—even as far back as austerity measures introduced in the 1990s in connection with Greece's introduction into the Eurozone—most often comes in the form of "neoliberalism as policy," existing within the setting of "disaster capitalism." *Ibid.* It is not the case that Greek politicians—even those from the centrist parties PASOK and ND—sought to push neoliberalist economic policy due to the appeal of neoliberalism as an intellectual project or as a cultural regime. Rather, as the history behind SYRIZA's election should demonstrate, neoliberalism has most often been implemented in Greece in response to either external economic conditions—the GFC—or through ultimatum—as seen throughout the entire negotiating process between Greece and the Troika lasting the majority of the previous decade.

⁴¹Kraatz & Dessimirova (2012).

⁴²*Ibid.* at 4.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴As just one example, however impractical it may be in reality, the welfare state could intervene by attempting to test for eligibility (i.e., former status as a governmental employee) before providing the same set of enhanced benefits to those who, arguably through no fault of their own, no longer are able to rely on benefits through governmental employment. Just this one example, however, demonstrates how unsurmountable such a financial undertaking would be. Consider that, in terms of the increase in actual individuals the welfare state would have to cover, the decrease in government employment from ~28% in 2010 to ~18% in 2015 could represent as many as 1.07 million additional claimants reliant upon the welfare state. Bearing in mind Greece's population ordinarily hovers around 11 million and has been on a steady descent since the economic and social crisis began, requiring the welfare state to absorb as many as 1.07 million people's shift of benefits from the governmental sector would undoubtedly overwhelm the country's welfare state. Further still, some may argue that there are serious issues of equity involved where the welfare state appears to intervene with the specific intention of protecting a particular class of citizens as opposed to others. Specifically in a country like Greece, where the migrant refugee crisis followed almost immediately after the most severe periods of the economic and social crisis began to ease, those solely focused on equity might argue that Greece's base social solidarity income would be more deserving of an increase as opposed to any plan for the welfare state to absorb and cover former governmental employees' benefits, since social solidarity income is far more broadly available than benefits contingent upon one's work sector. For context, the social solidarity income (Κοινωνικό Επίδομα Αλληλεγγύης or "KEA" in Greek) provides for a minimum of EUR 200 per household, regardless of any individual's work status; see also European Commission (2019):

continually gutted by the Troika during this period. Unsurprisingly, the majority of the evidence points to welfare benefits—not only limited to the governmental sector, but across the board—as having been slashed as a central part of the country’s attempts to avoid insolvency.⁴⁵

Historic features of the Greek welfare state were decimated in response to negotiations with the Troika. Most notably, the payments of what were known as the “thirteenth and fourteenth pension” were eradicated.⁴⁶ For the average Greek household, undeniably generous retirement pensions formed as much as 24.1% of a family’s disposable income and, as such, the removal of 1/7th of a family’s total pension—by ceasing to pay these thirteenth and fourteenth pensions—represents a significant change to a family’s available resources.⁴⁷ To further complicate the matter, consider the fact that Greece has an aging population characterised as one of the oldest in Europe,⁴⁸ and the fact that youth unemployment in Greece is so significant that expectations that the younger generations will be able to supplement cuts made in the public sector through their own contributions to the pension scheme must be discounted as unrealistic and unfeasible, at least if current trends hold.⁴⁹ This problem is further compounded by the fact that the Greek welfare state spends EUR 7.5 for each euro spent on *all* non-retirement pension benefits. As such, Manos Matsaganis, Professor at Athens University of Economics and Business, chastises the history of the Greek welfare state as evincing a strong, and unwise, prioritisation of retirement benefits over the prevention of unemployment.⁵⁰ Of course, such a practice can be criticised even when the country is *not* facing economic crises and uncontrollable unemployment by attacking the system’s failure to properly *safeguard* against unemployment when it is *employment* itself that necessarily—through taxing or through the new contributory pensions that have been introduced since 2015⁵¹—is responsible for *funding* retirement benefits.

Finally, in summarizing the rather complex changes made to the Greek pension scheme during 2015 and following the July referendum, rather than receiving pensions financed directly from the State budget, Greek pensions are now broken down into two streams: one base pension and one contributory

⁴⁵See generally OECD (2013).

⁴⁶*Ibid.* This “thirteenth and fourteenth pension” describes a set of two additional monthly pension payments, fit within a twelve-month period. Effectively, eligible beneficiaries were entitled to fourteen months of pension payments over a single year. This practice ceased in 2013.

⁴⁷Matsaganis (2011) at 501-502. Note a related point: not only do retirement benefits account for a disproportionately large amount of an average Greek family’s disposable income, but so too do other social transfers commonly associated with the welfare state (i.e., benefits attributable to family status, sickness, housing needs, unemployment, etc.) account for just 3.2% of average household disposable income. Therefore, on average, the Greek budget provides seven times as much funding to retirement benefits as it does to *all* other redistributive transfers of resources throughout the welfare state.

⁴⁸Bouloutza (2018).

⁴⁹OECD (2019). Greece’s youth unemployment rate as of 2019 is reported as being 35.23%. For context, the other “PIIGS” countries exhibit youth unemployment rates of 9.88% (Portugal), 12.43% (Ireland), 29.18% (Italy), and 32.58% (Spain) respectively.

⁵⁰Matsaganis (2011) at 503-505.

