

The Greek State: Its Past and Future

An interview with Anastassios Anastassiadis

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The Greek crisis is above all a crisis of the Greek state and its legitimacy. One must look back to the nineteenth century to understand its people's defiance of bureaucrats and the role of international powers in Greek politics. In this interview, Anastassios Anastassiadis offers an historian's perspective on Greece's current difficulties.

Anastassios Anastassiadis is an assistant professor of Greek history at McGill University in Montreal. The author of a thesis defended in Paris in 2006, he studies the formation of the modern Greek state in the nineteenth century, combining the methods and concepts of history, sociology, and political science. Specifically, his work examines the relationship between "tradition" and "modernity," cultural transfers between Western and Mediterranean Europe, and the role of the Church and euergetism in nineteenth-century Greek society.

The Failure of the Greek State: The *Longue Durée* of Commonplace

Books and Ideas: Since 2009, many European observers have deplored the almost inherent weakness of the Greek state since its creation in 1830. What does a historian who is attentive to the *longue durée* have to say about such an analysis?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: Though it may sound iconoclastic and paradoxical, I think it is possible to assert that, over the *longue durée* (from the foundation of the independent Greek state in 1828-1830 to the eve of the 2009 crisis), the Greek state has mostly been a success story. After all, Greece was born in 1828 as a former Ottoman province, ravaged by seven years of war (the War of Independence, 1821-1827). In his monumental work from 1835 entitled *The Greek People*, Ludwig von Maurer, the renowned Bavarian constitutionalist and a member of the new Greek king's regency, offered an unimpeachable assessment: Greece's economic system was 95% destroyed; cities and infrastructure were completely devastated; there were demographic imbalances, with an overabundance of widows, orphans, and the

elderly, and a cruel shortage of able-bodied workers. Moreover, the new state seemed too small to be viable. At the time, its borders comprised nothing more than the Peloponnese, the Cyclades, and the part of continental Greece that corresponded to the ancient conception of Greece (European negotiators had relied on Pausanias' description in the *Periegesis* to determine borders). There were no urban structures worthy of the name and the major cities, including port towns, where economic and intellectual activities tied to the emergence of a Greek bourgeoisie had developed since the mid-eighteenth century, were cut off from the new state.

And yet, 170 years later, Greece's territory has more than tripled and the country now belongs not only to the European Union, but to the thirty most developed countries on the planet. Imagine if I told you that present-day Iraq (or, better still, Kurdistan) would, in 2150, be one of the most developed states on earth: many would consider such a prediction reckless, to say the least. I'm not particularly fond of analogies, but this point shows the extent to which we must integrate the *longue durée* and the unpredictability of the state-building process into our thinking, as Norbert Elias and Charles Tilly have shown.

Books and Ideas: Is the twentieth-century Greek state that different from the rest of Europe?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: The other part of the question pertains not to the Greek's state origins, but to its trajectory, particularly in the twentieth century. Most European states during this century went through periods of extreme violence and destruction, followed by periods of reconstruction. In Greece, however, periods of war were often longer (and more destructive), accompanied by particularly deep internal divisions (e.g., Venizelists vs. royalists during the First World War, communists vs. nationalists during the 1940s). Consequently, the Greek state was no longer in sync with the broader European dynamic: the First World War (1914-1918) lasted five years for most European countries, while Greece was at war for ten years, from the Balkan Wars of 1912 to its defeat in the Greco-Turkish War of 1922. Reconstruction thus began at least three years later than elsewhere, at a time when the country was reeling from a humiliating defeat, while also undergoing a demographic upheaval with the arrival of 1.5 million refugees from Turkey (and the sudden exodus of 400,000 of its own residents). The Greek state nearly collapsed, and it was thanks to the League of Nations that it survived. The interwar period was a critical moment when the Greek state, confronting these challenges, implemented regulatory and distributive policies that were extremely ambitious

but often very costly and authoritarian. This was a period of conservative modernization continuing even after the 1932 bankruptcy, which resulted from the accumulated effects of debt, the 1929 crisis, and the linking of the drachma to the gold standard.

Yet no sooner had Greece recovered from the First World War than the Second World War began. It was just as destructive: the occupation was terrible and Greek resistance strong. This led to a murderous civil war, the first real conflict of the Cold War. Whereas the Marshall Plan helped the rest of (Western) Europe to start rebuilding itself as early as 1946, in Greece it served mainly to finance a civil war lasting between 1946 and 1949. Only in 1950 did the Greek state enter a phase of reconstruction, before finding itself under the colonels' dictatorship between 1967 and 1974.

