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# Europeanization and Democratization:

Aspects of the Greek Case

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## Abstract

Europeanization, by definition refers to causal links between the EU and domestic, national changes. Every particular case that involves interaction between EU and member states demonstrates a different aspect of what Europeanization might mean. The intention of this paper is first to demonstrate some significant dimensions of the impact of Europeanization processes on aspects of Greece's polity, politics and policies. More specifically, we try to identify the effects on the executive and legislative power, parties and party system as well as on civil society. In doing so, we will form a clearer picture concerning which conceptualizations of Europeanization pertain to Greece and in which ways. Another important consideration is related to the fact that the impact of the EU on each state elicits manifold responses and adaptation patterns. Hence, the various effects and influences need to be delineated so as to demarcate the extent and the degree of the impact effectuated by the EU. In this paper we try also to probe into the normative elements that relate to a broader democratization project propounded by the EU and the way that have been received by Greece, that is whether or not these elements have contributed to bringing about more democracy and how. In other words, by examining selected instances of political changes caused by Europeanization processes we will be able to assess what Europeanization means in terms of (domestic) democracy. So, the second factor that concerns this paper is how the impact of Europeanization on the institutions, politics and policies of Greece affects their democratic quality especially as regards the executive, the parliament, the parties and party system and civil society. That is, how Europeanization has been processed domestically mainly with respect to the democratic practices triggered by the interaction with the EU.

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## Introduction.

Europeanization studies have emerged as a prominent discipline since the late 1990s. There are many approaches to the concept of Europeanization, which vary according to the theoretical stance of scholars as well as the purpose of each research. However, despite the various nuances that are found in each approach to determining Europeanization, most of them agree on the fact that it is the EU which is the principal actor “producing” Europeanization processes and also that the development of EU’s polity, politics and policies has had a great impact on member states with regard to these areas respectively. To gauge the impact of Europeanization processes on member states requires an adequate understanding of the specific relation between EU and each of its members as well as the concrete formation of each nation setting that undergoes changes engendered by these processes. As many scholars have pointed out, in order that the concept of Europeanization not be merely a theoretical model focusing on how EU itself develops irrespective of the impact that these developments have on different countries in different times, case studies are an indispensable part of this study area. In other words, in order to be able to assess the effectiveness of the approaches to Europeanization and their contribution to our understanding of this phenomenon we need to analyze what concrete reality lies behind this abstraction.

Europeanization, by definition refers to causal links between the EU and domestic, national changes. Every particular case that involves interaction between EU and member states demonstrates a different aspect of what Europeanization might mean. The intention of this paper is first to demonstrate some significant dimensions of the impact of Europeanization processes on aspects of Greece’s polity, politics and policies. More specifically, we try to identify the effects on the executive and legislative power, parties and party system as well as on civil society. In doing so, we will form a clearer picture concerning which conceptualizations of Europeanization pertain to Greece and in which ways. Another important consideration is related to the fact that the impact of the EU on each state elicits manifold responses and adaptation patterns. Hence, the various effects and influences need to be delineated so as to demarcate the extent and the degree of the impact effectuated by the EU.

There is not a general agreement among scholars concerning what kind of power EU is, but it could be argued that it is an institution that wields “soft” power since it has developed a high degree of competence in economy and politics while lacking military power. On the other hand, the fact that EU portrays itself as a normative power and/or actor deserves serious consideration. Evidently, the EU has grown capable of building conceptions of normal. It has the power to influence state formats covering a wide spectrum of their “behavior”. The concept of norms is inarguably vague and thus they can take the form of models, patterns and ideology as well. In addition, in many cases these norms are not written. However when they are written down they constitute European treaties and acquire the status of values that are to be implemented. There can be found essential values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law that supposedly every member state agrees on and others that are debatable. EU does not always define what these norms mean; let alone what their implementation means. Therefore, if normative power means that a pre-given set of norms with fixed meanings are to be imposed in specific contexts, then we should expect a differentiated result depending on various

factors. It should be noticed that the effects delivered from the close interaction between EU and member states are not neutral in terms of the political direction to which they lead. Put differently, the element of normativity that inheres in the nature of EU does not leave the trajectory of domestic political changes unaffected. This means that immaterial and sometimes elusive factors that affect domestic settings are intensely colored by the set of rules and standards that EU tries to establish. In this paper we try also to probe into the normative elements that relate to a broader democratization project propounded by the EU and the way that have been received by Greece, that is whether or not these elements have contributed to bringing about more democracy and how. In other words, by examining selected instances of political changes caused by Europeanization processes we will be able to assess what Europeanization means in terms of (domestic) democracy. So, the second factor that concerns this paper is how the impact of Europeanization on the institutions, politics and policies of Greece affects their democratic quality especially as regards the executive, the parliament, the parties and party system and civil society. That is, how Europeanization has been processed domestically mainly with respect to the democratic practices triggered by the interaction with the EU.

The Greek case is of particular interest for many reasons. Some of the most obvious are, firstly, the fact that both the EU and Greece have expressed ambivalent attitudes towards their relation. Second, the study of oscillations in the stages of this relation provides research with useful analytical tools and skills that can advance further political theory. Third, the Greek case qualifies as an extreme paradigm of Europeanization compared to other member states and as such can expose flaws and problems latent both in theory and practice. As regards the more subtle characteristics that differentiate the Greek case from others there are some critical points that deserve examination. To begin with, the very nature of the EU, namely the fact that it seems to be an intergovernmental and supranational organization at the same time, and the concomitant contradictions that this nature produces make the analysis of the changing political status even more challenging. These inherent contradictions mirror the implications of Europeanization processes for domestic structures making the latter vulnerable to changes that may alter their character. The impact on domestic governance, for example, has been quite peculiar. It could be alleged that Europeanization allowed for the enhancement of domestic governance and the improvement of the quality of policies. At the same time Europeanization is being regarded as a process that subtracts member states' competences, constrains their policy choices and even harms the framework of democratic accountability. In this regard various questions could be raised: Has Europeanization also a different dimension? Or more concretely, is it possible for countries to be afforded more power with respect to the quality and quantity of governance by it?. In the same vein, the implications for non-state actors merit consideration. We are not referring only to the traditional notions used to describe political systems and societies but also to others such as mentality and collective reflexes, which, in our view need to be analyzed. In spite of the various problems that Europeanization seems to create in various countries, it is worth exploring and revealing the transformative potential of Europeanization when it applies to a specific context, namely that of Greece.

Taking all these into consideration we set out to trace the links between Europeanization and the evolution of the domestic setting concerning mainly the political and social format. Following several lines of inquiry, we place a premium on the dimensions, mechanisms and outcomes of

Europeanization<sup>1</sup>. Admittedly, the trajectory of the Greek politics has been heavily affected by the EU. But for EU, many of the domestic developments would not have happened, and others, presumably, would have occurred differently, or would have been hindered. However, this should not be perceived as forming an interpretative path whereby every change or evolution has to be ascribed to the EU. The relation between EU and Democracy appears to be tenuous, thus the task of tracing elements of Democratization that the processes of Europeanization can bring about is challenging. Whether the impact on Democracy can be construed as side-effect or intended effect is also a matter of a case-study analysis. Lastly, this paper is instigated by the fact that many of the phenomena that are examined herein have not been viewed sufficiently through the lens of Europeanization.