⁵¹OECD (2017).

pension. Most problematic in this scheme is the possibility for extreme poverty to proliferate amongst those dependent upon pension benefits. Specifically, the base pension ensures a minimum of just EUR 345.60 a month, on top of which certain percentages of an individual's earnings over an eligible earnings period are added, to comprise that individual's total monthly pension.⁵² Given the aforementioned unemployment statistics, the fact that Greece's population is severely aging and will become more and more dependent upon its youth, and these changes to the structure of the pension scheme, it remains to be seen how sufficient retirement benefits will continue to be paid if high unemployment means significant groups of Greeks will retire with next to no meaningful contributory pension. Through this perspective, Matsaganis' criticism of the focus of Greece's welfare state appears proper: that is, by focusing solely on retirement benefits, the Greek welfare system depends upon an assumption of at least a regular state of employment for its citizens. Instead of looking to uphold that assumption by focusing the welfare state toward achieving that end—i.e., propping up entitlements to education, enlarging employee protections in the workplace, etc.—the welfare state's preoccupation with retirement benefits has meant that as soon as that assumption is no longer in place, the welfare state will no longer provide meaningful insurance against unforeseen economic risks for the average Greek household.

The Psychological Impact on Greeks

The shift away from working in the public sector has also meant a shift in the relationship between Greece's constitutional commitments and its realisation of its citizens' rights as related to welfare. Specifically, as already alluded to by Petmesidou, Greek pensions and social insurance grew out of a conception of social solidarity—albeit of a Bismarkian orientation—which ensured that minimum pensions were established whereby pensions would be issued without premising entitlement upon compensation into the pension scheme.⁵³ As the governments of the 2010s sheepishly backpedalled on promises to oppose austerity measures only to see those measures come into effect, the psychological impact on the Greek populace has been devastating. Before laying out several of the ways in which the imposition of austerity measures has, in turn, resulted in drastic impacts to mental health in Greece, it is worth noting an idiosyncratic nationalism that exists in Greece. Indeed, even throughout the economic and social crisis of the 2010s, Greeks surveyed continued to report strong feelings of pride in their Greek culture and their history.⁵⁴

Perhaps the antithesis of this pride is the sense of deep, troubling embarrassment painfully experienced by Greek workers—often those in their fifties or above—who had worked the majority of their lives only to find themselves out of work during or after the GFC. The *New York Times* reports an all too familiar anecdote: Anna, 68, finds herself a widow after her husband, a retired bus driver, publicly committed suicide at age 66 following substantial cuts

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Mexi (2018) at 97.

⁵⁴Dixon, Hawkins, Juan-Torres & Kimaram (2019).

to his pension.⁵⁵ More famous, perhaps, was Dimitris Christoulas, who was 77 years old when he committed suicide in front of Syntagma Square, the national parliament building.⁵⁶ In linking pride to the despair and ultimate suicides these (more often than not) men experienced, Basta et. al researched a specific region in Greece in order to analyse the relationships between demographics and suicide rates following the crisis.⁵⁷ What this research concluded was that, while women were responding to the crisis with lowered suicide rates across all ages and although it was young men and women who saw the most significant increases in unemployment, it was middle-aged men forty years and over who exhibited a sizeable increase in suicides during the relevant time period.⁵⁸ For these men, their embarrassment was not in their dependency upon the welfare system; after all, even in a non-contributory system, there are arguments to be made that, merely by working, paying taxes, and broadly contributing to the country's GDP, these men were entitled to support in their retirement in the form of a state-issued pension. Rather, these men more often than not took their lives in order to avoid the further embarrassment of complete destitution, having worked a life often of forty or more years of labour. Consider Anna's husband, questioning how his situation could have arisen at all: "I've worked so many years. What will I have to show for it? How are we going to live?"⁵⁹

Cruelly ironic is the fact that it is Greece's preoccupation with retirement benefits that has prevented the country from putting in place more significant measures to protect employment and to assist those seeking to re-enter into employment. Faced with no job prospects at an age when most were expecting they would soon be retiring, the under-preparedness of the welfare state to embrace and manage underemployment, particularly amongst middle-aged workers, has undoubtedly contributed to the 40% increase in suicides between 2010 and 2015.⁶⁰ Furthermore, as both birth rates decrease and as suicide rates increase considerably from within an already aging population, researchers have observed the emergence of a diminishing workforce, even at a time when many Greeks are desperate for meaningful employment.⁶¹ To make the situation even less optimistic, recall the considerably high youth unemployment and the impact unemployment has had on Greek emigration to other EU member states. Between just 2009 and 2011, roughly 120,000 Greeks, mostly men in their thirties with tertiary education, emigrated to Western and Northern European countries, as well as to the United States.⁶²

A somewhat unexpected consequence of the failure of the welfare state to properly protect Greek citizens is the way in which family structures have adjusted in response. Prior to the crisis Greece operated primarily in a "male breadwinner/

⁵⁵Kitsantonis (2019).

⁵⁶Maltezou (2012).

⁵⁷See generally Basta, M., Vgontzas, A, Kastanaki, A., Michalodimitrakis, M., Kanaki, K., Koutra, K., Anastasaki, M. & P. Simos (2018).

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Kitsantonis (2019).

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Aspridis, Strolias, Vasiliadis & Kyriakou (2014) at 173.