Books and Ideas: Most international observers, whether journalists or politicians, criticize the “corruption” or “clientelism” of Greek society, which are often presented as atavistic cultural traits. Do these discourses have a history?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: Let's begin with the way in which “Europe” or “the West” sees Greece. Since the nineteenth century, Greece is the site where two frameworks of European thought intersect. The first is the “classical” framework of (ancient) Greece, which has played a major role since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the formation of the idea of Europe, of a European civilization that was identified with something more than Christianity. Without this intellectual framework, it is impossible to understand the phenomenon of Philhellenism and the volunteer movements fighting for the Greek cause over the course of the entire nineteenth century. This is also the framework that convinced the European powers to try to create a model state, in which the Greeks would renew and reclaim their former greatness thanks to European “technology,” and which would serve as a beacon in a sea of eastern “barbarism” and “corruption.” The second framework is orientalism, which is characteristic of the nineteenth century. The “Orient” was perceived as a land of intrigue, but irrational; sensual, but insufficiently virile; refined, but corrupt; steeped in (an overabundance of) history rather than progressive and future-oriented.

In Greece, these two discourses intersected. In fact, Western European resentment towards the Greek state and people, once they met them, was so great because they did not “live up to” the “classical” ideal. Hence the appeal of “orientalizing” discourses: they were a

way of showing that these people had nothing in common with the ancient Greek and that they could thus not lay claim to the “legacy” of the Ancients, nor to any assistance, which they would obviously waste. The extent to which the stereotypes and frameworks invoked today in the context of the Greek crisis draw on the same themes as the orientaling discourses of the nineteenth century is striking. In the new (1857) edition of his book *La Grèce moderne et son rapport à l'Antiquité* (*Modern Greece in its Relationship to Antiquity*—initially written following the War of Independence and as a result of his participation in the scientific expedition to the Peloponnese), Edgar Quinet was already denouncing Europeans’ ambiguous attitude towards the Greeks and their new state.

That said, there is in Greece an additional dimension that differentiates it from the typical orientalist case. Whereas China, India, or even the Muslim-Arab world reject and vehemently oppose orientalist stereotypes, many Greeks seem to have internalized them. Seeking a theoretical framework for explaining the coexistence of “modernizing” elites, integrated into the modern world, and a “recalcitrant” society, some have called attention to Greece’s cultural dualism. An anthropologist like Michael Hertzfeld, drawing on themes found in the works of Greek writers, particularly during the thirties, speaks of the duality between “Hellas,” referring to Antiquity and rationality, and “*Rommios*” (from the term “*Romaïos*,” which is used to describe Byzantine subjects and which gave birth to *Rum* in Arab and Turkish, to refer to the Christian Orthodox), which relates to the Byzantine, Orthodox, and Ottoman traditions. As long as this bipolarity was used to describe the duality of the Greek psyche, there was no problem, for it made it possible to see this duality at play in each Greek, as a repertory of practices that were available to all. But this framework has also been used in essentializing ways, notably by the political scientist Nikiforos Diamandouros, to explain the vagaries of the Greek state-building process. He argues that when the culture of Antiquity prevails, modernization progresses; conversely, when the Byzantine-Ottoman culture gains the upper hand, modernization fails. Imposed on Greek political history, this framework identifies “modernizing heroes” who introduce the Greeks to Western enlightenment, only to be resisted and defeated by the obscurantist forces of the “orientalizing” masses. This culturalist model, which reifies “modernization,” has in reality little explanatory value, for it starts with a poor understanding of the state-building process. In reality, the state is *formed* rather than *built*.

The Greek State in the Nineteenth Century: Between “Clientelism” and International Tutelage