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<sup>1</sup> Emphasis on these three factors has been placed both by Börzel, Tanja A./Risse, Thomas and Ladrech. See further, Börzel, Tanja A./Risse, Thomas 2007: *Europeanization: The Domestic Impact of EU Politics*, in: Jorgensen, Knud Eric/Pollack, Mark A./Rosamund, Ben (Eds.): *Handbook of European Union Politics*, London, pp 483-504. And Robert Ladrech, *Europeanization and National Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), ch. 1, p 22.

## Conceptualizing Europeanization

To begin with, the term itself entails various obvious notions as one can instantly think. Europe as a continent is supposedly considered to be a pretty much homogeneous, understood and comprehensible political-social space that differs significantly and in many ways from other geographical territories. So, it is clear from the very beginning that this concept carries implicitly connotations of an attempt to assert a strong and unique identity by differentiating Europe from other regions in many distinct and noticeable terms. That said, we should not deduce that Europeanisation is not arranged in line with the process of globalization. Rather the opposite is truth; more specifically, the process of Europeanisation is a means of moving towards or co-creating a globalised world, yet primarily “under the auspices” of EU. In the same vein, Europeanisation can be seen as a co-ordinated plan and practice that opens and smooths the path to participating in the ongoing globalizing trends. Next to this connotation, stands the remarkable phenomenon of the EU described as a unique political achievement. Indeed, the complex character of the EU, which is reflected in the problem of producing a comprehensive definition of it, is deemed to be unparalleled. It is neither a simply inter-governmental cooperation between sovereign states nor a fully-featured and absolute supranational entity; it is rather a mix of both. Hence, it is only natural that discussions about Europeanisation have as their core subject the emergence of EU.

Another idea that pertains to the concept of Europeanisation is that of European integration. Integration is associated with two elements that are often regarded as indistinguishable and used interchangeably. More specifically, the first implied element is that of expansion, as a progressive quantitative enlargement of the EU, meaning that more and more nation states becoming (or are to become) part of the EU. In addition to this, expansion refers to the increasing powers that the EU aspires or seeks to assume. The second element points to a qualitative kind of integration that appertains to the political, social, monetary and cultural unification<sup>2</sup> of all member states through the mediation of the EU, whose role would be that of safeguarding, diffusing and reinforcing what is deemed to be common among them. Another point to be noticed is that European integration and Europeanisation are often taken to be either as identical notions or as if the one is subsumed into the other. Despite both of them being centered on the way EU has radically changed politics, it is common to hypothesize that Europeanisation implies a broader process of influencing nation states not just in formal means, be it through legislation, directives and common policy-making, but primarily as a force that can have great influence on intangible aspects of political and social life, for example by forging attitudes, formulating cultural patterns as well as developing a common European identity. On the other hand, European integration has quite often a reference to the explicit, methodical and official fashion through which the EU endeavors to develop a unified political entity by assimilating the idiosyncrasies of each member state into a higher and abstract level. Integration is indeed embedded in the concept of Europeanization,

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<sup>2</sup> This can be further explained for example if we assume that member states influence one another in terms of setting rules, legislation, as well as co-opting moral standards that have political significance. See also a discussion on “political isomorphism” in Harmsen, Robert and Thomas M. Wilson (eds.). *Europeanization: Institutions, Identities and Citizenship*, *Yearbook of European Studies* No. 14 (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi Press, 2000), p 15

but it could be argued that serves as an interpretative tool when it comes to conceptualizing the intensification of influence that EU has upon its member states, measured in terms of economic, legal and political integration. Anywise, we are faced with a multidimensional European evolution on which we ought to reflect bearing in mind that this subject can be construed by diversified approaches.

EU in its current arrangement is not just a type of a simple short-term multitudinous alliance that intends to deliver mutual benefits with regard to specific and predetermined goals. Instead, its nature as it has been transformed during the last decades, reveals that it has reached a level of authority that transcends (or even oversteps) the bonds with its constituents. Is it that nation states consented to create an abstract entity-authority to which would be subject? In that regard, it is important to refer to the complex setting which EU has created and through which exerts its power. EU governance is multi-leveled in that it plays a dual key role in the formation of the authority at domestic and international level, and most importantly because it delineates the correlation between these two levels. A definition that is relevant to the aforementioned concept of Europeanization refers to it as:

“The emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance ,that is, of political, legal and social institutions that formalize and routinize interactions among the actors, and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative European rules”.<sup>3</sup>

This definition highlights the authoritative and formal character of the EU construction and at the same time stresses the top-down relation between the EU and the stakeholders involved within its functioning. Top-down means of course that there is a quite strict hierarchy and virtually everything is passed down to the lower ranking members, namely the member states. Thus, member states are in a sense degenerated into mere recipients of a body of policies that supposedly are designed and chosen by synergistic procedures. Nation-states need to familiarize themselves with this new reality, be ready to adjust to the new context that emerges and to accommodate to the demands with which are faced. According to Ladrech, Europeanization ought to be thought as:

“an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making”.<sup>4</sup>

Again, this line of reasoning regards EU as a quasi-autonomous entity that rules over the member states. The latter seem to be burdened with having to adhere to the rules imposed on them as if the existence of the EU is totally different from the way they themselves exist. What follows logically is the question of whether or not member states are responsive to these changes and to what extent they are capable or willing to realize them.

Another definition that accentuates the accumulated power of EU is that of Lawton. He suggests that Europeanization is the de jure transfer of sovereignty to the EU level, and distinguishes this concept

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<sup>3</sup> Bartolini Stefano, Thomas Risse and Bo Strath. 1999. *Between Europe and the Nation State : The Reshaping of Interests, Identities, and Political Representation*. Florence : Robert Shuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, p 25

<sup>4</sup> Robert Ladrech, *Europeanisation and National Politics*, Basingstoke : Palgrave MacMillan, 2010, ch 1.



from 'Europeification', that is, the de facto sharing of power between national governments and the EU.<sup>5</sup>

In the same line, Börzel defines Europeanization as a "process by which domestic policy areas become increasingly subject to European policy-making".<sup>6</sup>

Evidently, the concept of sovereignty is being faced with the most complex challenges at this moment in time. Even if the nation-state of the 19<sup>th</sup> century seems to still exist as a formation in the contemporary world, the member states of the EU cannot anymore be seen and analyzed in the same way since the European Integration has taken place and affected so decidedly their power. There can be no reference to European states, especially after the 1980's, without a reference to the EU, a unique formation which originates from its member states but is at the same time distinct from them, holding the position of a quasi-independent organism. Nation-state's sovereignty is deeply affected in multiple levels for many policies and decisions are formed and implemented directly by the EU organs. A typical example of this incident is the Common Agricultural Policy and in general many decisions of the European Commission. Furthermore, the monetary policy is centrally regulated, which constitutes one of the biggest limitations concerning states' sovereignty. On top of that, European Law has, over the years, achieved a quasi-constitutional status since it is directly applicable to the member states and the European Court of Justice has indisputably played an important role towards this direction with its decisions<sup>7</sup>.