⁶²Ibid.

familiarist regime.”⁶³ Petmesidou describes this regime as based on the stereotypical patriarchal family construct, whereby the family’s income is dependent solely upon the male breadwinner and, crucially, where any women within the family are entitled *only* to derived, rather than individual, social insurance or welfare rights.⁶⁴ That is, women within families under this regime are entitled to benefits *only* if they are able to prove the necessary relationships to a *male* who is himself entitled to benefits.⁶⁵ Following the economic and social crisis, and the corresponding failure of the welfare state, more than half of Greek families receive over half of their income from a woman’s income.⁶⁶ While the fact that 30.9% of employed Greek wives work in temporary positions may remain somewhat problematic, it is still remarkable that a society that has previously been so fundamentally male-dominated in absolutely all aspects of life has seen an almost instantaneous shift in gender dynamics and roles, at least within the context of labour statistics and relations.⁶⁷ As such, the average Greek woman now contributes a majority of her family’s income, with 45.5% of Greek women providing *more* than 80% of their family’s income.⁶⁸ Of course, while the increased role played by women both in their family’s finances and in the workplace is a considerable achievement standing alone, it must be acknowledged that the increased role played by women has been engendered, at least in part, by the failure of the welfare state to provide certain benefits.⁶⁹

The Elephant in the Room: Taxation in Greece

Before introducing the relevance of tax policy to the welfare state in Greece, it is worth forewarning that tax evasion in Greece has often been overstated as being a sole factor behind Greece’s financial problems in the 2010s.⁷⁰ While this section will indeed cover the implications of tax evasion in Greece and revenues lost from unrecovered taxes, it should be noted that research has separately argued that *inequality*, rather than corruption or tax evasion, was a “root cause of the...crisis.”⁷¹ Indeed, even in an article from United States media declaring that Greece has “Too Many Tax Cheats,” reporters found that those with higher incomes are significantly more likely to evade paying their taxes.⁷² According to Costas Bakouris of Transparency International, while the self-employed—

⁶³Livaditi & Petmesidou (2018).

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Aspridis, Strolias, Vasiliadis & Kyriakou (2014) at 173-74.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹See, e.g., Hacker (2008) at 34. Hacker describes the shifting of risk as an ideological shift. That is, whereas formerly the promise of the welfare state or of one’s government may have been “all of us are watching out for you, when things go back,” once risk has been properly shifted away from the welfare state or the government, the promise to the population is simply that “you are on your own.” As such, the issue of increased participation in certain domains particularly by women in Greece cannot be taken alone to an increase in the rights held by women.

⁷⁰See, e.g., Phillips (2015); Westervelt (2010).

⁷¹Kramer (2015).

⁷²Westervelt (2010).

tradespeople, taxi drivers, etc.—are found to regularly evade tax payments, “the biggest tax cheats come from high-paid, white-collar professions,” including doctors, lawyers, architects, and engineers.⁷³ Their approach, Bakouris explains, is simply *not to provide receipts* unless they are asked, allowing some of the country’s highest earners to minimize their reported income, leading to a lowered tax burden to the national government.⁷⁴

Nonetheless, recognizing the country’s failure to effectively recoup tax payments from liable citizens, in the 2000s, researchers Manos Matsaganis and Maria Flevotomou determined that income across the country had been underreported by as much as 10%.⁷⁵ The under-declaration of incomes by just 10% resulted in a 26% shortfall in tax revenues.⁷⁶ For a welfare state that necessarily depends upon taxation for its funding, such a shortfall would be expected to have a significant impact on the welfare state’s ability to deliver its promised benefits. Separately, though, consider the fact that even this research further supports the notion that *inequality*, and not tax evasion or corruption, was the main culprit leading to Greece’s financial woes of the 2000s. In fact, Matsaganis and Flevotomou’s research explains that, while the *average* rate of underreporting was surveyed at approximately 10% across all income levels, it was the richest decile—and, much more specifically, the top 1% and top 0.1%—who were responsible for the largest differences between surveyed income and tax reported income.⁷⁷ As such, given the progressive tax scheme in Greece, while medium-low income earners’ wages were underreported in line with the national average of 10%, it was the richest decile’s underreporting of close to 15% that constitutes the majority of the 26% shortfall in realised tax revenues. To reach the same conclusion from a different direction, this research actually suggests that, even while underreporting their incomes by around 10%, medium and low income earners provide for an outsized proportion of tax revenues, when compared proportionally with higher income earners, who, given the progressive tax scheme in place, contribute proportionally less than their poorer Greek counterparts in virtue of reporting far less of their taxable income. While Matsaganis and Flevotomou report that, using income statements from 2005, the self-employed and those working agricultural or farming jobs are the most likely to under-report their incomes in tax returns, it simply cannot be accepted as true that unrealised tax revenues traceable to the self-employed and farmers are one of the sole causes of the crisis of the 2010s.⁷⁸

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid. See also the subsection entitled “The welfare state during the 2000s” on inequality between the country’s top and worst earners.

⁷⁵Matsaganis & Flevotomou (2010).

⁷⁶Ibid. at iii.

⁷⁷Ibid. at 20.

⁷⁸Matsaganis & Flevotomou (2010) at 19. This is due to the fact that the country’s tax system appears to already have been over-reliant upon medium and low-income earners prior to the crisis. The point to be made is that if a 10% underreporting of relatively low-income earners’ wages causes a 26% reduction in collected tax revenues, the country’s tax system is clearly disproportionately dependent upon taxes from these demographics and *not* from the country’s highest earners. See World Inequality Database.

