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January 2013

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# **The Rise of the Golden Dawn: The New Face of the Far Right in Greece**

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## **Abstract**

The article examines the rise of the one of the most extremist political parties in Europe, the Golden Dawn. It sketches the historical trajectory of the Greek far right, examines the ideological, organisational and voter profile of the Golden Dawn, and offers possible explanations for its breakthrough in the 2012 elections. The article shows how the economic crisis has brought about a massive realignment of the Greek electorate away from mainstream parties, giving rise to anti-system and anti-immigrant sentiments. The violent tactics of the Golden Dawn allowed the party to establish an anti-system and anti-immigrant profile, and capitalize on these sentiments. The future of the party will depend on its capacity to organisationally absorb future tensions between party pragmatists and idealists.

**Key words:** Greece, Golden Dawn, National Socialism, far right, Michaloliakos, economic crisis, immigration, anti-system

## **Introduction**

For a long time late democratized Southern European countries were thought to resist the rise of far right parties observed elsewhere. The legacy of authoritarianism and the absence of postindustrial welfare states presumably limited the electoral demand for the far right (Kitschelt 1995, pp. 52-54; Ignazi 2003, p. 196; Ellinas 2010, p. 38). Postauthoritarian far right groupings were absorbed by the mainstream Right or relegated to the fringes of the political system with very limited voter support. Not surprisingly, the voluminous literature on the far right largely ignored its evolution in Southern Europe focusing instead on the electoral ascendancy of far right parties in Western Europe (e.g. Betz 1994; Kitschelt 1995; Hainsworth 2000; Mudde 2000; Carter 2005; Norris 2005). Apart from a few sporadic references (e.g. Mudde 2007) the trajectory of Southern European far right parties remained unexplored. Even the electoral breakthrough of the Greek far right party LAOS (Λαϊκός Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός) in the past decade did not raise enough scholarly eyebrows.

Given the dearth of scholarly analysis on the Greek or the Southern European far right, the electoral breakthrough of the Golden Dawn (Χρυσή Αυγή, GD) in the 2012 elections took many by surprise. A party that merely received 0.29 per cent and 19.624 votes in the 2009 elections got 6.97 per cent and 441.018 votes in the May 2012 elections. Expectations that voters would desert the GD after venting their frustration with the mainstream parties were belied. Even after the televised use of violence against two female politicians by one of its legislators, the party secured 6.92 per cent, 425.990 votes and 18 seats in the June 2012 elections. Despite the

association of the GD with violence, subsequent polls have shown the party to reach 11-12 per cent.

This article seeks to trace the evolution of the GD since its founding, and more importantly, to explain why such an extremist political formation has gained so much electoral traction in Greece. Given the abrupt and recent nature of the phenomenon any attempt to explain the rise of the GD can only be cursory. An account of GD's breakthrough must take into consideration the extraordinary conditions Greece has been facing in the past few years. The country received an international bailout in 2010 to repay its creditors, and another one in 2012, in exchange for undertaking a major austerity drive. The austerity measures, which included major spending cuts and tax hikes as well as major reforms and privatisations, pushed the country into one of the deepest postwar recessions. Now in its sixth year, the recession has led to a cumulative shrinkage of the Greek economy of 18.6 per cent making it the most protracted and most severe recession for an established democracy (Eurostat 2012). Even after the 1973 oil crisis established democracies did not experience such a long and deep drop in national production (see dataset by Barro and Ursua 2008).

The length and magnitude of the Greek recession has taken a big toll on Greek society and has ultimately led to the collapse of the traditional party system. The two major parties, which had averaged 83.8 per cent of the vote in the ten elections between 1981 and 2009, dropped to 32 per cent in the May election and to 41.9 per cent in June (Graph 1). The 2012 elections can hence be viewed as critical elections, "characterized by abrupt, significant, and durable realignments in the electorate with major consequences for the long-term party order" (Norris 2005, p. 224). Comparable to the 1994 Italian election that led to the collapse of the Italian Christian Democrats or to the 1928-1932 American elections that led to Roosevelt's New Deal coalition, the Greek 2012 brought about a massive realignment of the electorate away from mainstream parties – what V.O. Key would have called "a sharp alteration in the pre-existing cleavage within the electorate" (Key 1959, p. 17).

[insert Graph 1 somewhere here]

The first section sketches the ideological and electoral contours of the Greek far right parties and traces its evolution since 1974. The second section focuses on the ideology, organisation and voter profile of the GD. The third section considers possible factors that facilitated the electoral ascendance of the party and allowed it to overtake LAOS as the main representative of the Greek far right. The article concludes with a discussion of the post-election strategy of the GD and a consideration of its future prospects.

### **The Greek far right since 1974**

To better understand the development of the GD it is important to place it within the universe of the various far right groupings that contested Greek national elections

since the reestablishment of democracy in 1974. The first parties that appeared on the Right of the conservative New Democracy (Νέα Δημοκρατία, ND) brought together ex-army officers, ex-junta officials, diehard anti-communists and loyal royalists. Largely led by politicians belonging to the pre-1967 political establishment, these parties were largely a reaction to the policies adopted by the conservative government of Constantine Karamanlis toward junta officials, the king and the communists (e.g. Georgiadou 2013). These postauthoritarian far right parties were morally conservative and sought to protect the Hellenic-Christian tradition but stayed short of the nationalist overtones that characterize the modern Far Right in Greece and in Europe (e.g. Eatwell 2000; Hainsworth 2000; Mudde 2007; Ellinas 2010). The postauthoritarian far right tried to rally “nationally-minded” citizens but mostly as a reaction to leftist internationalism than as a positive identification with the Greek nation.