Books and Ideas: What were some of the challenges that the young Greek states faced when it was created in the nineteenth century?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: The Greek state went through roughly three phases during the nineteenth century. Between 1833 and 1843, the centralized state made serious efforts to affirm itself. Between 1843 and 1875, centralization regressed or stagnated. Finally, between 1875 and 1897, the state-building process accelerated. I should first point out that the transition to a national state was not self-evident. The Greek revolutionaries knew what they did not want, but they were not at all driven by a clear vision—and even less a shared one—of what they did want, or in any case of how they would manage independence. Consequently, to deal with the regional, social, and political tensions that had, by the second year of the War of Independence, resulted in civil war (an anachronistic term in this case since it is used to refer to “pre-modern” conflicts, which in 1831 notably cost the Greek state’s first governor his life), the great powers in 1833 installed a Bavarian monarchy, whose mission was to establish a modern, centralized state. The Bavarians took this mission seriously, but were quickly confronted with the enormity of the task, which entailed both reconstruction and establishing the new regime’s legitimacy. There are only two ways to make this stage of state-building successful: to offer public services that legitimize the central state’s role and to suppress any challenges to the state’s authority. During their first decade in power, the Bavarians strove to achieve these goals. They created a modern administrative apparatus, reorganized every sector of the economy and society, established a European legal system, etc. Meanwhile, they suppressed local resistance. Their efforts would undoubtedly have been successful had they had more time and resources. But, from its birth, Greece was in debt: its creditors and European public opinion grew impatient with its lack of results. The country had its first bankruptcy in 1843. Consequently, the goal of creating a centralized state became secondary. As it no longer had the financial means to legitimize its power by creating an efficient state, the Bavarians returned, as the historian Kostas Kostis explains very well, to the Ottoman model, in which the center governed through the intermediary of local elites, who were responsible for ensuring the allegiance of local populations.

Following the removal of the Bavarian king Otto in 1862, Greece saw the arrival of a new dynasty, a Danish one, which was accompanied by the proclamation of one of Europe’s

most liberal constitutions. It should also be recalled that Greece was one of the first countries to grant universal manhood suffrage (de facto, in 1843, de jure, in 1864) and to practice it systematically during the entire second half of the nineteenth century. In a context in which the central government had relatively few resources to distribute, a clear political configuration emerged: the central government co-opted local elites, who in turn pressured the government to obtain resources in the name of the legitimacy they derived from their local status. Universal suffrage, moreover, institutionalized this legitimacy. Henceforth, competition between elites, both vis-à-vis the state and among themselves, occurred in parliament rather than in the mountains, as it had during the Bavarian period. Banditry, a phenomenon tied to local practices of challenging central authority and which lasted until the 1870s, disappeared around the turn of the century.

If parliamentarism is traditionally a means by which local elites gain privileged access to the allocation of rare state resources, it simultaneously induces, often involuntarily, a sense of belonging to an imagined national community. Consequently, when, in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, the Greek state again attempted, after the Bavarians' fall, to jumpstart the state-building process (through infrastructure, administrative organization, etc.), it met with less local resistance than it had in the 1830s. Unfortunately, this period, when Greece was financed by international loans, euergetic practices, and an aggressive fiscal policy (though based more on consumption than income) ended abruptly with a second bankruptcy in 1893.

Books and Ideas: In what ways did the compromises made in the nineteenth century between the state and local elites permanently influence the relationship that Greek citizens have with their state?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: As I have said, local elites, during the first phase of state-building, became the intermediaries through which the state endeavored to control the local population. Parliamentarism institutionalized this practice. This would not have been a problem had an efficient central bureaucracy developed simultaneously. Remember that for Max Weber, the power of the modern state rests on the coexistence of two groups: on the one hand, a rational bureaucracy that has developed over a long period and which is driven by an almost blind loyalty to the cause of an efficient state; on the other, political elites, acting both as actors and power brokers on behalf of the population, in ways that guarantee the state's

legitimacy. The antagonistic interdependence of these two forces is what ensures the modern's state's equilibrium.

In the case of Greece, political elites provided the population with concrete access to the state and its resources beginning in the nineteenth century. The bureaucracy, however, never attained an optimal degree of efficiency, both because its development was arrested by events like the bankruptcies of 1893 and 1932 (and now 2012), and because it was usually only able to develop under authoritarian regimes (the authoritarian governments of the 1930s, the limited democracy of the postwar years, etc.), which largely discredited it in the eyes of the population. The problem was thus not so much clientelism as such, but the fact that the state bureaucracy, being insufficiently institutionalized, was not in a position to serve as a counterweight. It is thus not surprising that the Greeks have little respect for the state and its servants—even though they simultaneously fear them!

Books and Ideas: As you have mentioned, the Greek state has, on a number of occasions, been placed under the tutelage of foreign powers. What impact has this had on Greek democratic life?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: From its origin, the Greek state has been “under the influence.” Yet during the nineteenth century, this did not prevent the development of a parliamentary democracy that worked rather well, particularly between 1862 and 1909. There are not many countries, including European ones during this period, which practiced both unicameral parliamentarism and universal (male) suffrage without any hitches. For 47 years, political life was relatively stable. It was not necessarily to the taste of the great powers, who considered that the Greeks, like their own peoples, were not yet ripe for democracy. Above all, they believed that this kind of political opening prevented the development of a rational state and bureaucracy. As a result, they had no qualms about pressuring the Greeks to achieve “bureaucratic rationalization,” even when it called democratic procedures into question. This was notably true of the International Financial Commission of 1898, following the bankruptcy of 1893 and the defeat of 1897. Most economic decisions were made by the Commission and not by elected governments. Similarly, during the civil war and afterwards (i.e., the 1940s and 1950s), Greek dependence on American aid increasingly made the political class vassals of the United States.