This idea is bolstered by the drama, predominately in the first half of the 2010s, surrounding the Lagarde List. This List contains the information of thousands of individuals who have moved accounts and monies outside of Greek banks and into Swiss or German banks in an attempt to evade tax liabilities in Greece.⁷⁹ Initially, as the crisis was escalating, the prospect of being able to recoup taxes owed by individuals holding secret offshore accounts was extremely appealing. Close to a decade later, those optimistic prospects have entirely faded, and the statute of limitations for prosecuting these individuals in Greek courts has now expired.⁸⁰ Simply put, without any high-profile tax evasion cases for the last decade and with the courts themselves often taking up to ten years to fully adjudicate cases related to tax evasion,⁸¹ the Greek system of tax *enforcement* must be accepted as being underprepared to provide for services contingent upon taxation—namely, the welfare state.

Finally, and tying together the ideas of taxation and inequality once more, consider reports of the impact of higher taxes and increased enforcement, following the imposition of austerity measures in Greece.⁸² As an example, restaurant owner Charalampos Bonatsos from Athens shared in mid-2018 how increased tax liability resulted in him having to fire half his staff and to further reduce any remaining employees' wages.⁸³ Encapsulating many Greeks' discontent with the SYRIZA government following the July 2015 referendum, Bonatsos explains that, for the Greek government, "[a]ll that matters is reaching the bailout goals. No one cares whether doing business is possible with this policy."⁸⁴ As wealth inequality continues to widen,⁸⁵ low and middle earners have felt the brunt of new tax policies, which, *inter alia*, impose the following new tax rates: 29% on corporate income; 15% on dividends; 24% on VAT; 45% on income tax for the highest bracket; extra 10% solidarity levies, related to improving the country's financial position; and, 27% social security levies for employers and employees. Describing those tax rates alone, one would expect that the tax system being described belongs to an extremely egalitarian, redistributive scheme, perhaps from one of Greece's Northern European neighbours. Indeed, Professor George Pagoulatos of Athens University of Economics and Business concludes just that: "Greece resembles Scandinavian-style taxation, but its welfare state has nothing to compare to theirs: You don't get anything in return."⁸⁶

⁷⁹Greece Gives Up Chasing Lagarde List, Borjans Tax Cheats (2019). To connect this argument to Mastaganis and Flevotomou's research from the previous paragraph, it should be plain to see that those appearing on the Lagarde List are, of course, those from the richest decile of Greek income earners.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Stamouli (2018).

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵See the subsection entitled "The welfare state during the 2000s" on inequality between the country's top and worst earners.

⁸⁶Stamouli (2018).

Greece's Welfare State as Consolidation State

The intent in this section is to connect the factual history of both Greece's politics and its experiences throughout the economic and social crisis to conclude that, regardless of the incumbent political party, their tenacity, or their support, Greece's national government was and still is required by the Troika to maintain a "consolidation state" type of welfare state. In describing the transitions made between types of welfare states over time, Streeck introduces three eras, or kinds, of welfare states: the classical tax state, the debt state, and the consolidation state.⁸⁷ While picking any specific point in time as the moment where fiscal policy or the type of welfare state changed is sure to be artificial, it is nonetheless undeniable that some of the most fundamental changes to Greece's governance, fiscal policy, and principles underlying the welfare state occurred as Greece transitioned to become part of the Eurozone and, relatedly, to adopt the euro as its national currency.⁸⁸

In devising the euro, Streeck and Mylonas both describe the nascent European Union as focused on organizing itself around ordoliberal principles⁸⁹ with the central goal being the protection of market freedom.⁹⁰ Without even invoking the more abstract issue of the interplay between Greek citizens' sovereignty and the imposition of austerity measures by the Troika,⁹¹ it is possible to see how the EU's centralizing principles—of market freedom and of growth in these markets *without* direct local governmental intervention—could conflict with a Member State's own interest in the governance of its local national economy.⁹² As the euro established itself, the EU and its institutions—the Troika, essentially—gained increased political power, further legitimizing the centralizing principles of liberal fiscal policy.⁹³ Streeck further describes actual implemented fiscal policies that demonstrate the liberal ideology that Member States' governments must adhere to;

⁸⁷See generally Streeck (2015). While the actual process of transitioning from tax state, to debt state, to consolidation state is interesting and worth its own analysis, the focus here is on the way in which external political forces engendered the transition from debt state to consolidation state, specifically for Greece.

⁸⁸Mylonas (2019) at 76.

⁸⁹Matsaganis & Flevotomou (2010). Ordoliberalism here refers specifically to the German ideology under which it is thought that it is the government's role to regulate markets such that actual realised market outcomes closely match theoretical outcomes in a perfectly competitive market. Of course, ordoliberalism requires that the government *provide* a perfectly competitive market, by prohibiting cartels and monopolies, but otherwise an ordoliberal government will mirror a classically liberal government in rejecting government involvement in activist monetary or fiscal policies. See Dullien & Guérot (2012). Note, finally, how both ordoliberalism and classical liberalism differ from *neoliberalism*, which, as is seen even in the case of Greece, *can* involve activist monetary or fiscal policies, only in the name of austerity and reduced spending. See, e.g., Streeck (2015) describing the way in which reforms related to employment, and monetary and fiscal policy more generally, *have* been introduced under neoliberal governments, with these reforms limited to reducing spending or increasing austerity.

⁹⁰Streeck (2016) at 161.

⁹¹See, e.g., Crespy & Ladi (2019).

⁹²Mylonas (2019) at 76.