The National Democratic Union (Εθνική Δημοκρατική Ένωση) contested the 1974 election campaigning against the conservative Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis for his handling of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus; the legalisation of the communist party; and the treatment of ex-junta officials (Clogg 1987, pp. 59-72; Koliopoulos and Veremis 2007, pp. 134-135; Tsiras 2012, p. 93). Headed by the former minister (1964-1965) Petros Garoufalias the party received 1.1 per cent and failed to gain representation in the national parliament. To the contrary, the ND won the election and has since established itself as the major center-Right party in Greece averaging forty per cent in the fifteen national elections held since 1974. The conservative government faced a bigger challenge in the 1977 election from the National Camp (Εθνική Παράταξη), which managed to capitalize on dissatisfaction with New Democracy’s modernisation policies as well as with the treatment of the king and jailed junta officers. The party received 6.8% per cent of the vote and five parliamentary seats but by the 1981 election, most of its members got co-opted by the ND. The rest took refuge in the Party of the Progressives (Κόμμα Προοδευτικών) led by Spyros Markezinis, which received 1.7 per cent in the 1981 national election and 2 per cent in the European election and gained one seat in the European Parliament. It was replaced by the National Political Union (Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωση, EPEN) a fiercely anti-Communist party nominally led by the imprisoned former colonel and dictator George Papadopoulos. In the 1984 European election the party secured a seat in the European Parliament and it participated in a number of elections in the 1980s and 1990s receiving between 0.1 and 0.6 per cent and no seats. The youth group of the EPEN became a breeding ground for future far right leaders including the leader of the GD Nikos Michaloliakos and the leader of the Hellenic Front Makis Vorides. In the 1989 European elections the EPEN competed for the far right vote with the United Nationalist Movement (Ενιαίο Εθνικιστικό Κίνημα, ENEK), which received 0.3 per cent of the vote before disbanding itself. Members of the EPEN later joined the National Party (Εθνικό Κόμμα, NP), which was founded in 1989 to revitalize the

far right. The NP received 0.1 per cent in the 1990 election (Dimitras 1992; Kolovos 2005; Ellinas 2010).

The NP failed to leave a distinctive mark in Greek politics but set the beginning of the ideological renewal of the Greek far right. By the early 1990s far rightists like Vorides realized the need to discard rusty appeals about the fate of jailed junta leaders and to fully embrace nationalism. The attempted renewal of the Greek far right was evident in the program of the NP, which identified the nation as the supreme political unit and advocated an expansionist foreign policy to “liberate” Greek populations abroad. Greek far rightists were also increasingly attentive to developments in the rest of Western Europe, where the far right started making important inroads in countries like France and Austria by capitalizing on anti-immigrant sentiment. Following the footsteps of the French National Front, with which the EPEN was affiliated, the NP called for the repatriation of foreign workers (Ellinas 2010, p. 133; see also Kolovos 2005).

In 1994 far right attempts to change the political landscape led to the establishment of the Hellenic Front (Ελληνικό Μέτωπο, HF) by Vorides and former members of the NP. The nationalist fervor that swept Greece over the Macedonia issue left no political space for the HF, as a splinter party of the New Democracy, Political Spring (Πολιτική Άνοιξη), led by current ND Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, sought to outbid the mainstream Right and the socialist PASOK by adopting a tough stance towards Greece’s northern neighbor’s claim to the name “Macedonia.” Greece has been in a dispute over the name with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia since the early 1990s and Greek nationalists have traditionally adopted maximalist positions on the issue. Identifying itself as “nationalist” and seeking to fight illegal immigration, the HF participated in the 2000 election with the Front Line (Πρώτη Γραμμή, FL), a party led by the Holocaust-denier Constantine Plevris. They competed for the far right vote with Sotiris Sofianopoulos and his Party of Hellenism (Κόμμα Ελληνισμού, PH), which espoused “Hellenism” as an alternative to capitalism, socialism and communism; sought to end national decadence; and to induce endogenous economic development. Each received 0.2 per cent and in 2004 Sofianopoulos joined the LAOS ticket. The HF decided to disband and most of its top leadership including Vorides (later LAOS MP 2007-2012, LAOS minister 2011-2012 and ND MP since 2012) joined the LAOS in 2005, after receiving a dismal 0.1 per cent in the 2004 election.

The LAOS was founded in 2000 after the clash of its leader and popular ND legislator, George Karatzaferis, with the ND leadership. Explicitly nationalist and xenophobic, the party called for the “protection of the Nation, the Genus, the Faith, the History and the cultural identity” and for the expulsion of illegal immigrants (Ellinas 2010: 137). Like most of its counterparts in Western Europe, the LAOS associated immigration with rising unemployment, increased crime and national security threats. Especially during its early years, the party put forth a clearly anti-Semitic and anti-American

agenda, warning that Greeks “live in a country run by Jews” and accusing the two main parties of “slave-like” behaviour to the United States. Unlike its Greek predecessors the party made an effort to appeal to leftist voters with populist outbursts against foreign-owned companies and domestic commercial banks. Evident of the much more radical profile the LAOS had established in its early years, the party included in its lists for the 2002 local election four representatives of the GD (Psarras 2010, p. 124). The party surprised political pundits with its performance, receiving 13.6 per cent in the most populous prefecture of Athens-Piraeus. The LAOS got 2.2 per cent in the March 2004 national election and 4.1 per cent in the June European election, winning a seat in the European Parliament. In the 2007 election the party received 3.8 per cent and ten seats and in the 2009 election it got 5.6 per cent and 15 seats. The collapse of the party system brought about by the Greek economic crisis did not benefit the LAOS, which had lost its outsider status by supporting the Memorandum of Understanding and, later, by participating in the coalition that supported the Loukas Papadimos government. The electoral pressures LAOS faced were evident in the local 2010 election, as the party failed to capitalize on the growing popular discontent with the Memorandum (Verney 2012: 209). In May 2012 the party fell to 2.9 per cent and in June its vote share dropped to 1.6 per cent losing all its parliamentary seats and a number of its leading members to ND.

### **The Golden Dawn**

The Golden Dawn was founded on 14 February 1983 by its current leader Nikos Michaloliakos under the name “People’s Association – Golden Dawn.” The statutes of the party state that it is a popular movement “with faith in the ideology of nationalism” (Golden Dawn 2012a: 2). Its symbol is a Greek meander reminiscent of the Nazi swastika. The party was inactive for a decade and started its political activity in 1993 in the midst of the nationalist fervor that swept the country over Macedonia (Danforth 1997; Ellinas 2010). “We started in a Leninist way: we decided to issue a newspaper, the Golden Dawn, and to build a party around it. Back in the 1980s, we flirted with all sorts of ideas of the interwar years including National Socialism and fascism. But by the 1990s, we settled the ideological issues and positioned ourselves in favour of popular nationalism” (Michaloliakos 2012a). Indeed, after the 1990s there is an effort by the GD to avoid explicit reference to National Socialism and to present itself as a Greek nationalist party (Psarras 2012, pp. 250-251).