From the standpoint of strengthening the state, this situation had at times some positive effects. During the fifteen years between the 1897 defeat and the beginning of the Balkan Wars, the Greek state's military and bureaucratic apparatus modernized and became more efficient so rapidly, compared to the nineteenth century, that Greece could even claim, during the 1910s, to be a mini-imperial power. This made it possible to make decisions that were unpopular because they were authoritarian, which previous governments had been unwilling to make because, as they were seen as "imposed by foreigners," they could potentially cost politicians votes. The same situation occurred between 1946 and 1960. But this also made the achievements of state-building fragile, as they could easily be described as illegitimate measures imposed by foreigners. It's in the name of this "illegitimacy" that the hierarchical aspects of the Greek state bureaucracy were "deconstructed" in the 1980s.

Redistribution without Taxation

Books and Ideas: The Greek state currently seems to have a very difficult time collecting taxes. Does this phenomenon have historical roots?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: As I have said, the Greek state is in reality a former Ottoman province that became independent. Both its fiscal and land tenure systems obey an Ottoman logic. In the legal realm, Islamic law was implemented along with customary law as well as Christian ecclesiastic law, and thus Byzantine law. When they arrived, the Bavarians undertook to modernize both the land tenure system (by the abolition of "mainmorte," land redistribution, and the creation of land registries) and the judicial and economic realm (i.e. by introducing Napoleon's commercial code). These efforts ended abruptly with the 1843 bankruptcy. This was notably true of the land registry (an effort that has recently been renewed within the framework of the European Union). Moreover, the Bavarians' efforts to modernize and, consequently, to centralize tax collecting met with enormous resistance from local communities.

As for taxation itself, one should remember that, at that time, agriculture weighs heavily on the Greek economy. The other major activity is commerce. As the historian Georges Dertilis has shown, the Greek political-institutional compromise of the nineteenth century played to the *fiscal* advantage of these two constituencies. The creation of a parliamentary democracy benefited farmers, who benefited both from land redistribution and the lowering of their tax burden. In Greece, unlike in most cases of state-building, small

agricultural landholders did well for themselves and were not absorbed into larger properties, as occurred in other European countries. Greece is thus one of the rare European countries in which there was neither a mass rural exodus creating an abundant and available workforce for nascent industrialization, nor major rebellions of dispossessed and impoverished peasants. At the same time, tax cuts for farmers were not paid for by raising taxes on the urban professions and bankers, the other influential groups, which were and still are politically overrepresented.

Even after the introduction of the income tax in 1910, the Greek state continued to prefer indirect taxes when seeking new resources. This explains the great difficulty it faced in rendering the income tax really efficient. The roots of this problem lie in the structure of the Greek economy: an overabundance of liberal professions (the per capita number of lawyers, engineers, doctors, and dentists, as well as plumbers and cabdrivers, is exceptionally high), the dominance of small agricultural properties and small family business with few salaried workers (or with illegal and often immigrant salaried workers, as in tourism), and the importance of petty trade. Even today, controlling the income of these professions is arbitrary and complex. The weight of the informal economy (particularly in the service sector) reduces tax revenue, which is drawn mainly from salaried workers and retirees—in other words, people whose income is ultimately dependent on the state, whether in para-public services or in sectors that work with the state (banks, large private companies, etc.).

Books and Ideas: How, despite everything, did redistribution occur?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: As I mentioned earlier, during the nineteenth century, it was the rise of euergetism that allowed for a certain degree of redistribution to occur. These really were benevolent practices of a pre-modern character that were grafted onto a new socioeconomic framework—the integration of the village economy into the world economy, as a result of the opportunities offered by the opening up of trade in the eastern Mediterranean. They dispelled the mixture of fear and envy that the new commercial fortunes and the visible display of new social inequalities triggered in these communities. The Orthodox Church facilitated this shift by redefining its conception of the relationship between sin and eternal life in the inheritance and will-writing process. In particular, it introduced the principle of gifts benefiting the community, which replaced not only gifts to monasteries as a way of redeeming sins, but also commemorative gifts to families. Henceforth, entire

community would remember the euergetist's name until the Apocalypse, and not the family alone.