Additionally, another important definition (broader and more inclusive in certain aspects than the previous ones) that also stresses the top-down character of Europeanisation is that of Radaelli. According to him the concept of Europeanisation refers to:

"Processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies".<sup>8</sup>

Nonetheless, we should consider the possibility of state's sovereignty being empowered by Europeanization processes and the interaction with the EU. It is possible for example to assume that in certain aspects state sovereignty can be reinforced through the mediation of the EU. In order for this to become visible though, we will need to delve into the specific ways through which EU impacts on political settings considering the historic factors and identifying key variables.

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<sup>5</sup> Lawton, T. (1999) 'Governing the skies: Conditions for the Europeanisation of airline policy', *Journal of Public Policy*, 19(1): 91-112.

<sup>6</sup> Börzel, T. (1999) 'Towards convergence in Europe? Institutional adaptation to Europeanization in Germany and Spain', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39(4), December: 573-96.

<sup>7</sup> Palmowski Jan, *The Europeanization of the Nation-State*, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2011, 46(3) 631–657

<sup>8</sup> Whither Europeanization? Concept stretching and substantive change, Claudio M. Radaelli  
European Integration online Papers (EIoP) Vol. 4 (2000) N° 8; <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-008a.htm>

Another interesting definition that underlines the utility of Europeanization when it is used by domestic actors is that of Dyson and Goetz :

“Europeanization denotes a complex interactive ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ process in which domestic polities, politics and public policies are shaped by European integration and in which domestic actors use European integration to shape the domestic arena. It may produce either continuity or change and potentially variable and contingent outcomes”<sup>9</sup>

So far the definitions mentioned testify to the presence of a predetermined mindset concerning the conceptualization of the EU. That is, an abstract conception that separates artificially and perhaps violently EU from its member states. In our view this conception is partly valid, but only because the full potential of the EU has not been released yet. Subsequently, it is difficult for the various analytical endeavors to grasp the full dynamic of the EU project. That being the case, definitions ought to endeavor to grasp the truth by describing what is happening in reality, what is factually based. Nonetheless, the purpose and the subsequent utility of a definition do not exhaust other possibilities and the potential for launching a definition that would be both a reforming suggestion and an exposure of the latent dynamics of the issue at stake.

As we have already indicated what is missing from the aforementioned definitions, which in other respects are suggestive of a comprehensive understanding of Europeanisation, is the demonstration of the reciprocal, multilateral links between the EU as the main actor that delivers and stipulates changes at the level of nation states, and the nation states as actors that – through their responses to these demands- are able to effect change at a level transcending their domain. In order for this to happen we need to specify the content of this relation by inquiring into the specific adaptations or patterns of resistance expressed in specific countries. By doing this, we will put in test all the possible definitions and their strengths and weaknesses will become apparent. Moreover, different approaches can be vitalized and new interpretative strategies might emerge. The various forms of national mediation demonstrate the fact that the EU, as the main actor that characterizes Europeanisation, is an ongoing process which formulates itself by formulating others.

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<sup>9</sup> Dyson Kenneth Goetz Klaus, H 2003 Living with Europe: Power, Constraint and Contestation in Kenneth Dyson and Klaus H. Goetz (eds.), Germany, Europe and the Politics of Constraint, Oxford: Oxford University Press 3, p 35

## Conceptual specifications.

In relation to the case of Greece, the concept of Europeanisation is regarded as having a great breadth that renders its determination almost impossible. To have a vast and vague meaning of this notion, implies that it embraces and incorporates other notions that may or may not relate directly to what a strict definition of Europeanization would dictate<sup>10</sup>. However, as it is always the case, there is not a consolidated definition of Europeanisation that European Studies and Political Science Scholars would agree upon. Another reason that might thwart the development of a satisfactory and adequate definition is also that the term ‘Europeanisation’ is used by a variety of different social science disciplines. What lies behind this well-recognized problem is profoundly theoretical – in terms of methodology - and can be articulated as such: whatever is defined is constrained and limited. At first glance these perplexities seem to offer great leeway to anyone who tries to determine what Europeanisation means, how it works, and how it wields its power. If virtually any change or reform can be attributed to the effects of the EU’s projects then the political analysts have a seemingly unconditioned task as regards (their) methodology and interpretative coherence. The complications caused by this conceptual stretching should be born constantly in mind. Is, for example, Europeanisation, something that derives solely from EU? In other words, would we approach national politics –and subsequently the internationalization thereof- radically differently were it not for the EU? Furthermore, if, for instance, we presume that everything is Europeanised to a certain degree, would it not be legitimate to ask: what is not Europeanised after all?<sup>11</sup>

This said, we should not surmise that definitions are useless for they either constrain what is being defined or are based on a subjective approach that opts for accentuating the points that considers more important. Definitions cast light on different aspects of the subject-matter, thus emphasizing on facets that when associated with actual phenomena, that is to say, phenomena which the interpreter experiences, brings into existence the link between theory and praxis. This is prominently evident in specific case studies, which demonstrate this linkage clearly and thus demonstrate the theoretical utility of different definitions and conceptualizations. In this regard, Europeanization as Greece has been experiencing it makes us think about the inevitable relations between theory and practice in a context where the tension of this linkage creates new problems or amplifies the already existing. Yet, on the other hand, it should be highlighted that the impact of Europeanization has also facilitated the development of problem-solving strategies.

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<sup>10</sup> As Featherstone has pointed out: ‘Europeanization is a term that can be stretched in different directions at the cost of some debasing of its meaning’, Featherstone, K. (1999): ‘The British Labour Party from Kinnock to Blair: Europeanism and Europeanization’, paper presented to ECSA Biennial Conference, Pittsburgh, 2-5 June.

<sup>11</sup> Whither Europeanization? Concept stretching and substantive change, Claudio M. Radaelli  
European Integration online Papers (EIoP) Vol. 4 (2000) N° 8; <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-008a.htm>, p 7  
. Also, more illustrative : [...] Europeanization is supposed to explain processes of cultural change, new identities formation, policy change, administrative innovation, and even modernization. It covers the formation of European public policy and the effects of EU decisions on national systems. It affects member states but also the wider world, as there is undoubtedly Europeanization of policy in countries applying for EU membership.

A question whose answer is indispensable for the revitalization of EU project's concept is this: Is it possible for heterogeneous nation-states to transform themselves in order to comply with a suggested model? And most importantly, is the demand for the establishment of an integrated and united setting a good strategy in the long run? Put differently, screening out political differences can result either in the strengthening of a union/alliance/cooperation or in their weakening. Bearing heterogeneity in mind could prevent us from identifying Europeanisation with the discovering of national policies that converge with what EU dictates.<sup>12</sup> This urges us to think that divergence, displayed by member states, can lead to a reverse Europeanisation, namely the Europeanisation of the EU itself. The paradoxical relation between the EU - and even the whole process of Europeanisation - and the participating or affected member states can be expressed like this: the establishment/creation of the EU and even of what we think as a common European shared space, does not seem to be strongly connected with the putative creators of the EU. Thus, in order for this deficit to be redressed, theory of Europeanisation should also demonstrate how the EU can be affected by the member states themselves. Further to this, political practice could be re-orientated both at EU and national level in ways suggested by theoretical analyses. In fact, as long as EU perceive itself not only as an economic corporation but also as an integrated system of shared values, theory needs to make known how the distinct political entities, namely the participating member states, could project essential features of their idiosyncrasy to an upper level. This level could serve as an intermediate institution through which states will come together to challenge first and foremost themselves and to re-evaluate their overall performance. So, it could be argued that the EU can be constantly Europeanized in many different and imperceptible ways.