For most of the time and up until recent years, the party stayed on the margins of parliamentary politics. It contested the 1994 European election and the 1996 national election receiving 0.11 and 0.07 per cent, respectively. In the 1999 European elections the party joined forces with Plevris and his First Line receiving 0.75 per cent. Throughout the 1990s the party gained notoriety for incidents of violence and Nazi propaganda. Party members were involved in numerous violent attacks against immigrants and leftists. In one of these attacks, in 1998, a group of GD members including the number-two of the party and member of its political council, Antonios

Androutsopoulos, nearly killed a student and seriously wounded two others. In 2006 Androutsopoulos was convicted and sentenced to 21 years in prison (Psarras 2012, pp. 84-139). After briefly suspending its political operations and founding the “Patriotic Alliance,” the GD decided in its sixth congress, in 2007, to independently contest the next local, national and European elections. The party failed in the 2009 European and national elections receiving 0.46 and 0.29 per cent, respectively. “In 2010 we said we should take over Athens in order to spread the message to the rest of Greece, as well. We strategically participated in this election for this reason. We knew we would succeed” (Michaloliakos 2012a). Indeed, Michaloliakos surprised most observers receiving 5.29 per cent in Athens and a seat in the city council. Michaloliakos was particularly popular in the sixth district of Athens receiving 8.38% of the vote. The high concentration of immigrants in the Agios Panteleimon area and the seeming abandonment of the area by the state highlighted the electoral potential of the immigration issue and pointed to the possibility of using anti-immigrant violence and vigilante-type activities as means to mobilize support. As in the case of far right parties elsewhere in Europe (Kitschelt 1995, pp. 99-102) this breakthrough in a secondary election became the springboard for the twenty-fold electoral growth of the GD in the 2012 elections.

[Table 1 somewhere here]

### *Ideology*

To understand the ideology of the GD it is important to take into account official party documents as well as the public rhetoric, writings and activity of party leaders. Approaches that solely focus on the former are likely to miss much of what has granted the GD the stigma of a neo-Nazi political formation. The statutes of the party point out from the beginning that the GD stands against the Greek bailout agreement as well as “against the demographic alteration, with the millions of illegal immigrants, and of the dissolution of Greek society, which is systematically pursued by the parties of the establishment of the so-called Left” (Golden Dawn 2012a: 2). Like its Greek and European counterparts, the GD fully embraces nationalism, which it calls “the third major ideology of History” (Golden Dawn 2012b). The GD wants to establish “a state grounded and built on this ideology that nurtures and guides individual and collective life.” As it is typical of far right parties, the GD explicitly equates the state with the nation, citizenship with ethnicity, and the *demos* with the *ethnos*. “Democracy means state of the demos, that is of the People, made up of individuals of common descent” (Golden Dawn 2012b).

This ethnocentric conception of politics does not stop at excluding non-Greeks from the state but it also incorporates a call for the radical transformation of society. According to the GD, the establishment of a nationalist state will help create a new society and a new type of individual. The GD calls for the “radical renewal of discarded and fake social values” to save the nation from national decadence.

“Nationalism is the only absolute and genuine revolution because it pursues the birth of new moral, spiritual, social and mental values.” The GD “does not intend to rescue anything from the established economic and social interests that lead the Nations, the People and the Civilisation in decadence” (Golden Dawn 2012b).

While the GD denies the national socialist or Nazi label others use to describe it, party documents make no secret of the ideological lineage with interwar ideologies. Party members are asked to embrace a biological form of nationalism reminiscent of Nazi ideology. “For nationalism, the People is not just an arithmetic total of individuals but the qualitative composition of humans with the same biological and cultural heritage” (Golden Dawn 2012b). Party documents point out that “the people” is born from the race, and according to party MP and member of the political council of GD, Elias Panagiotaros, the Greek race has particular standards.<sup>1</sup> According to the GD the party “does not ignore the law of diversity and difference in Nature. Respecting the intellectual, national, and *racial inequality* of humans we can build a just society based on equality before the law” (Golden Dawn 2012b). In the Greek parliament the GD legislator and wife of Michaloliakos, Eleni Zaroulia, accuses the political establishment of “equating Greek expatriates with every sort of subhuman that invaded our country, with various diseases he carries” (Greek Parliament 2012). The biological basis that the GD considers necessary for national belonging sets the party apart from its far right predecessors as well as from most far right parties in Europe. Even parties described in the literature as neo-Nazi (e.g. Carter 2005, pp. 50-52) do not make such explicitly racist appeals.

The ideological profile of the party is reinforced by the violent activity of its members and leaders. In a report issued after the June 2012 election, Human Rights Watch documents the rising violence on the Greek streets against immigrants and associates increasing anti-immigrant crime with GD members. Greek police has detained or put on trial GD candidates and MPs for attacks against immigrants during “cleansing” operations in Athens – vigilante-type activities aiming to clean Athenian neighborhoods of foreigners and to protect citizens from crime (Human Rights Watch 2012). The party denies direct involvement in the increasing incidents of violence against foreigners but the GD leaders have not shied away from using violence themselves. Party MP Elias Kasidiaris gained world notoriety in June when he assaulted two female political opponents on television.<sup>2</sup> In September, MPs George Germanis, Elias Panagiotaros and Constantinos Barbarousis led a group of GD members in Rafina and Mesologgi against dark-skinned merchants. After “verifying”

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<sup>1</sup> In a televised discussion Panagiotaros stated on 26 October 2012 that the Greek national-team basketball player Sophocles Schortsianitis, who is black, is not Greek. “We do not consider Schortsianitis, according to the standards of the Greek race, to be Greek. His two parents have to be Greek and to belong to the European race.” ([http://www.sport24.gr/multimedia/video/Podosfairo/panagiwtaros\\_o\\_sxortsianiths\\_den\\_einai\\_ellhnas.1984870.html](http://www.sport24.gr/multimedia/video/Podosfairo/panagiwtaros_o_sxortsianiths_den_einai_ellhnas.1984870.html); last access 27 October 2012).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVH9LlgLSLU> (last access 29 October 2012). For an analysis of the electoral effect of this event see Papasarantopoulos 2012.



they had no permits to sell their goods, the black-shirted GD supporters used their Greek-flag poles to destroy the merchants' stalls. As Germenis stated afterwards, "we reported to the police that some illegal immigrants were selling their goods without papers, and did what the Golden Dawn had to do."<sup>3</sup> In addition to the association with Nazism, the violent behaviour of GD members and leaders distinguishes it from all other far right formations that surfaced in Greece in the past decades. The racist ideology and violent image of the GD also set it apart from radical right parties in Europe, which share a nativist or nationalist worldview (e.g. Mudde 2007), but do not necessarily embrace a biological understanding of the national belonging nor use violence as a means to achieve political ends.