⁹³Streeck (2016) at 113.

maintaining a state deficit of less than 3% and a public debt of less than 60% of the Member State's GDP are just two examples.⁹⁴

Therefore, within the context of the EU, the Troika, and the organizing liberal fiscal policy underlying those institutions, the fiscal policy preferred by the Greek government or by its population can find—and has found⁹⁵—itself subverted by EU interests. From the perspective of the EU's institutions, the proper role of any fiscal policy is, at its core, to protect the *single market*—that is, the EU's single market—from deleterious impacts originating out of individual Member States.⁹⁶ Indeed, grouping together and subsequently integrating each Member State's idiosyncratic form of capitalism was part of the very intention behind the creation of the EU.⁹⁷ As such, Mylonas' analysis results in the convincing conclusion that the euro operates as an instrument of policy rather than solely as a currency, providing the EU and its institutions with both the political power and the legitimacy to implement “European” fiscal policy, even within the properly elected national governments of its Member States.⁹⁸

These theoretical connections can be further substantiated by reintroducing the factual history leading up to the national referendum of July 2015. Albeit under the far more centrist PASOK party, Greece's tortured history in conducting referenda related to European fiscal policy begins with Prime Minister Papandreou's bailout referendum, called in 2011.⁹⁹ Undeniable at the time was the connection between EU-imposed bailout conditions and PASOK's introduction of severe and seemingly continuous cuts to the welfare state.¹⁰⁰ As such, to summarise the context of the referendum succinctly, 2011's referendum proposed to Greek citizens a choice between the prioritisation of their rights to the benefits of the welfare state and their rights attributable to European identity, citizenship, participation, and financial protection. What the 2011 referendum demonstrates is the accuracy of Mylonas' and Streeck's arguments that the EU's centralizing principle demands that it protects what it considers the *single market*. To reiterate from earlier, Papandreou's announced referendum resulted in pressure exerted by EU elites.¹⁰¹ By premising the delivery of bailout funds upon a “swift yes vote in the referendum,” prominent members of the EU all too clearly demonstrated the way in which the EU seeks to integrate Member States' varying conceptions of capitalism to better fit its ordoliberal fiscal ideology.¹⁰²

When SYRIZA came to power in 2015, the party emerged with the most advanced political opposition yet seen to the EU's imposition of its ordoliberal

⁹⁴Ibid. at 130.

⁹⁵See generally Varoufakis (2017) involving former Finance Minister of Greece's combative meetings with members of these EU institutions wherein he describes the ways in which Greek national and political ideology vastly differed from that of the EU, with Greek interests ultimately falling to EU interests.

⁹⁶Mylonas (2019) at 76.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Vogel (2011).

¹⁰⁰Kyriakidou (2011).

¹⁰¹Treanor et al. (2011).

¹⁰²Ibid.

organizing principles.¹⁰³ More than vaguely promising to reject austerity, SYRIZA's promises leading up to their successful election demonstrated an awareness of Greek citizens' reliance upon the welfare state. Specifically, part of SYRIZA's "Thessaloniki Programme" of reforms was a promise to "[r]ebuild[] the welfare state, restoring the rule of law and creating a meritocratic state."¹⁰⁴ Mentioned as part of the same plan are promises to "[g]radually restor[e] salaries and pensions so as to increase consumption and demand."¹⁰⁵ Here, SYRIZA's promise is intended not solely to increase salaries and pensions, but is further intended to impact the employment market so as to affect demand for certain positions. As such, SYRIZA's approach to expanding the welfare state, at least as presented in the Thessaloniki Programme, appears consistent with Julian Le Grand's choice and competition approach to the disbursement of public services.¹⁰⁶ Namely, Le Grand argues that "models that rely significantly upon user choice coupled with provider competition generally offer a better structure of incentives to providers...and, as a result, are more likely to deliver high-quality services efficiently, equitably, and in a responsive fashion."¹⁰⁷ Applied to SYRIZA's promises, the Thessaloniki Programme is cognizant of the relationship between improved salaries and pensions, as supported by the welfare state, and subsequent increased demand for those positions offering improved salaries and pensions. Therefore, under Le Grand's theory, increasing salaries and pensions can engender a cycle wherein improved wages and benefits increase interest in those positions, which in turn increases competition for those positions and impacts *other* employers' decisions on whether to match or better the improved conditions offered elsewhere. All this is to say that, while outwardly depicting themselves as a 'far-left' political party, SYRIZA's strongest proposals related to the refusal of austerity can nonetheless be squared with capitalist-oriented or even market-liberalist ideologies.

The relatively modest and apolitical conclusion to be drawn from this section of analysis is simply that Greek political will or ideology could not overcome that of the EU or the Troika. Whereas at least part of the blame for failing to bring the 2011 referendum could fairly be squared at PASOK, a party that was severely internally divided as to its stance toward the EU by the time of the proposed referendum,¹⁰⁸ it is difficult to treat SYRIZA as similarly internally divided in 2015. At least ostensibly, SYRIZA appeared to understand what the austerity measures had meant for Greeks since their introduction in 2010: namely, the SYRIZA slogan, "No to subjugation, No to the new occupation," aptly characterises how Greeks thought of the imposition of austerity by the EU.¹⁰⁹

Leading up to the 2015 referendum, European politicians and elites acted substantially identically to the lead up to the 2011 referendum. Again indicating an ardent commitment to the idea of a single European market, former President of

¹⁰³Kouvelakis (2016).

¹⁰⁴SYRIZA (2014).

¹⁰⁵SYRIZA (2014).

¹⁰⁶Le Grand (2007) at 39-62.