Through the EU many value differences can be re-evaluated and re-examined in the light of the belief that countries located relatively close to each other have many things in common. All kinds of unions, co-operations, alliances, of which EU is a salient example, are supposed to both strengthen the practice and dynamics of politics and enhance the conception of democracy and human rights. Seen as a normative actor EU is faced with this question: By what means could the equilibrium of power between the EU and the member states be reached or restored? Or to put it differently, in which ways and to what extent could both EU and member states be empowered by their association? Along with tracing what is being Europeanized at both sides in their current status and to what extent<sup>13</sup>, it is also pertinent to query how this process takes place in every single member state.

Taking into account how precarious is to assume that Europeanisation is an easily traceable phenomenon we need to delineate the proper methodological strategy so as not to run the risk of getting domestically-driven reforms mixed up with EU-driven changes. Research needs to problematize whether or not we are qualified to apply the model of causality when examining Europeanisation processes<sup>14</sup>. In addition to this concern, the origin and the direction of causal links have to be taken into account, since there is the possibility of encountering instances where a transformation is, or at least has the characteristics of being, a cause and an effect at the same time. The difficulty of discovering

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p 6

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p 7

<sup>14</sup> Exadaktylos, Theofanis and Claudio Radaelli (eds.), *Research Design in European Studies: Establishing Causality in Europeanization* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

what is Europeanized and through which mechanisms<sup>15</sup> is amplified owing to the fact that the concept of Europeanization in relation to Greece is very broad as said. Hence, to isolate the alleged effects of Europeanization and to dissociate them from other causes is a risky move. Nonetheless, we contend that in the case of Greece it is feasible to concretize the meaning and the effects of Europeanization. A useful methodological observation that pertains to this issue was offered by Goetz. According to him: ‘‘alternative explanations for changes observed are rarely considered systematically in the context of Europeanization research’’<sup>16</sup>. In the same vein, Haverland<sup>17</sup> urged the importance of putting in test research findings by employing counterfactual reasoning as well as utilizing examples of non-EU case studies in order not to misconstrue both the findings and the nature of Europeanization itself. These remarks are definitely of great value and keeping them in mind will be a valuable asset to undertaking this type of research.

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<sup>15</sup> Whither Europeanization? Concept stretching and substantive change, Claudio M. Radaelli  
European Integration online Papers (EIoP) Vol. 4 (2000) N° 8; <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-008a.htm>, wherein these two questions are central.

<sup>16</sup> Goetz, K. (2000) Europeanizing the national executive? Western and eastern style,  
Paper prepared for the UACES 30th annual conference , Budapest, 6-8 April 2000, p 19

<sup>17</sup> Haverland, Markus. ‘Does the EU cause Domestic Developments?: The Problem of Case Selection in Europeanization Research’, European Integration Online Papers vol. 9 no. (2005). <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2005-002a.htm>

## Methodological considerations- Case specific method

With regard to the Greek case, the right formula to handle the prominent issue of identifying the impact of Europeanization is to look at the ways Greece was conditioned into dealing with its chronic problems until the time when the pressure from EU (mainly induced by the will to create the monetary union) became sensible. When the problems from which a country suffers draw the attention of the EU then they acquire a more international status and the way they are dealt with might change. So, to start with, the pivotal point regarding the process of Europeanisation can be said to be the moment when the EU turned its attention to each of its members in order to find out if they could fulfill the requirements pertaining to the creation of the common monetary system.

With respect to Greece, state problems assumed a more international status in the late 1990s and thus the impact of Europeanization processes became more measurable. This occurred mostly for two reasons. Firstly, until the beginning of the 1990s the administration of the country did not place great emphasis on the fact that Greece was a member of the European community. This is not as bizarre as it might possibly seem because, evidently, the European community was at a preliminary and exploratory stage at that time. In addition to this, we should keep in mind that the country was at the beginning of a new era with the wounds from the civil war and the junta (which ended in 1974) be recent and in a sense present. Hence, it is reasonable to presume that the administrations followed that period concerned themselves mostly with domestic issues. The latter is important because when examining the impact of Europeanization on a national setting we should take into consideration how strongly each country is willing to let external factors permeate their format. It is thought that the impact of Europeanization, owing to the fact that most times is regarded as an external power, can be felt irrespective of whether a country is or is not receptive to these processes. This means that Europeanization processes do not have an inevitable impact on member states. Even if Europeanization is regarded solely as having an external origin it must be noticed that after all a cooperative “attitude” is required in order that the impact become sensible. Hence, we need to discern more focal points with regard to Europeanisation processes in general and particularly in Greece. The determination of the time when the in-house affairs became a point in question at a different and upper level is one part of the equation. The other parts relate to the way member states effected changes by using their own powers and thus coming closer to an ideal model of exercising politics suggested by the EU. Arguably, the cooperation between these two stakeholders - a relation which could be seen as that of the whole and the part - introduces the distinction between endogenous and exogenous endeavors targeting ostensibly at the same goal.

Another point worth-noting in the attempt to determine the manner through which Europeanization takes place, is to delve into the results that every such enterprise has, namely to examine whether the reconstitution of a state -which is considered to be the outcome of a Europeanisation process- would not have occurred unless this state had been a member of the EU. Moreover, another challenge that we need to attend to is related to the distinction between the tangible and measurable impact that the process of Europeanization brings about and the intangible, immaterial effects that occur due to this process. The former become manifest in institutions, formal commitments, institutionalization of mechanisms and the latter in changes in the quality of governance, in the orientation of policies that aim at the realization of long-term goals, as well as in the retooling of the mentality of peoples.



So, the time when a “Europeanization program” initiated, as a purposeful and productive process, is only one component of the analysis. Others include for example how Greece perceived itself as a member of the Union. Featherstone’s insightful approach suggested that for Greece, Europeanisation equals to modernization<sup>18</sup>. However we should take into account that this conception does not relate necessarily to the evolution of the EU. This means that modernization was taken to be not just a need for achieving progress from a political or economic point of view, but also a deliberated effort to follow the example of western European countries in respect of their lifestyle, i.e. in a very broad sense. Being a European meant automatically that one acquires a much more important status. In the case of Greece the willingness to follow European standards was combined with the need for creating a domestic environment that could accommodate the transformation of state’s functioning as it was expected by the EU. So, the effects of Europeanisation, carried by the EU as the main actor of it, gradually became evident across the political spectrum. Governments took seriously the meaning of the membership of the state in the EU thus reshaping the concept of national interest.