The ideological proclivity to Nazi ideas is reinforced by the anti-system, anti-Semitic and anti-Communist rhetoric of the GD. Michaloliakos calls the political system of Greece a "pseudo-democracy" and the party asks its members to reject every authority including "the dictatorship of parliamentarism." (Michaloliakos 2012b; Golden Dawn 2012b). Like LAOS, the GD uses populist attacks against the "corrupt political establishment" that executes orders from abroad selling off Greek national sovereignty (Golden Dawn 2012c). In the nationalist state the GD seeks to establish there is no room for political parties: "political authority belongs to the People, without party patrons" (Golden Dawn 2012b). The GD considers the media to be part of the corrupt establishment that has helped "loot" the country. In an hour-long interview on Skai Michaloliakos accuses the channel and his host, among others, to be "taking orders from the *New York Times* and international Zionism."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, like other far right parties in Europe and in Greece, the GD is explicitly anti-Semitic, accusing the Jews or Zionists of seeking to eliminate the Greek nation through US-induced globalisation and cosmopolitanism (e.g. Karaiskos 2012). Discussing the Holocaust, Michaloliakos says "there was an extermination of the Jews in the concentration camps. Regarding the number of those exterminated – if it was six, four or three million, nobody knows. They were exterminated by all people..."<sup>5</sup> In addition, the party is explicitly against communism, an ideology the GD associates with internationalist ideas that seek to level national differences. While presenting nationalism as an alternative to communism, the GD adopts aspects of the anti-plutocratic rhetoric that is usually associated with communism. Reminiscent of claims made by LAOS in its earlier programs, the GD proclaims that "the multinationals are operating without control, generating consumer norms and fictitious needs" and asks its members to oppose big property (Golden Dawn 2012c).

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<sup>3</sup> George Germenis, statements recorded from <http://www.skai.gr/player/tv/?mmid=232181> (last access 30 October 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Michaloliakos, interview on Skai TV, 24 October 2012 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxOwSYgRPPU>; last access 31 October 2012). See also his interview on Contra TV on 26 October 2012, where he denies that he has condemned the Holocaust and repeats claims about the number of Jews who were exterminated. He also states that it was just the Germans who had concentration camps but others as well, like the Americans for the Japanese. (<http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/polymesa/videos/P216#prettyPhoto>).

<sup>5</sup> Michaloliakos, interview on Skai TV, *Ibid*.

The GD opposes plutocracy because it undermines the productive capacity of the country by imposing barriers to indigenous developmental efforts. “A characteristic example: the retailer chains that promote imported goods and undercut Greek products” (Golden Dawn 2012c).

In terms of policy, the GD is similar to other Greek far right parties like the LAOS in having hard-line positions on “national” issues as well as on immigration and citizenship. It wants any politician who accepts the use of the name Macedonia by Greece’s northern neighbor, a name that many Greeks think is solely Greek, to be liable for treason. The GD also makes irredentist calls for the liberation of northern Epirus (southern Albania), where there is a significant Greek-speaking population. In terms of foreign policy, it proposes the establishment of a centre for the examination of anti-Hellenic activity. As most far right parties, the GD demands the deportation of all illegal immigrants. Illegal entry into Greece should be a criminal offence punished with compulsory social work. Anyone renting property or employing immigrants illegally must have their property put on hold by the state. According to the GD only people of Greek descent and Greek conscience should have political rights, and the rest should have civil rights. “The ownership of land and property is only for those with full political rights; for those who only have civil rights property automatically belongs to the state after the 99<sup>th</sup> year” (Golden Dawn 2012c).

Like most of the parties witnessing an electoral spurt in the 2012 Greek elections, and unlike LAOS, the GD has taken a firm stance against the Greek bailout agreement. The GD wants to cancel the Memorandum outlining the bailout terms arguing that “the only solution to the Greek problem is the immediate write-off of the illegal and unbearable debt the Greek people are paying” (Golden Dawn 2012c). The GD wants the immediate audit of the public debt and all loan agreements made by the Greek state since 1974, to show which part of the debt is illegal and to expose all those who took bribes. The GD considers the adoption of the euro a disaster for Greece and points to the importance of having a national currency, “which is equivalent with national independence.” To achieve national independence, “the first goal is Greek autarky in all basic items necessary for the survival of the Greek people,” like food, medicine, fuel and guns. Although it does not explicitly demand exit from the European Union, it considers Greece’s entry to the organisation to have led to the destruction of the primary sector and of Greek industry (Golden Dawn 2012c).

### *Organisation*

The organisational structure of the GD is similar to that of far right parties in Western Europe, with near absolute concentration of authority in the hands of the leader (e.g. Betz and Immerfall 1998; Georgiadou 2008, p. 104-112; Mudde 2007). Most of the power in the GD rests – both formally and informally – with the general secretary of the party Nikos Michaloliakos who has held this position since the founding of the party in 1983. The 54-year-old leader boasts tenure in the Greek nationalist

movement since the age of 16 and has served time in the late 1970s for illegal possession of explosives.<sup>6</sup> He has authored a number of historical, ideological and political books, where he outlines his ideology and world-view.

The towering presence of the founder is evident in how the party is structured. The highest organ in the GD is the party congress, which meets every three years and sets the general ideological and political principles of the party as well as its political planning and strategy. The three hundred members participating in the congress are elected from the local cells of the GD and they elect the general secretary and the members of the central committee. While the party congress is officially the highest organ, official party documents make no secret of the enormous authority granted to the general secretary. The party statutes note that “the general secretary is the highest party organ in the period in-between the regular congresses, and his decisions are compulsory and commit all party organs” (Golden Dawn 2012a, p. 10; document given to author by GD). His three-year tenure is automatically renewed unless an absolute majority of congress participants asks for an election. The statutes vest the general secretary with the authority to choose, among central committee members, the members of the political council of the party, to appoint the general manager of the party and to choose the candidates in national, European and local elections (Golden Dawn 2012a, pp. 11, 20-21). This formal organisational structure creates a significant hierarchical distance between the general secretary of the party and everybody else. The authority vested by the party statutes to Michaloliakos is evident in his interactions with other GD members including the rest of the party leadership. For example, everyone from the telephone operator to his wife (an MP) address Michaloliakos as “chief” (αρχηγός).