¹⁰⁷Le Grand (2007) at 41.

¹⁰⁸Erlanger & Donadio (2011).

¹⁰⁹Casanas Adam, Kagiarios & Tierney (2018) at 261-270.

the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker stressed that a Greek referendum would have consequences far beyond the interests of Greek constituents.¹¹⁰ For Juncker, and other prominent critics within the EU, regardless of what Greeks sought to gain from their political mobilisation, their motivations had no bearing on the fact that such a local referendum was seen as impermissibly “self-interested” when compared with the ordoliberal and single-market interests of the EU itself.¹¹¹ Indeed, failing to so much as credit Greeks’ demands for better protections within their welfare state, Juncker instead reduced the entire referendum down to a manoeuvre motivated by “populism and tactical gamesmanship.”¹¹² At the time Juncker was exerting pressure on Greek voters to accept austerity and to condemn their welfare state, Greece was observing an unprecedented increase in suicides, as mental health plummeted between 2010 and 2015.¹¹³ While remaining as apolitical as possible, this is only to show how deep and unfaltering other leaders’ commitments to the EU’s centralizing principles are, to the extent that theories of and approaches to fiscal policy dominate over the interests of a nation’s voters in preserving and expanding their welfare state.

Going even further than Juncker, other European leaders responded to the 2015 referendum by imposing ultimata upon the country’s government and people: essentially, either accept austerity or leave the EU. For example, in France, former President François Hollande inserted himself into Greek domestic affairs by characterizing the referendum as being “about whether the Greeks want to stay in the Eurozone or take the risk of leaving.”¹¹⁴ Italian Prime Minister Renzi stated that the referendum was not some political battle between the European Commission and SYRIZA’s Tsipras but was rather a blunt question of “the euro versus the drachma.”¹¹⁵ Again, he concludes his characterisation with a veiled threat to the Greek constituents: “This is the choice,” with the connotation that a rejection of the euro in favour of the former Greek currency would only further damage Greek financial and economic health.¹¹⁶

Conclusion

Ultimately, what followed the 2015 referendum was utter anti-climax. From the perspective of SYRIZA supporters eager to reclaim control and agency over their welfare state, a turnout of 62.5%, with the ‘No’ vote claiming 61.31% of all votes, should have represented an extremely successful campaign.¹¹⁷ Instead,

¹¹⁰European Commission Press Release Database (2015).

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Kitsantonis (2019).

¹¹⁴Elliot et al (2015).

¹¹⁵Ibid. The “drachma” (δραχμή in Greek) is the form of currency used prior to the adoption of the euro. This comment by Prime Minister Renzi is made even more ironic by Italy’s own tortured experiences in negotiating relief with the EU, particularly toward the end of the 2010s. See, e.g., Scalia (2019).

¹¹⁶Elliot et al (2015).

¹¹⁷Arnett, Sedghi, Galastidas & Clarke (2015).

subject to the aforementioned pressures and the reality that the EU and its institutions would not succumb to one country's rejection of ordoliberalism, Tsipras and SYRIZA capitulated to the Troika, with new austerity measures approved in the Greek parliament as soon as July 16, 2015.¹¹⁸ Then, just a month later, and still with a resounding victory in the referendum only a handful of weeks prior, August 2015 saw additional bailout measures approved by the Troika in exchange for, specifically, the following promises to gut the welfare state:¹¹⁹

1. Increases to VAT, impacting all Greeks but affecting those with lower incomes more significantly;
2. Cuts to the entire national pension system, to “improve long-term sustainability”;
3. Stripping unions and labour movements of their effectiveness by ‘modernizing’ collective bargaining and industrial action, to align the Greek approach to labour with what is required by “European best practices”;
4. Privatizing formerly public or government enterprises, resulting in the reduction of government pensions and benefits;
5. Selling off as many “valuable Greek assets” as possible so as to “monetize the assets through privatisation and other means”;
6. Seemingly in response to the rise of an impermissibly leftist party like SYRIZA, the “de-politicizing [of] the Greek administration”;
7. With regards to any rights to welfare or other benefits that were expanded prior to February 2015, “amending legislations” that conflict with EU demands.

What the outcomes of both the 2011 and the 2015 referenda demonstrate is the way in which the EU's centralizing principles dominate over the local interests of its Member States. While the lesson after the failure of 2011 may, legitimately, have been that any national government bringing a challenge to the EU's fundamental ideological commitments must do so as an organised, undivided party, the lesson after the failure of 2015 may be less optimistic or instructive for future movements. Rather, what the failure of 2015 appears to suggest is that, at least as far as fiscal policy balanced against a nation's interest in its own welfare state is concerned, the EU is untroubled by demanding that a Member State abandon its interest in its own welfare state if to abandon such an interest would work toward bringing the Member State in conformity with the EU's preferred fiscal ideology.

¹¹⁸Council on Foreign Relations (2018).

¹¹⁹Euro Summit Statement from Brussels (2015).