It could be argued that probably the most profound impact of Europeanization processes on the Greek state bears upon the concept of national interest. The widening of EU’s powers along with the intensification of the interaction between EU and Greece led to the reorientation of the idea of commonweal. EU was not seen only as a role model as regards governance but also as an economic apparatus through which progress could be achieved. As a result extrovert tendencies appeared and facilitated the interconnection between the national and the EU interest. The passive role that Greece used to hold until then had to be transformed and this need changed domestic political configurations as well as the way to exercise foreign policies. The increasingly enlarged EU project was seen as a chance for Greece to overhaul its capabilities so as to reach a generally upgraded level. This suggests that the task of becoming more ‘European’ meant that the state had to undergo a major manifold change in order to be considered as an active member of the Union. The only option was to adapt to the new and complex European setting and put in test state capabilities both at the domestic and the international level. The competencies that the EU had assumed could no longer be ignored and in order for Greece to meet the necessary requirements many national structures and policy-making processes had to be arranged differently<sup>19</sup>. This led to two outcomes. Firstly, the chronic problems besetting the country draw the attention of EU institutions, which offered suggestions in order for these issues to be dealt with, giving at the same time significant leeway to the administration so as to decide what problem-solving strategy should follow. The problems that we are referring to, such as bureaucratic inefficiency, clientelism, irrational statism and corruption, led to, among other things, economic stagnation. It is important to realize that for Greece it was difficult to deal with these domestic problems, let alone with the challenges that Europeanization itself offered. However, the opportunity for a better domestic management was now afforded.

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<sup>18</sup> Featherstone, K. (2005). Introduction: 'Modernization' and the structural constraints of Greek politics. *West European Politics*, 28(2), 223-241.

<sup>19</sup> Harmsen, Robert and Thomas M. Wilson (eds.). *Europeanization: Institutions, Identities and Citizenship*, Yearbook of European Studies No. 14 (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi Press, 2000) ,p 14, where the concept of Europeanisation as national adaptation is discussed.

Having the EU as a partner in a try to rectify such deeply- rooted problems is a great asset, not only because of the assistance that EU can provide but also because the problems now concern the EU itself. Thus, governments could put pressure on actors that hindered domestic progress, because, evidently, reforms that set out to sideline partial or sectional interests in order to promote a broader sense of public good rarely enjoy a wide political approbation. On top of that, even if such reforms gained momentum, they were abandoned quickly when the incumbent administration believed that the dissatisfaction with the proposed measures would be considerable. The political cost that administrations hesitate to undertake has always been one of the biggest obstacles to progress. However, if states are under external pressure to proceed with profound and necessary modifications then they are in a better position to convince the citizenry for the long-term benefits that will come after<sup>20</sup>.

With regard to the citizenry of a traditional nation state, we can see that the transformative potential of Europeanization can affect the way peoples perceive themselves, since they are now regarded as parts of a larger group. Although processes of Europeanisation have not managed to create a sense of belonging to a European family yet, national identities -while interacting with each other in an internationalized framework- have surely become more receptive to reflecting on their saliency. Additionally, territorial boundaries have become greatly flexible, an evolution that has a profound impact on the development of communicative skills of peoples, the mitigation of cultural differences as well as on the way they think of others in general. Apart from all the suggestions mentioned above, which are indicative of the way that the concept of Europeanization applies specifically to Greece, we should take note of Greece's experiencing globalization in general. We could argue that the instrument with which Greece moves towards and comes closer to a globalized context is the EU, as the main actor that carries out Europeanisation. EU not only contributes to creating a unified space including aspects of trade, goods, services etc, but also functions as a supranational agent that interacts with other international or intergovernmental entities, a fact that has a significant impact on the formation of the foreign policy of each member state.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p 15 : Europeanisation as problem and opportunity for domestic political management.



## Contextualizing Europeanization

The initial purpose of Greece's joining the European Community, besides the need for economic re-development, can be summarized in the following way. As a relatively new democracy, since the military junta ended in 1974, Greece deemed that the participation in the European Community was a great opportunity that would assist the country's endeavors to strengthen and deepen its democratic course within a rapidly changing European space. Consolidating democracy is by definition an extremely challenging undertaking. Even if the vast majority of the people ardently endorsed the dissolution of the dictatorship – many social struggles against that regime took place during this seven year period<sup>21</sup> - and the advent of democracy, a process of political osmosis was needed. Political stability was seen as a matter of necessity, and the external support was thought to be essential for the restoration of the political system in general and of the economy in particular. Moreover, in order for this to happen the state had to be secure from possible external threats and to inaugurate a new strategy regarding its foreign relations, especially in Europe, by taking advantage of its location as a natural border between Europe and the East.<sup>22</sup>

We maintain that Europeanization in the context of Greece can be divided into two different stages. The first, as we have already indicated spans from the late 1990's until 2009 and the second from 2009 to date. The reason that makes the drawing of this line indispensable relates to the acute outbreak of a financial crisis which influenced and to some extent still influences the global economy. Greece was found in the middle of the storm with its chronic problems being fused with new ones, which had in a large degree an external origin. The other occasion that leads us to drawing this line is the determining reconstitution<sup>23</sup> of the EU brought by the Treaty of Lisbon. The transformations that have been observed since then both at the domestic and the European level are striking and unprecedented. Actually we would not exaggerate if we argued that this occurrence signified a new era both for Greek and EU politics.

Europeanisation processes of the late 1990's are marked by the 'modernization' strategy launched by the one of the two prevailing political parties that had been governing alternately for almost two decades. More specifically, this strategy was pronounced by the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (P.A.S.O.K) after winning the elections in 1996. Interestingly, this same party when first came to power in 1981, immediately after the official accession of Greece to the European Community, held a quite skeptical position towards the EU and many aspects of the integration project. This can be corroborated, for example, from a memorandum submitted to the European Community in 1982, requesting special provisions that would not obligate Greece to implement certain EC policies since it was professed that the country had limited capacities with regard to delivering the anticipated results. For this reason, the Integrated Mediterranean Programs (IMPs), approved by the Commission in 1985, provided sizable funds with a view to restructure the Greek economy. Because of this positive impact on economy, from 1988, when Greece held its second Presidency of the EC, and onwards it seemed to

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<sup>21</sup> The most memorable and significant of them being the uprising at the polytechnic school of Athens in 1973.

<sup>22</sup> Tsoukalas, L. (ed.) (1979): *Greece in the European Community*, London: Saxon House. A work particularly interesting due to the time when it was written.

support the integration project and to consent to the strengthening of EU institutions (Commission, Parliament) as well as the cooperation in the domains of foreign relations, security and environment. Essentially, until the late 1990's the Europeanisation project and the stance of Greece within the European community was not part neither of the prevailing political agendas of administrations nor of the debates concerning the improvement of the domestic state of affairs. The overwhelming majority of political actors -except from the Greek Communist Party- seemed to have a positive stance towards the EC, but without considering the direct or indirect effects that the EC could or should provoke in the domestic configurations. Greece supported the adoption of a European Constitution and espoused the Treaty of Lisbon seeking the deepening of Integration in various sectors as well as in terms of the enlargement of the EU by advocating in favor of Cyprus' accession. Finally, the struggle to meet the convergence criteria set by the Maastricht Treaty which would lead to the full participation in the Economic and Monetary Union was deemed to be relatively successful and the single currency was adopted in 2002. A point worth-noting is that Greece had not concerned its European partners so much because of the fact that the country was thought to be in the middle of a Europeanization process that would eventually render it capable of being at grade with the other European countries. Indeed, Greece was thought as a consensual partner who was building a stabilized state<sup>23</sup>.