Besides the party congress and the general secretary, the central organisational structure of the GD is made up of five additional organs. The next in the party hierarchy is the central committee of the party, which is made up of sixty elected members and the general secretary. The central committee is supposed to help the general secretary in setting the ideological, political and programmatic positions of the party and it elects two other organs of the GD, the ethics and audit committees. The political council of the GD is in charge of its daily operations as well as the execution of the decisions of the general secretary and the central committee. The members of the council “are chosen, at the total discretion, of the general secretary” and “during their tenure the general secretary can decide for important reason to replace any member.” The party statutes do not specify the number of political council members but the latest version of the statutes is signed by five members: Michaloliakos, Germenis, Kasidiaris, Lagos and Panagiotaros (Golden Dawn 2012, p. 14). The ethics committee is appointed by the central committee to examine disciplinary issues, which include social behaviour that exposes the member and the

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<sup>6</sup> Ios, “Οι γιάφκες του Καραμανλή: Η ξεχασμένη τρομοκρατία” [The cells of Karamanlis: The forgotten terrorism] *Eleftherotypia*, 29 September 2002 [in Greek]; Psarras 2012.

party. The audit committee includes five members appointed by the central committee to find resources, draft the party budget and control party finances. The last organ on the party hierarchy is the five-member committee for the evaluation of potential members of the GD appointed by the central committee.

“Any Greek citizen or Greek in genus” can become a member of the party after a recommendation by two existing party members (Golden Dawn 2012a: 3). Once approved by the relevant committee new members need to spend a year of active involvement in the party before they acquire the right to vote or get elected in intraparty elections. The electoral ascendance of the GD has increased membership applications, but according to Michaloliakos, the party remains very selective in recruiting new members. “We do not have many members. We do not aim at a large membership base. The party has around three thousand members today” (Michaloliakos 2012a). The GD is much more active in establishing new local organisations, which report directly to the central committee. In October 2012 alone the party set up fifteen new local cells increasing their number to forty three. The general secretary claims that the rapid extension of its local organisational network is carefully planned to avoid incoherence and opportunism. “If someone tells us that he wants to set up a local organisation we do not simply tell him go ahead. We examine who this person is, for how long he has been a member of the party, if he has been a loyal member, an active member, etc. We do not want opportunists in the party” (Michaloliakos 2012c).

The multifold electoral growth of the party means that the party finds itself today in organisational flux, as new structures need to be set up to accommodate the new realities. For example, due to its rapid organisational expansion, the GD is paying increasingly more attention to organizing its local cells in northern Greece at the regional level. Another example is the audit committee, which is a recent addition to the party statutes since, according to Michaloliakos, the party had no financial resources or state funding in the past (Michaloliakos 2012a).<sup>7</sup> Despite this organisational fluidity, there is enough evidence to suggest the organisational resemblance of the GD with other far right parties in Western Europe. The concentration of authority in the party leader is a typical characteristic of such parties, sending “a programmatic message to voters and party activists about the kind of society that party is willing to realize” (Kitschelt 1995: 71) and giving these parties the label *Fuehrerparteien*. The hierarchical structure, institutional set up and organisational density of the GD is also reminiscent of communist parties – an argument made for other far right parties, like the French National Front (e.g. Mayer 1998: 14). Asked about the organisational resemblance of the GD and communist

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<sup>7</sup> The GD is also giving emphasis in helping the Greek Cypriot party National Popular Front (Εθνικό Λαϊκό Μέτωπο, ELAM), which Kasidiaris calls the “Golden Dawn of Cyprus.” The GD displays the ELAM prominently on its website and Kasidiaris and Lagos sought to boost its electoral fortunes in the presidential elections of Cyprus by taking part in the announcement of ELAM’s presidential candidate.

parties Michaloliakos quickly rejects the suggestion. “We have a military organisational model. We have a first, second, third and fourth office dealing with operations, personnel, etc., just like in the military” (Michaloliakos 2012a).

### *Electorate*

The electoral breakthrough of the GD in the 2012 elections has helped provide substantial information for the voter profile of the party. The GD draws overproportionate support in prefectures located in Central Greece, Attica and Peloponnese. In regions like Central and Western Macedonia the results are mixed while in the rest of Greece the GD is much weaker. It is particularly weak in the Greek islands as well as in Epirus. Like the LAOS, the GD performed particularly well in some – albeit not all – of the most populous prefectures, like Attica (9.96%) and Piraeus B (9.28%). Unlike the LAOS, though, it has received overproportionate support in Peloponnese, in prefectures like Laconia (10.87%), Corinth (9.99%) and Argolida (9.44%), which suggests that the GD is not solely an urban phenomenon. Indeed, opinion polls show that the GD is under-represented in urban areas (Public Issue 2012a; 2012b). Moreover, the party has not been as successful as LAOS in northern Greece. The geographical distribution of GD voters indicates that the party has managed to attract a different combination of constituencies than the LAOS. The overrepresentation of GD voters in Peloponnese parallels the performance of the National Camp in the 1977 election (Tsiras 2012: pp. 196-200) suggesting the mobilisation of traditional nationalist constituencies.

[Table 2 somewhere here]

The demographic profile of GD voters is similar to that of extreme right parties elsewhere in Europe (e.g. Betz 1994; Mayer 1998, p. 19; Riedlsperger 1998, p. 35). Although the GD draws support from heterogeneous constituencies rather than a homogeneous pool of modernisation losers (Mudde 2007, p. 225), there are some noticeable similarities with voting trends documented in other countries. As is usually the case with extreme right parties (e.g. Givens 2004; Georgiadou 2008, pp. 480-482) as well as with the LAOS, the GD draws overproportionate support from male voters and is relatively underrepresented among female voters (VPRC 2009; see also Georgiadou 2013). In the May election the GD received 8 per cent of male voters and 6 per cent of female voters; and in the June elections it drew support from 10 per cent of male voters and 4 per cent of female voters (Table 3). Another similarity with the social profile of European extreme right voters as well as with previous LAOS voters is the age distribution. The support for the GD among young voters (e.g. 18 to 24 years) is almost double than its overall performance. Among younger voters support for the GD is well over 10 per cent, dropping sharply with age. Among the oldest voters, GD support drops to 2 or 3 per cent. In terms of education, GD voters are underrepresented among the least and most educated. Only those reporting moderate levels of education are more likely to vote for the GD. The occupational

profile of those voting for the GD bears some similarities with that of extreme right voters elsewhere. The GD tends to draw overproportionate support among employers and the self-employed, private sector employees, the unemployed and university students (Table 3).<sup>8</sup>

[Table 3 somewhere here]

As is the case with many extreme right parties in Western Europe, the 2012 breakthroughs of the GD have largely come at the expense of other parties on the Right. In the May 2012 election, a tenth of New Democracy voters in the 2009 elections and nearly a fifth (18 per cent) of 2009 LAOS voters defected to the GD. To the contrary, the three parties of the Left – PASOK, SYRIZA and KKE – experienced minor losses to the GD. The GD performs particularly well among constituencies that have not previously voted for the five parties that made up the previous parliament. It received 22 per cent of all new voters, 7 per cent of non-voters and 19 per cent of all those who voted for other parties in 2009 or gave other responses. The June elections belied expectations that GD voters will return to the political mainstream after expressing their protest. The largest portion of the GD electorate in June (70 per cent) were voters who had also voted for the party in the May election, suggesting that the GD is drawing support from a relatively large pool of voters that did not simply protest against the established parties (Public Issue 2012a; 2012b).