Then, as of the second half of the nineteenth century, the power mechanism was transformed to adapt itself to the encompassing "national" discourse, in which various benevolent practices, reorganized under the term "euergetism," were seen as offering additional proof of the historic continuity of the Greek nation since Antiquity (euergetism being a characteristic practice of Greek cities during the classical and Hellenistic periods, which have been studied in depth by Hellenists from the late nineteenth century until Paul Veyne's famous book, *Le pain et le cirque [Bread and Circuses]*, published in 1976). It also became a mechanism for domination, one deeply influenced by new social conditions that were brought in from the West, incorporating such concepts and problems as charity, the social question, "dangerous classes," etc. As several politicians, journalists, and intellectuals would proudly repeat, there was no "social question" in Greece, as national euergetists had made class struggle unnecessary.

Obviously, this was very far from the truth, and the state had to consider other options. The welfare state and the development of public-sector employment over the course of the twentieth century helped to redistribute wealth, while also guaranteeing the state's legitimacy. From 1930 to the 2000s, the Greek state became a genuine welfare state, implementing the range of distributive and redistributive policies that one would expect of any modern state (health, education, retirement, etc.). Some of these policies were representative of the often paternalistic character of a state that was typical of rural societies, where the principle of mutualized insurance is lacking. The Greek system nonetheless suffered from three serious shortcomings: finances that were generated primarily by indirect consumption taxes; haphazard enforcement, which gave some professional groups better salaries simply because of their superior negotiating powers; and, finally, the use of public-sector employment and of advantages granted on the basis of "social criteria" as a cheap way of providing social insurance.

Books and Ideas: Is the role of the Orthodox Church in Greek society, as well as in the current predicament, as important as it is often claimed?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: As someone who has worked on the Church, I think it is one of the favorite themes of journalists, be they Greek or foreign, as well as of politicians who are short on ideas. It allows them to sound progressive at little expense. The Orthodox Church is important. That is a fact. Politicians know that it is an institution that can serve as a conduit to the electorate, like the media and the professional associations of lawyers and doctors. Is the Orthodox Church rich? Probably. Can we guess how much it is worth? Not really, as there is no registry of its real estate holdings, nor do we have access to its mobile assets. The Church is a very decentralized institution (one has to visit the dioceses to get a sense of this). A number of important properties are in fact owned by ecclesiastical institutions that are officially registered outside of Greece. This is the case, for instance, of the monasteries of Mount Athos, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, or of those related to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. These institutions are more often mixed up in scandals, though not relating to the Greek Church per se. But, in this respect, the Greek state has little elbow room. Ecclesiastical institutions that are Orthodox but located outside of Greece are foreign policy concerns that the Greek state cannot take lightly, by evoking, say, progressive secularization. One only has to recall that when a state prosecutor placed under investigation a superior of the grand monastery of Mount Athos who was involved in a real estate scandal, none other than Vladimir Putin interceded on his behalf!

An Economic and Democratic Crisis

Books and Ideas: What were the economic and social consequences of Greece's decision to join the European Community in 1981? Did they foreshadow the current crisis?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: Remember on what basis Greek rebuilt itself after the Second World War: construction as the economy's driving force; emigration as the safety valve for dealing with the massive post-war rural exodus, in addition to being a source of hard currency; infrastructure and public companies to manage them; Greek industries protected by tariffs, direct subsidies, and an oligopolistic market; and whatever it took to support traditional economic forces, like commercial shipping and, later, tourism. At the same time, in the aftermath of the civil war, it was necessary to promote the Western capitalist model, with an emphasis on a culture of mass consumption. Even so, the Greeks remained rather "frugal" until the 1980s (this may be one of the last vestiges of a society that remained deeply marked by its rural past—in the early eighties, 25% of the population still worked in the agricultural sector).

Greece's entry into the EEC in 1981 had many consequences. Industry, which had hitherto been protected, collapsed as a result both of the lifting of protectionist barriers and the importation of European goods, made in countries with higher productivity and more competitive prices. Deindustrialization went through a second wave with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the gradual integration of the eastern countries into the European Union. Agriculture, for its part, faced the arrival of competitive products. Gradually, the state expanded its role in the economy without gaining in efficiency. Greece's budget deficit and debt started growing rapidly in the eighties. At first, devaluations of the drachma and inflation softened the blow, but they were also bad for that Greek "frugality" that I mentioned a moment ago. In the second half of the 1990s, control of public finances was only ephemeral, and was quickly set aside by the euphoria elicited by the pharaoh-like projects that were planned for the 2004 Olympics. Furthermore, upon entering the euro, the Greek economy benefited from broad access to cheap credit. Within barely twenty years, frugality had given way to consumption, leading to a heavy dependence on credit. The Greeks borrowed from their banks, which borrowed from French and German banks. Why? To buy French and German goods.