References

- Arnett, G., Sedghi, A. Galatsidas, A. & S. Clarke (2015). ‘Greek referendum: full results’ in *The Guardian* of 6 July. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2015/jul/05/live-results-greek-referendum>
- Aspridis, G., Sdrolias, L., Vasiliadis, L. & D. Kyriakou (2014). ‘Greece and Social Impacts under Economic Crisis: An Example to Avoid?’ in *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 3(3):171-176.
- Basta, M., Vgontzas, A, Kastanaki, A., Michalodimitrakis, M., Kanaki, K., Koutra, K., Anastasaki, M. & P. Simos (2018). ‘Suicide rates in Crete, Greece during the economic crisis: the effect of age, gender, unemployment and mental health service provision’ in *BMC Psychiatry* 18:356-363. DOI: 10.1186/s12888-018-1931-4
- Bouloutza, P. (2018). ‘Greece’s population shrinking, aging’ in *Ekathimerini.com* (30 September). <https://www.ekathimerini.com/233090/article/ekathimerini/news/greece-population-shrinking-aging>
- Carpenter, M. (2003). ‘On the Edge: The Fate of Progressive Modernization in Greek Health Policy’ in *Int’l Pol. Sci. Rev.* 24(2):257-272.
- Casanas Adam, E., Kagiarios, D. & S. Tierney (2018). ‘Democracy in Question? Direct Democracy in the European Union’ in *European Constitutional Law Review* 14(2):261-282.
- Chrysosgelos, A.S. (2015). ‘Foreign policy change in a polarized two-party system: Greece and Turkey’s EU candidacy’ in *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 15(1):19-36. DOI: 10.1080/14683857.2014.1002293
- Council on Foreign Relations (2018). ‘Greece’s Debt 1974-2018’ at <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/greeces-debt-crisis-timeline>
- Crespy, A. & S. Ladi (2019). ‘In the name of ‘the people’? Popular Sovereignty and the 2015 Greek referendum’ in *Journal of European Integration* 41:871-885.
- Dixon, T., Hawkins, S., Juan-Torres, M. & A. Kimaram (2019). ‘Attitudes Towards National Identity, Immigration, and Refugees in Greece’, [moreincommon.com 0535+More+In+Common+Greece+Report_FINAL-4_web_lr.pdf](https://www.moreincommon.com/0535+More+In+Common+Greece+Report_FINAL-4_web_lr.pdf)
- Dullien, S. & U. Guérot (2012). ‘The long shadow of ordoliberalism: Germany’s approach to the euro crisis’ in Eur. Council on Foreign Relations ECFR/49. https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_the_long_shadow_of_ordoliberalism
- Elliot, L., et al. (2015). *Europe’s big guns warn Greek voters that a no vote means euro exit*, *The Guardian* (Jun. 30, 2015) www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jun/29/greek-crisis-referendum-eurozone-vote-germany-france-italy
- Erlanger, S. & R. Donadio (2011). ‘Greek Premier Pledges Vote in December on Debt Deal’ in *N.Y. Times* of 2 November. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/03/world/europe/greek-cabinet-backs-call-for-referendum-on-debt-crisis.html>
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2014). ‘Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism’ in F. G. Castles, I. K. Naumann & Ch. Pierson (eds.) *The Welfare State Reader* 3rd ed. pp. 136-150. Cambridge, UK: Polity press.
- European Commission Press Release Database (2015). Transcript of President Jean-Claude Juncker's press conference on Greece, 29 June 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_15_5274
- Euro Summit Statement from Brussels (2015), 12 July 2015 (SN 4070/15), <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20353/20150712-eurosummit-statement-greece.pdf>
- European Commission (2019). ‘Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion’ at <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=548&furtherCalls=yes>

- Greece Gives Up Chasing Lagarde List, Borjans Tax Cheats (2019) in *National Herald* of 9 June. https://www.thenationalherald.com/archive_politics/arthro/greece_gives_up_chasing_lagarde_list_borjans_tax_cheats-53688/
- Hacker, J.S. (2008). *The Great Risk Shift: The New Economic Insecurity and the Decline of the American Dream*, 2nd ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hellenic Republic Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, *Information on the KEA*, (Ελληνική Δημοκρατία Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Υποθέσεων, Πληροφορίες για το KEA) [In Greek]. <https://keaprogram.gr/pubnr/Home/Contact>
- Kaloudis, G. (2000). 'Transitional Democratic Politics in Greece' in *International Journal on World Peace* 17(1); 35-59.
- Kalyvas, A. (2000). 'Schmitt and the Categories of the Political: Carl Schmitt and the Three Moments of Democracy' in *Cardozo L. Rev.* 21:1525-1534.
- Kamekis, A. & S.I. Tzagkarakis (2017). 'Social consequences of welfare state deregulation in Greece' at *Hellenic Observatory-LSE 7th PhD Symposium, 4-5 June 2015, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)* <http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/hellenicObservatory/Events/HO%20PhD%20Symposium/7th-Symposium/Documents/Papers/Tzagarakis%20Stelios%20-%20Kamekis%20Apostolos.pdf>
- Kitsantonis, N. (2019). 'Greece, 10 Years Into Economic Crisis, Counts the Cost to Mental Health' in *N.Y. Times* of 3 February. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/03/world/europe/greece-economy-mental-health.html>
- Kouvelakis, S. (2016). 'Syriza's Rise and Fall' in *New Left Rev.* 97:45-70.
- Kraatz, S. & D. Dessimirova (2012). Unemployment and Poverty: Greece and Other (Post-)Programme Countries 1, 2 in *European Parliament, Employment and Social Affairs Briefing* of 22 May. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/602051/IPOL_BRI\(2017\)602051_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/602051/IPOL_BRI(2017)602051_EN.pdf)
- Kramer, S. (2015). 'Inequality as cause of the Greek Crisis' in Int'l Association For Political Science Students. <https://www.iapss.org/2015/10/13/inequality-as-cause-of-the-greek-crisis>
- Kyriakidou, D. (2011). 'Newsmaker: Greece's Papandreou, Socialist scion, felled by debt' in *Reuters* of 6 November). <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-papandreou/newsmaker-greeces-papandreou-socialist-scion-felled-by-debt-idUSTRE7A060620111106>
- Le Grand, J.(2007). *The Other Invisible Hand: Delivering Public Services through Choice and Competition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Livaditi, I. & M. Petmesidou (2018). 'Rethinking Greece: Maria Petmesidou on the past and the future of the Greek welfare state' in *Greek News Agenda*. <https://greeknewsagenda.gr/index.php/interviews/rethinking-greece/6616-petmesidou>
- Maltezou, R. (2012). 'Greek pensioner kills himself outside parliament' in *Reuters* of 4 April. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-suicide/greek-pensioner-kills-himself-outside-parliament-idUSBRE8330OB20120404>
- Matsaganis, M. (2011). 'The welfare state and the crisis: the case in Greece' in *Journal of European Social Policy* 21(5):501-512.
- Matsaganis, M. & M. Flevotomou (2010). 'Distributional Implications of Tax Evasion in Greece', LSE GreeSE Paper No 31 Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe January 2010. http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/26074/1/GreeSE_No_31.pdf
- Mexi, M.M. (2018). 'Greece' in Veronica Federico & Christian Lahusen (eds.) *Solidarity as a Public Virtue? Law and Public Policies in the European Union*, pp. 91-108. Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Mylonas, Y. (2019). *The "Greek Crisis" in Europe: Race, Class and Politics*. Leiden: Brill,