[Table 4 somewhere here]

### **Facilitators of electoral success**

To understand the factors that brought about this massive realignment of the Greek electorate – and hence, the rise of the GD – it is important to appreciate the nature of the Greek political system and the effect the economic crisis has had on this system. Long thought to be in crisis (e.g. Kontiades and Anthopoulos 2007; Simitis 2007; Kontiades 2009; Kastanides 2009; Veremis and Tsoukas 2011), the Greek political system has suffered from high levels of corruption, clientelism and populism (e.g. Lyrantzis 1984; 1987; Featherstone 1990; Sotiropoulos 1996; Pappas 1999; Papakostas 2001). The dynamics of the political crisis were evident as early as 2008, when the police killing of a 15-year-old led to youth riots for several weeks. The endogenous nature of the Greek debt crisis further exposed the chronic failures of “partocracy” and gave rise to calls for radical political change both on the Left and on the Right. The past few years witnessed the drastic de-legitimisation of the Greek political system, evident in the increase in incidents of public insults against politicians and the disruption of highly symbolic public events (e.g. the 28 October

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<sup>8</sup> The common exit poll by Metron Analysis, Alco, Marc, MRB and Opinion for the June 2012 elections uses different occupational categories and finds overproportionate support for the GD among farmers (9%), professionals (9%), public sector employees (8%), the unemployed (10%) and university students (9%) ([http://www.metronanalysis.gr/access/poll/downloadpdf.asp?poll=pub1664\\_expol](http://www.metronanalysis.gr/access/poll/downloadpdf.asp?poll=pub1664_expol); last access 12 November 2012).

parade). In addition, the austerity policies disrupted the clientelist networks major parties had used to distribute patronage and limited the resources they had at their disposal. This alienated their political clientele facilitating the defection of traditional constituencies to other political parties. In the absence of effective institutional channels of political participation, the collapse of the clientelist networks through which this participation was previously channeled, facilitated the emergence of radical forms of participation.<sup>9</sup> The failure of the political system to provide alternative forms of political participation can partly explain the legitimation and support of political violence as a means to express political dissatisfaction. The effectiveness of this means relates to the tolerance, or even, the complicity of state authorities, which have arguably turned a blind eye to violent expressions of political dissatisfaction. The realignment of the Greek electorate was also brought about by increasing public concerns about immigration and by growing perceptions that the Greek state is incapable of controlling the flow of undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers. As early as the 1990s, when Greece was transformed from a net sender to a net host of migrants, Greek public opinion has seen immigration with a lot of skepticism (e.g. Baldwin-Edwards and Safilios-Rothschild 1999). Repeated Eurobarometer polls show Greeks to be much more apprehensive of immigration than most Europeans (e.g. Eurobarometer 2003; 2009). The latent xenophobia of the Greek electorate remained untapped by mainstream parties and the issue did not become politicized until recently, when immigration flows from Africa and Asia started changing “the demographics of the entire country” (Human Rights Watch 2012, p. 4). The economic crisis exacerbated the challenges posed by unchecked migration to Greece and brought to the surface the failed immigration and asylum policies of the past decades as well as the incapacity of the Greek state to control its eastern borders. In recent years, then, the immigration issue has provided a fertile ground for the political mobilisation of frustrated voters who felt strongly about the need to end uncontrolled migration flows and to address the challenges posed by immigration.

The GD was best positioned to benefit from the realignment of the Greek electorate. An outsider to parliamentary politics for nearly three decades since its founding, the GD was able to turn its pariah status into a symbol for its genuine and authentic antithesis to the political system. Having spent so much time in the political wilderness it was much easier for the GD to present itself as a party that sought to radically transform Greek politics. The main competitor of the GD on the radical Right, the LAOS, had already moderated its programmatic profile to become a mainstream, coalition-ready partner of the established parties (Tsiras 2012, pp. 127-133). On the issue of immigration, which gained salience during the economic crisis,

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<sup>9</sup> The return of “street politics” was evident as early as 2008, before the onset of the economic crisis, when violent riots in Athens over the shooting of a school-boy by police, led to widespread looting of public and private property (Andronikidou and Kovras 2012).

the LAOS witnessed the transgression of its programmatic territory by the GD, and to some extent, by the Independent Greeks. More importantly, the LAOS quickly lost its anti-system status by supporting the Greek bailout agreement and, later, by participating in the Papademos coalition government with PASOK and ND. The support for the Memorandum of Understanding reduced the capacity of LAOS to capitalize on the public resentment against the terms of the bailout agreement and to electorally benefit from the protest sentiment the bailout agreement generated among mainstream party voters. The subsequent participation in the coalition government further limited the protest appeal of LAOS. Although the LAOS exited the coalition government after a few months, its brief presence proved to be a strategic miscalculation, depriving the party the opportunity to capitalize on growing anti-system sentiment. The effect of participating in the Papadimos government is captured by polls showing a sudden drop from 9% in October 2011 to 6% in December 2011 (Tsiras 2012, pp. 180-184). In May 2012 only 27 per cent of its previous voters stuck with LAOS while 23 per cent defected to a new ND splinter party, the Independent Greeks (IG), founded in February after a substantial number of ND MPs refused to follow the ND leadership and vote for the Second Memorandum. The GD got 18 per cent of former LAOS voters, which shows that its success goes far beyond its transgression into the LAOS electorate. The GD received the second biggest share of new voters (22 per cent, compared to 30 per cent for SYRIZA), which might be suggestive of its capacity to attract voters who have not previously been integrated into the political system.