Books and Ideas: Can one say that the Greek debt crisis, rather than being the result of the Greek state's historic weakness, is above all the consequence of social inequality and a crisis of democracy?

Anastassios Anastassiadis: The Greek state is currently undergoing a threefold crisis, which is unfolding in three distinct spatial and temporal registers. First, there is a global and European crisis, tied to the functioning of the global economy, its disequilibrium, and the way in which the European economic and monetary union (very) imperfectly mediates on behalf of the states and regions that are most heavily penalized and marginalized by the international division of labor. The financial crisis has made states more fragile and vulnerable to attacks by financiers who want either better guarantees for their investments or greater short-term profits. At a European level, the lack of genuine fiscal harmonization and of mechanisms for regulating the economy and providing a minimum of solidarity between regions is partly responsible, if not for the Greek crisis itself, at least for its intensification over the past two years.

From an historical standpoint, we are witnessing the crisis of the model of production and consumption that prevailed in Greece over the past thirty years. Greece will have to cut itself off abruptly from low-interest credit, to which it has grown accustomed since joining the euro. It will have to return to budgetary equilibrium without being able to rely anymore on cheap debts and European subsidies if it wants to pursue a state-building process that seems adrift, with no other goal than the satisfaction of local communities. Clearly, the state apparatus will have to make some brutal cuts. One must hope that these will give future generations a chance to make it. To succeed, a reassessment of the social and political compromises that shaped Greece's destiny over the past fifteen years is imperative. The Greek state must renew its state-building project and give itself a new roadmap—one that is both more modest, fairer and more realistic.

Finally, the crisis is above all that of the Greek political establishment and specifically of the political parties that emerged after the dictatorship, as the political scientist Yannis Voulgaris has explained. Within the two major parties, the center-right New Democracy and the center-left PASOK, very ideologically and political diverse groups have existed side by side, united under a single banner for the sole purpose of winning electoral contests in a way that precludes electoral alliances with smaller parties. Both parties have, moreover, always competed for the same electorate, particularly the middle class and the *petite bourgeoisie*. This is not a problem as such, but it becomes one when no bureaucratic department or institution serves as a counterweight. Still, it is evident that following the election of last February 12, the Greek political landscape is closer to recomposing itself than ever before. Each of the major parties expelled from its ranks some twenty MPs who refused to vote for the new austerity measures. The crisis is particularly acute for PASOK, which is living its final hours exactly as it was born, as a formidable electoral machine (it has been in power twenty of the last thirty years). The center-right party is also weakened. It has lost thirty MPs since elections two and half years ago, despite the fact that it was not in power! The public's desire for political renewal is so great that it will undoubtedly be very difficult for incumbent MPs to survive the crisis.

For analyses of the current crisis, see

- in Greek : Politician Scientist Yannis Voulgaris's [blog](#)
- in English the [Athens Review of Books](#); and [the New York Times](#)

Further Reading

- Anastassios Anastassiadis' [page](#) at McGill University
- Anastassios Anastassiadis, « [Les pérégrinations de l'évergétisme en Méditerranée orientale du XVIIIe au XXIe siècle : éthique chrétienne, technologie de gouvernement et concept historiographique](#) », *Le Mouvement social*, 234, janvier-mars 2011, p. 45-62 :
- Historian Georges B. Dertilis wrote a *History of the Greek State, 1830-1920*, Athènes, Estia, 2009, in greek [here](#) ; see also « Terre, paysans et pouvoir économique (Grèce, XVIIIe-XXe siècle) », *Annales ESC*, 2 (mars-avril 1992), p. 273-291 ; « Terre, paysans et pouvoir politique (Grèce, XVIIIe-XXe siècle) », *Annales ESC*, 1 (janvier-février 1993), p. 85-107.
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- For an example of the "unfinished modernization" trope in textbooks on Greek history, and reference to modernizing heroes, see Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge, Cambridge University press, 1992, et John Koliopoulos et Thanos Veremis, *Greece : the modern sequel*, Londres, Hurst, 2002.

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