The second most profound economic impact on Greece was the aid offered from the EU and the International Monetary Fund, after an agreement had reached in early 2010. The financial crisis began to affect the Euro and the corollary was that Greece along with other countries of the EU periphery had to face the downsizing of their capabilities as a result of this downturn in the economy. The important thing that this incident revealed was that the meaning of Europeanisation had not been internalized significantly in Greece, even though from the late 1990's and onwards different administrations proclaimed the need to follow the standards set by the EU. Even if, as we have already mentioned, the ambition to modernize Greece was also an endogenous demand, which means that the whole domestic setting was conducive to such endeavors, already known and deeply-rooted pathologies proved to be continuous and persistent.

As Featherstone puts it, the idea of modernization which stigmatized the first era of Europeanization referred to "the package of economic, social and political reforms defined by their liberalizing character, advocated by Costas Simitis whilst he was Prime Minister from 1996 to 2004. The explicit purpose of Simitis' project was to secure Greece's position at the core of the EU"<sup>24</sup>. With the EU pushing for Greece's meeting the criteria<sup>25</sup> for accessing to the single currency, the divergence between the EU and Greece became more and more apparent, especially from an economic point of view. However, we should not infer that the "Copenhagen program" had exclusively to do with economic reforms. By this we mean that when it comes to Greece and the countries of the south periphery as

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<sup>23</sup> Pagoulatos George 2003 *Greece's New Political Economy: State, Finance and Growth from Postwar to EMU* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

<sup>24</sup> Featherstone, K. (2005). Introduction: 'Modernization' and the structural constraints of Greek politics. *West European Politics*, 28(2), 223-241, p 225

<sup>25</sup> Some of the most important being reducing inflation, interest rates, public debt and public deficits to three per cent of GNP.

well, it had a meaning that exceeded the domain of economy; it was perceived - partly out of necessity - as a quite comprehensive plan that could bring these countries closer to a standardized European setting. This supports the idea that, every commitment, directive or compulsory measure coming from the EU level, even if it is purported to be arranging just a specified sector of politics, it actually affects and penetrates explicitly or implicitly all the other sectors of a given political system. It is crucial that we take into account this remark, namely the fact that the impact of Europeanization might be complicated, since it has significant implications for the methodology deployed. This means that even if we examine the economic impact of Europeanization it appears that in effect, it cannot be isolated from other collateral effects that it produces. As a result when a Europeanization effect that allegedly has a relatively limited impact influences different spheres of a specific country setting, then it is only natural that this kind of spillover be introduced into the way domestic responses are formed. In the Greek case particularly, as it will be explained later, in order for the adaptation to the demands imposed by the EU be successful, it was imperative that the country reconstruct its political system in a way that would reflect the values, norms and principles of the EU<sup>26</sup>.

Along with the economic reforms that the then administration set out to introduce, including privatization plans, liberalization of the labor market and the limitation of state's intervening tendencies with regard to the way economy operates, a Constitutional reform was passed, in which the principle of the social welfare state was enshrined. This fact is particularly interesting since it is difficult to imagine that it is feasible to restore harmony between the social welfare state and economic reforms that are characterized by liberalist principles. So, from the very beginning we are faced with a paradoxical situation that implies the confused and complex reaction to the forces of Europeanisation.

The inclusion of the liberalist rationale in the Greek economy, obvious in this period of compromising domestic policies with those of EU, is a matter of great importance as far as the Greek understanding of Europeanization impact is concerned. The Greek State whose jurisdiction, control and authority were quite pervasive, covering a wide array of structures, was about to undergo drastic changes. The project of Europeanizing was linked with a liberalization project which shook the foundation of the state conceived as powerful and protective. The over-centralized state apparatus and the fact that this apparatus was constantly overloaded with an immense array of duties, was perceived eventually as a problem. For example, the enormous number of people working in the public sector which made the state by far the biggest employer in the market, the high amount of public expenditure as a share of GDP and the extensive regulatory role performed by the state<sup>27</sup> had to be dealt with. Especially, in the

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<sup>26</sup> Friis, L., and A. Murphy (1999): 'The European Union and central and eastern Europe: Governance and boundaries', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 37, p.2.

<sup>27</sup> P.C. Ioakimidis (2000) *The Europeanization of Greece: An Overall Assessment*, *South European Society and Politics*, 5:2, 73-94, pp 76-77. The evidence that Ioakimidis provide with regard to the public sector and the public expenditure are impressive: "Over-employment in the public sector constituted one of the main traits of the state's gigantism. The number of public sector employees amounted in 1981 to 351,028 people, rising to 615,956 people in 1992, or 17 per cent of the total Greek population. This meant that one in six Greeks or one in three employed in the tertiary sector were working in the public sector. [...] The level of public expenditure reflected also the gigantism of the Greek state. Total public expenditure amounted in 1981 to 49.6 per cent of Greek GDP, much higher than the EU average, while public debt rose from 17.6 per cent of GDP in 1970 to 28.3 per cent in 1981, and 112 per cent in 1986", *ibid.* See also Tsoukalas, C. (1986) *Κρατος Κοινωνια Εργασια στη Μεταπολεμικη Ελλαδα* [State, Society, Labour in Post-War Greece], Athens: Themelio.

areas of production the state had a highly influencing position. In fact the state was not restricted to exercise pervasive control over private economic activities; on the contrary the state itself was an entrepreneur. The excessive number of public businesses that were being set up made the emergence of competition extremely difficult<sup>28</sup>. The expansion of public sector, which served as a means of maintaining cliental relations between the parties in power and their supporters, was another symptom of the decay of economy and political culture. Privatization policies spread turbulence throughout the country showing the clash between the established mindset concerning the role and the powers of the state and external ways of perceiving politics.

The privatization agenda perhaps it was not a direct and compelling obligation posed by the EU<sup>29</sup>, but with regard to the Greek state, the only way to handle this pressure was thought to be by implementing privatization policies<sup>30</sup>. In our view, this instance is indicative of the way some rules/directions/recommendations emanating from the EU central policy-making, even if they claim to be non-binding and thus optional to a certain extent, turn out to be perceived as obligatory by different member states. One possible explanation might be that, states whose economic condition is unstable do not have the leeway and the flexibility to modify these direct or indirect pressures in an advantageous for their long-term existence way. Economies that struggle to find their way are most times tied to patterns of tradition and every attempt to rectify their defaults should take under consideration the potential shortcomings that might follow from a rigorous alteration. Hence, this particular endeavor of the Greek administration to comply with the demands of the EU, politically and economically speaking, demonstrates some of the perplexities that Europeanization impact bears as regards country-specific adaptations and responses. Even if some proposed changes seem to be successful with regard to their merits at a theoretical level, things are different when they are contextualized in a specific time and place. The problem lies in that not all suggestions are suitable for every country, that is, they should not be thought as independent from the domestic idiosyncrasies, which inarguably play a decisive role in implementing reforms successfully. The latter brings us back to the concern related to the lack of a two-way policy-making process that would allow member states to be instrumental in reaching goals by taking into account their available capabilities and skills. One-sided directions can have from little to no results. So, it could be argued that domestic policies blind to the shortcomings of EU's suggestions might have contrasting results and thus hamper the whole positive content and potential that the impact of Europeanization can have. Domestic policies, which have arisen entirely because of the excessive will to conform to the EU and embrace the alterations that it involves can have adversarial results. States' capabilities might often render EU's paradigms, rules and norms powerless

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<sup>28</sup> The nationalization of many banks as well as of the Olympic airlines took place that period for example.