The GD was also able to benefit from the realignment of the Greek electorate by putting forth extreme nationalist positions. As mentioned earlier, these positions addressed a wide variety of policies including immigration, which has gained political visibility in the past years. Before the onset of the economic crisis, the LAOS was perfectly positioned to capitalize on growing anti-foreigner sentiment but chose to moderate its position on immigration by avoiding the rhetorical excesses of earlier years (e.g. Ellinas 2010, pp. 137-138). Even after the absorption of the Hellenic Front in 2005, which had built a strong anti-immigrant profile for almost a decade; and even as the issue started becoming part of the political discourse, LAOS avoided explicit programmatic calls for the expulsion of illegal immigrants (e.g. LAOS 2007; Tsiras 2012, pp. 127-133). The IG had a tougher position than LAOS on immigration, which included the expulsion of illegal immigrants and the establishment of a 2.5 per cent of the population-quota on immigration. But the new party stayed short of adopting a distinctive nationalist – or any other – ideology. Not surprisingly, postelection polls have showed that the IG has the most ideologically heterogeneous electorate among the seven parliamentary parties. To the contrary, the GD seems to be one of the most ideologically coherent parties, belying analyses that it merely attracts protest votes. Nearly half of the GD electorate (46 per cent) consider themselves to be “nationalists” compared to merely 6 per cent of nationalist voters in the total electorate (Public Issue 2012c). The anti-immigrant profile of the party is



reinforced by the violent activity of its members against immigrants. The combination of its nationalist worldview and violent activity has helped the GD establish ownership of the immigration issue.

The positioning of the GD in the competitive space can go a long way to explain why it benefited from the realignment of the Greek electorate but raises questions about the capacity of such a small party to send its programmatic signals to this nation-wide audience. As the activity of the GD in high-immigrant areas like Agios Panteleimon suggests, the party has invested in building grassroots support and links to local communities. This contrasts with the LAOS, which failed to invest subnational politics relying instead on the communication resources of Karatzaferis (Verney 2012: 206; see also Ellinas 2010, Tsiras 2012). But while the GD currently boasts an extensive organisational network, it is unclear whether its electoral breakthroughs are the result or the consequence of its organisational capacity. Apart from information one can gather from its frequently-updated website, the organisational resources and intraorganisational workings of the party remain unknown.

Most of what is now known about the party is due to the media, which showed increased curiosity in the party after its 2010-breakthrough in the municipal elections, and started covering its activities in the run-up to the 2012 elections. While major television channels seem to have ignored the GD,<sup>10</sup> the party managed to draw considerable interest by online news sites and in the press. The increased media attention was partly due to opinion polls in early 2012 showing that the party could pass the electoral threshold and enter parliament. The results of the opinion polls were amplified by the rest of the political parties, especially by LAOS, which repeatedly warned the electorate against voting for the GD.<sup>11</sup> Media spotlights also turned onto the GD due to the mobilisation of anti-fascist, human-rights or pro-immigrant groups against it.<sup>12</sup> On many occasions media reports about the GD focused on the involvement of its members in violent activities.<sup>13</sup> In one incident that

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<sup>10</sup> According to official data reported in *The Paron* about the coverage each party received prior to the May 2012 election, the GD received merely 0.2% of the total TV time. (<http://www.paron.gr/v3/new.php?id=77229&colid=37&catid=28&dt=2013-02-03&search=%E5%F3%F1+%F7%F1%F5%F3%DE+%E1%F5%E3%DE>; last access 9 February 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Some examples are: “Hard talk by Karatzaferis against Samaras, attack against Golden Dawn” *To Vima*, 24 April 2012 [in Greek]; Aris Ravanos, “George Karatzaferis: I fear the night of the election,” *To Vima*, 22 April 2012 [in Greek]; “Al. Tsipras: Venizelos and Samaras are political crooks” *Proto Thema*, 2 May 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Some examples are: “Salonica: Gathering of antifascist organisations,” *To Vima*, 15 January 2012 [in Greek]; Greek Union for Human Rights and for the Rights of Citizens, “The political system in disintegration: Nazism in parliament?” *To Vima*, 27 April 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Some examples are: “Serious clashes with three wounded in Panepistimioupoli Zografou,” *To Vima*, 29 March 2012 [in Greek]; “Anarchists assaulted Golden Dawners handing out campaign material in Livadia,” *To Vima*, 26 April 2012 [in Greek]; “Class of anarchists and Golden Dawners in Livadia” *Proto Thema*, 29 March 2012 [in Greek]; “Nationalists ‘hit’ an ANTARSYA stall at Chania,” *Proto Thema*, 25 April 2012 [in Greek]

took place on the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1967 military coup party supporters assaulted a prominent socialist candidate and former minister.<sup>14</sup>

Although most media kept a critical distance from the party, it is highly likely that negative publicity benefited instead of hurting the party. Whereas in most West European countries the association of extremist parties with violence deters voters, in Greece the GD seems to be rewarded for its violent practices. This became evident after the televised assault of Kasidiaris against two female candidates on 7 June, which has been associated with the reversal of the waning electoral appeal of the party (Papasarantopoulos 2012). Despite the wave of negative publicity for the party after the incident, the party was able to sustain its voter share in the June election, belying early post-May opinion polls, which showed a drop in party support.

Although the GD has mostly received negative publicity, some coverage of its activities has been much more favorable, highlighting the “social work” of the party. Some reports presented GD security-patrols to urban areas and ATM-escorts to the elderly as useful and necessary in a country where state authority was collapsing. This helped legitimize the “cleansing” operations of the GD in high-immigrant districts like Agios Panteleimon, where the party is thought to apply its own law through the threat of using violence (Psarras 2012: 377-382). After the June election, the relatively easy access the GD had to both the electronic and print media, allowed it to reinforce this favorable “social” image of the party. In July 2012, for example, the GD grabbed media attention by distributing free food and donating blood to blood banks “only for Greeks.” Although the drives were limited in scale, the media attention amplified the local community work of the party, allowing it to claim social legitimacy while retaining its ethnocentric message.

## **Conclusion**

The GD is one of the most extreme political formations in Europe. Like most of its West European counterparts, the party has a nationalist agenda calling for the expulsion of illegal immigrants and the exclusion of non-Greeks from the political community. As it is typical of extreme right parties, authority in the GD is concentrated in the hands of the leader who controls all major party decisions and sets its programmatic orientation. The voter profile of the party is also similar to that of European extreme right voters: young males with moderate levels of education and, often, no job. There are at least two characteristics that distinguish the GD from other extreme right parties. The first is its explicit attachment to national socialist ideas: party documents reveal a worldview founded on a firm belief in racial inequality and party legislators refer to foreigners as “subhuman.” The second distinction relates to

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<sup>14</sup> “Golden Dawn against a PASOK campaign event,” *To Vima*, 21 April 2012 [in Greek]; see also two GD interviewed about the incident on Skai, 10 May 2012 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx-miz4WD0>; last access 12 January 2013); “The attack against Efthymiou ‘united’ the parties against the Golden Dawn,” *Proto Thema*, 22 April 2012.

the clear association of the GD with the use of violence. Amplified by the media, the violent activity of the party sends strong programmatic signals reinforcing its radical image and its pariah status in the Greek party system.