- OECD (2013). *Pensions at a Glance 2013: Country Profiles — Greece*, <https://www.oecd.org/els/public-pensions/PAG2013-profile-Greece.pdf>
- OECD (2017). *Pensions at a Glance 2017: Country Profiles — Greece*, <https://www.oecd.org/els/public-pensions/PAG2017-country-profile-Greece.pdf>
- OECD (2019). *Youth unemployment rate*, <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/youth-unemployment-rate.htm>
- Phillips, M. (2015). ‘Yes, Greece has a serious tax evasion problem’ in *Quartz* (1 July). <https://qz.com/441393/yes-greece-has-a-serious-tax-evasion-problem/>
- Rodgers, D. (2018). ‘The Uses and Abuses of “Neoliberalism”’, in *Dissent Magazine* (winter). <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/uses-and-abuses-neoliberalism-debate>
- Scalia, E.L. (2019). *Sovereign Debt, “Austerity,” and Socio-Economic Rights: Italy’s 2019 Budget between EU Fiscal Rules and International Human Rights Law*, 28 *Italian Y.B. of Int’l L. Online* 135.
- Stamouli, N. (2018). ‘Taxation Strangles Greece’s Growth Prospects’ in *Wall Street Journal* of 26 July. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/taxation-strangles-greeces-growth-prospects-1532597400>
- Streeck, W. (2015). ‘The Rise of the European Consolidation State’ (MPIfG Discussion Paper, No. 15/1. Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung, Köln. <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/107091>
- Streeck, W. (2016). *How Will Capitalism End? Essays on a Failing System*, London: Verso.
- SYRIZA (2014). ‘The Thessaloniki Programme’, available at <http://www.syriza.gr/article/id/59907/SYRIZA---THE-THESSALONIKI-PROGRAMME.html>
- Tassopoulos, I.A. (1999). ‘New Trends in Greek Contemporary Constitutional Theory: A Comment on the Interplay Between Reason and Will’ in *Duke J. Comp. & Int’l L.* 10: 223-248.
- Treanor, J. et al (2011). ‘Greece given €8bn referendum warning by Merkel and Sarkozy’ in *The Guardian* of 2 November. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2011/nov/02/greece>
- Van Kersbergen, K. & B. Vis (2013). *Comparative Welfare State Politics: Development, Opportunities, and Reform*, chapter 3: *The Logics of the Welfare State: Why Did We Need a Welfare State in the First Place and How Did We Get It?* (pp. 31-52). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Varoufakis, Y. (2017). *Adults in the Room: My Battle with the European and American Deep Establishment*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Varoufakis, Y. (interviewed by G. Souvlis) (2020). ‘Syriza Was a Bigger Blow to the Left Than Thatcher’ in *Jacobin* (9 March). <https://www.yanisvaroufakis.eu/2020/03/11/yanis-varoufakis-syriza-was-a-bigger-blow-to-the-left-than-thatcher-jacobin>
- Vasilopoulou, S. & D. Halikiopoulou (2015). ‘Greek Politics: Economic Crisis or Crisis of Democracy?’ in *World Affairs* 178(3):13-18.
- Vogel, T. (2011). ‘Papandreou calls off referendum’ in *Politico* of 11 March., <https://www.politico.eu/article/papandreou-calls-off-referendum/>
- Westervelt, E. (2010). ‘Greece’s Bottom Line: Too Many Tax Cheats’ in *NPR* of 25 March. <https://qz.com/441393/yes-greece-has-a-serious-tax-evasion-problem/>
- World Inequality Database, *Income inequality, Greece, 1980-2016*, World Ineq. Database. <https://wid.world/country/greece/>

Žižek, S. (2015). 'When the Blind are Leading the Blind Democracy is the Victim' in Žižek, S. & H. Srećko (eds.) *What Does Europe Want? The Union and Its Discontents*, pp. 21- 25. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.