<sup>29</sup> Featherstone, K. (2005). Introduction: 'Modernisation' and the structural constraints of Greek politics. *West European Politics*, 28(2), 223-241, p 232 : "Single market legislation requires the liberalisation of state monopolies in various sectors (e.g. telecommunications, transport), but it does not require a change in the ownership structure of the state enterprise itself".

<sup>30</sup> Christos Dimas, *Privatization in the Name of 'Europe': analyzing the telecoms privatization in Greece from a 'discursive institutionalist' perspective*, GreeSE Paper No 41 Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe November 2010. This article deals particularly with privatization in relation to Europeanisation in Greece.

when applied in specific contexts. The “goodness of fit”, a concept which represents an attempt to operationalise that of Europeanization<sup>31</sup> is methodologically relevant to what has been said already. Pre-existing national models, practices and institutions may or may not be appropriate for the accommodation of what is decided at the European level. All the adaptive pressures are mediated by existing domestic institutions and practices and the outcome of such pressures is heavily dependent on the responsiveness and the exact characteristics of these domestic structures. On that account, miscellaneous domestic responses and reactions could be a source of reflection when it comes to re-thinking the appropriateness of every EU proposition that is to be launched.

Taking into account all the distinct elements mentioned above and also their interplay incites us to think that in the case of Greece the concept of Europeanisation obliged the state to realize its structural problems and most importantly to confront them in different ways, many of them dictated by the EU itself. We hold that the term structural state problem is particularly pertinent to the Greek case. “Structural” denotes the fact that deficiencies and flaws were embedded in the fabric of institutions and they seemed to be, to a large extent, independent of the governance of administrations in power and their ideological backgrounds. For example the intervening role of the state in almost any sector of economic life and its gigantic character remained untouched by the different governmental formations. Hence, for Greece it was vital to reach a better level as regards many aspects of state functioning, because the full participation in the new format that was being stipulated by the EU was seen as necessary for the sustainability of the country. Greece could not afford to be isolated in a more and more globalised environment so, it had to be reconstituted. But to conform to the EU logic seemed a particularly difficult task due to the great differences in the political culture and it is for that reason why the impact of Europeanization is more visible in the Greek than in other political settings.

The way a country considers the role and the opportunities offered by the EU affects its position in it<sup>32</sup>. The Greek case is indicative of an intended and purposeful attempt to Europeanize (and modernize) itself, in contrast to other cases where the impact of Europeanization is not so strong and the adoption to the EU demands is a natural process that only necessitates a certain level of responsiveness<sup>33</sup>. So, despite the domestic resistance to the impact of Europeanization on economy the then administration took the opportunity to introduce some critical reforms. The reduction of public deficit, which accounted for 12.5 percent in 1993 and by 1999 had decreased to 0.9 per cent, was a positive outcome of the reshaping of the economic policy. The latter included the reduction of public expenditure, the reduction of employment in the state and the termination of financial support through state aids and

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<sup>31</sup> Cowles, J.A. Caporaso and T. Risse (eds.), *Transforming Europe: Europeanisation and Domestic Change*, Cornell University press, 2001, where the concept of “goodness of fit” is expressed and analyzed.

<sup>32</sup> As Ioakimidis points out: Greece regarded the EU “as an external power source and stimulus for advancing economic, social and political modernization”, p 74. A remark that successfully juxtaposes Greece’s understanding of Europeanisation with that of countries like Britain and France. P.C.Ioakimidis (2000) *The Europeanization of Greece: An Overall Assessment*, *South European Society and Politics*, 5:2, 73-94,

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, for the insightful conceptualization of Europeanisation into two basic types: (1) responsive Europeanization, and (2) intended Europeanization.



subsidies to public firms and enterprises<sup>34</sup>. Also, EU directives that aimed at creating a competitive internal single market brought about the gradual liberalization of the banking system which had been previously regulated almost entirely by the state<sup>35</sup>.

The former reforms were accompanied by state configurations both in terms of territorial composition and its relations to sub-national and regional authorities. Greece was a unitary, highly centralized and statist political system. That means that due to the discrepancy between the Greek and the EU logic as regards the concept of politics in itself, there were much more things susceptible to change than in other countries, which were conversant with other modes of political structure. As Schmidt argues: “the EU’s quasi-federal institutional structures have had a greater impact on member states with unitary institutional structures, by altering the traditional balance of powers among branches and levels of government, than to those with federal institutional structures, where the traditional balance of powers has been largely maintained”<sup>36</sup>. The difficulties in dealing with the new and unused economic policies demonstrated many aspects of the state’s impotence, because in order for such policies to be successfully realized there has to exist an analogous state organization. Besides the focus on the economic reforms that aimed at meeting the so-called “Copenhagen Criteria” for the full accession to the Economic and Monetary Union, which as we implied are better understood in connection with the delineation of the nature of the Greek state, attention should be drawn to the predominant position of the state. The virtually complete absence of regions in the policy-making process and their full dependence on the central state exemplifies the enormity of the powers that the central state had accumulated. As a result of this absence, civil society was more than underdeveloped. That being the case, it is almost meaningless to search for links between civil society and the EU. The only opportunity to get access to policy-making processes was by participating in one of the two ruling parties, and again this access would be both limited and superficial. And as it is always the case in contexts like this one, groups of economic interest find their way in influencing politics for their benefit with methods which can be characterized as at least non-transparent. Other interest groups were edged out, an occurrence that widened the distance between the ruling elite and the lay citizens. We should not be misled into thinking that the citizenry was satisfied with the degree of influence that held, due to the fact that the vast majority of the electorate affiliated with one of the two governing parties. In current systems of representative democracies voting is only one, amongst multiple, indicator of political expression and if it is not combined with other forms of political mobilization might often lead the assessment analysis to false conclusions.