What is most surprising is that an extreme political formation like the GD has such a large voter appeal. In the rest of Europe extreme right parties associated with violence, like the Dutch Centre Party '86 or the German National Democratic Party, failed to attract more than a few percentiles of the national electorate and stayed on the margins of parliamentary politics. To the contrary, the GD managed to receive nearly 7 per cent of the vote and is now polling 11-12 per cent making it the third biggest political party.

The steep rise of the GD is less surprising when the deep and protracted Greek recession is taken into account. The economic crisis has challenged the foundations of the Greek political system giving rise to widespread protest against the political establishment. The crisis has also exposed the immigration challenges facing Greece, in part due to the failure of the state to effectively control Greek borders. The GD was best positioned to benefit from the crisis because its pariah status and violent tactics reinforced its anti-systemic profile at a time when the system had lost its legitimacy. Moreover, its nationalist ideology allowed it to establish credibility on the immigration issue and to capitalize on growing public concerns about the effects of immigration in urban areas. The media seems to have helped amplify its anti-system, anti-immigrant and violent image allowing the party to gain a much wider audience than its organisational resources would have otherwise allowed. In part due to the way the media has been covering its activities, after the election the GD has been able to sustain its anti-system profile despite some evidence of collusion between the police and GD (e.g. Human Rights Watch 2012, p. 40; Chatzistefanou 2012). This seeming collusion between the party and the state might partly explain why there has been no systematic or effective effort from the state apparatus to hold the GD and top GD members accountable for the use of violent tactics.

Given the importance and urgency of these developments it is worth speculating about the future of the GD. Will it prove to be a flash party that will vanish from the electoral map as quickly as it appeared? Or will it be able to sustain and extend its initial electoral gains and establish a permanent presence in the Greek party system? To a some extent, the fate of the GD lies in its own hands. As the fate of LAOS seems to suggest, once parties pass the Sartorian threshold of relevance (1976, pp. 121-129) their fate depends less on what their competitors do than on their own strategy and organisation (Ellinas 2010). In terms of strategy, the future of the GD will depend on its capacity to adjust to the changing political environment. For as long as the electorate rewards its violent tactics, the GD will be able to sustain and perhaps extend its initial electoral gains. But once the economic crisis ends, the future of the party will depend on how effectively it can adapt to the new political context. As the conditions that facilitated its electoral ascendance dissipate, the party will have

to choose between pragmatism and moderation on the one hand and idealism and radicalism on the other. The emphasis the GD places on violent tactics mobilizes militant street fighters that are even more radical than its leadership. Should the strategic need for moderation arise, the party will find it difficult to de-mobilize its militant base and avoid voter defection to more moderate political alternatives.

The organizational structure of the party will be a critical determinant of its electoral future. The high concentration of power by Michaloliakos as well as the seemingly slim organizational structure of the GD is an asset for the party allowing it to effectively maneuver in the competitive space and adjust to the changing environment. But the organizational set up of the GD is likely to prove a liability when the electoral fortunes of the party start changing. A drop in voter support would create strategic and programmatic dilemmas for the party and generate tension among its members. Without proper organizational mechanisms for resolving intraparty conflicts and without the organizational complexity necessary to sustain the support from its militant base, the party will be unable to effectively contain factionalism and to resist the co-optation strategies of its less radical competitors.

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**Acknowledgments:** The author would like to thank Vasiliki Georgiadou, Yiannos Katsourides, Ioannis Kolovos, Iosif Kovras, Neophytos Loizides, Stavros Tombazos, the editors of SESP and the anonymous referees for their useful comments and suggestions.

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**Table 1: The electoral performance of the GD, 1994-2012**

<b>Election</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Seats</b>
European	12 June 1994	7,242	0.11	0
National	22 September 1996	4,487	0.07	0
European*	13 June 1999	48,532	0.75	0
European **	13 June 2004	10,618	0.17	0
European	7 June 2009	23,609	0.46	0
National	4 October 2009	19,624	0.29	0
Local***	14 November 2010	10,222	5.29	1
National	6 May 2012	440,996	6.97	21
National	17 June 2012	426,025	6.92	18

\*with First Line (Πρώτη Γραμμή)

\*\*as Patriotic Alliance (Πατριωτική Συμμαχία)

\*\*\*Athens municipal election

**Source:** Greek Ministry of Interior, <http://www.yypes.gr/el/Elections/>

**Table 2: Best and worst electoral constituencies for the GD in 17 June 2013**

<b>Top results</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Worst results</b>	<b>%</b>
Laconia	10.9	Lasithi	2.6
Corinth	10.0	Heraklion	3.5
Attica	10.0	Rethymno	4.1
Argolida	9.4	Rodopi	4.2
Pireaus B	9.3	Arta	4.4

Source: Greek Ministry of Interior

**Table 3: Gender, age, education and occupation of GD voters, %**

	<b>6.5.2012</b>	<b>17.6.2012</b>
<i>Actual result</i>	6.97	6.92
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	8	10
Female	6	4
<b>Age, years</b>		
18-24	14	13
25-34	12	16
35-44	11	11
45-54	7	7
55-64	5	4
65-	3	2
<b>Educational level</b>		
Lower	4	3
Middle	9	9
Higher	6	6
<b>Occupation</b>		
Employers/self-employed	9	11
Public sector employees	8	6
Private sector employees	8	11
Unemployed	10	12
Pensioners	4	3
Housewives	7	3
University students	12	7

**Sources:** Public Issue polls for May 2012 election (N=4.607; data collected between Feb. - May 2012);

**Table 4: Party preferences of GD voters in previous elections**

% of [party] who voted GD	6.5.2012*	17.6.2012**
New Democracy	10	1
PASOK	4	1
SYRIZA	1	1
KKE	2	2
Independent Greeks		5
Golden Dawn		70
Democratic Left		0
LAOS	18	n/a
New voters	22	n/a
Non-voters	7	5
Other	19	12

Sources: Public Issue polls for May 2012 election (N=4.607); and for June 2012 election (N=5.862).

\*based on what respondents voted in 2009 election

\*\*based on what respondents voted in May 2012 election