The most important factor that led to the restructuring of Greece’s territorial divisions of power was the introduction of the cohesion and structural policy. The objective of the cohesion and structural policy, which is part of the larger regional policy of the EU, was to reduce economic, social and territorial disparities across member-states, as well as to enable underdeveloped regions to participate

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pp 81-82. And Christodoylakis (1994): ‘Fiscal Developments in Greece 1980-93: A Critical Review’, European Economy 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p 82

<sup>36</sup> Schmidt, VA. (1999): ‘The EU and its Member States: Institutional Contrasts and their Consequences’, MPIfG Working Paper 99/7, p 1

productively both at national and EU level. However, the demand for state decentralization had been present even before EU launched the plan for cohesion and structural policy. So, the modernization of public administration and regional-local government was being perceived as an urgent need that failed to materialize, mainly due to the domestic governmental inertia caused by the will to maintain an as much a centralist state as possible. The maintenance of the latter was thought to be necessary for the consolidation of whichever government took office. Hence, what was needed was the (external necessary stimulus<sup>37</sup>. The main impetus for these reforms was provided by the EU in an indirect way. The fact that the regional structures were underdeveloped made the implementation of the Integrated Mediterranean Programs (IMPs) impossible, since regions were supposed to be partners in the execution of the structural policy<sup>38</sup>. As a result, in order for the reforming of administration policy to be realized the “Kapodistrias Plan”<sup>39</sup> was passed in the parliament in 1997 and entered into force the next year. This law aimed at improving the capabilities of local authorities and putting an end to the fragmentation of the local and regional political apparatus. Sub-national authorities’ role as regards development, administration and policy-making was minor and the proposed reform was perceived to be an estimable attempt to breathe new life into the conception of (local and regional) governance<sup>40</sup>. It provided for the structuring of two levels of local authorities and a more decentralized regional administration. The first level local agencies, namely municipalities and communities were reduced drastically after merging with pre-existing administrative structures, thus facilitating the management of local problems. Additionally, a second level of local government was created with main agencies the prefectural self-administrations. Also, the country was divided into 13 administrative regions and the heads of the prefects instead of being appointed by the government, as it was the case in the previous years, i.e. before 1995, they would now be elected directly from their regions<sup>41</sup>. In that way, democracy was introduced at the local and regional level and subsequently regions held a much more autonomous status than they used to. Regions could seek to influence state-led policy outcomes and become active members of policy-making in regard to their distinct needs.

The same goes for other social actors whose importance was clearly understated. The relation between state and civil society had to be redefined and the first step towards this direction was the strengthening of civil society, which had not been quite active. This strengthening occurred in a subtle way and not as the outcome of a governmental policy. In fact, it occurred as a collateral effect of the Europeanisation

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<sup>37</sup> See N.K. Hlepas, *Multilevel Self-Governance – Theoretical Searches and Institutional Transformations*, Athens-Thessaloniki, Sakkoulas, 1994, pp. 43-44 [in Greek]. For a general overview, see A. Makrydemetres, A. Passas, *The Greek Administration and the Coordination of the European Policy*, Athens-Thessaloniki, Sakkoulas, 1994 [in Greek].

<sup>38</sup> P.C.Ioakimidis (2000) *The Europeanization of Greece: An Overall Assessment*, *South European Society and Politics*, 5:2, p 86

<sup>39</sup> Named after Ioannis Kapodistrias who was elected as the first head of state of independent Greece in 1827.

<sup>40</sup> See MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DECENTRALIZATION Program "IOANNIS KAPODISTRIAS". [http://www.ypes.gr/kapodistrias/english/kapo/fr\\_prog.htm](http://www.ypes.gr/kapodistrias/english/kapo/fr_prog.htm).

<sup>41</sup> *Structure and Operation of Local and Regional Democracy in Greece*, Athens, 2000. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/untc/unpan000205.pdf>.

processes described above. The limitation of state's powers and the reconstitution of many structures paved the way for the involvement of civil society, either in an organized way or not, in policy-making. Besides the indirect and subtle effects of Europeanization that resulted in the empowerment of civil society, there were also direct policies that facilitated this progress. European Commission's funding of social associations quadrupled between 1996 and 1998<sup>42</sup>. As a result the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and pressure groups increased as well as that of other economic associations and unions. This particular event is also indicative of the complex way through which Europeanisation works: the impact that is supposed to be limited in scope ends up to cause a sort of "domino effect" or in other words to create additional spillover effects.

Moreover, in addition to these developments, another one of major significance can be added. The establishment of the special committee on European affairs in parliament<sup>43</sup> in 1990 was a progressive evolution that empowered the parliament to exercise control over the relation between governments and the EU, thus restoring its role in the domestic political system.

Another important characteristic of this first period of Europeanisation is that it led to the lessening of ideological differences between the main political actors and especially between the two main governmental parties<sup>44</sup>, which contested the leadership. Demands, policy plans and recommendations deriving from EU were couched in neutral ideological terms and it is for that reason why the incumbent governments felt that they would not alter their ideological identity were they to embrace the underpinning rationale of the policies proposed. A reason that also contributed to this was that these policies were thought as identical with a "rationalization" process and thus to deny or reject them would give the impression of a government opposed not only to the EU but also to rational (political) thought. So, it can be argued that at this juncture the dominant political parties could maintain their identity differences at the domestic level and at the same time adhere to the EU policies which were regarded as "apolitical" in a sense. However, from that point onwards, the specific and distinct ideological characteristics that each of these parties claimed to uphold and because of which they were viewed as completely different, started to fade away. In other words, the Left-Right cleavage would be rendered negligible in the following years owing to the deeper penetration of the EU into the political system. Furthermore, this notion of rationality was coupled with a more technocratic approach to the policy-making. The need to produce positive results in conformity with the expectations of the EU meant that policy-making had to pass through a sort of an "enlightenment process" although without questioning the effectiveness or the intentions of the ideas on which this new project was premised. The new "political philosophy" that was introduced led gradually to the subtle lessening of ideological divisions as it is evident from the years followed. The new ideas pertaining to governance is a determining factor in order to shed light on the interpretation of Europeanization impact when examined in conjunction with a specific context. The EU propounded a new political model that concerned the very concept of

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p 89

<sup>43</sup> The treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam provided for the enhancement of the quality of the relationship between national parliaments and the EU.

<sup>44</sup> We are referring to the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PA.SO.K), the center-left party, and New Democracy (ND), which is the conservative center-right party. In the elections held in 1996 PA.SO.K received 41,49 % of the votes and ND 38,12%. Quite similarly, in the next national elections held in 2000 the percentages were 43,79 and 42,74 respectively.



governance in itself and not just financial or fiscal measures. Greece was faced with difficulties that would challenge the power of tradition and the dependence on inherited paths as well as the current governmental capabilities. At this critical juncture the issues of government competence and the role of state took precedence over other aspects involving processes of Europeanisation. Moreover, these evolutions questioned the pre-eminent position of parties in relation to the state apparatus since state governance was considered to be a kind of an awarded trophy. The need to separate the state apparatus from parties' influence emerged and the (extraordinary emotional) attachment of the electorate to the traditional parties started to wane.

## Europeanization as an external force.

Greece entered the second stage of its Europeanization process in 2009, as has already been indicated. Albeit, it should be borne in mind that the choice of this chronological mark is partly a convention that facilitates the illustration of some striking differences that we wish to expose. Furthermore, it goes without saying that, since the examination of Europeanisation requires a longitudinal analysis, all the alleged landmarks are of relative use.

This new era signified a new format of interaction between Greece and EU and can be characterized as a turning point in the evolution of Greece within the EU. The increase in the intensity of interaction has grown in parallel with the extension of EU's competences<sup>45</sup>. It would seem that the country stepped into a new transition period dominated by the urge to harmonize the nature of domestic structures with external pressures for change. Contrary to the first stage of Europeanisation, when Greece had much leeway to control the impact of Europeanization and develop strategies by its own volition, the second is characterized by a much closer cooperation between Greece and the EU at an institutional level, which has led to the production of greater effects.

The major factor that marked this new type of Europeanization impact was that Eurozone was in crisis and Greece's weak economy was immediately affected. That said, we should not infer that this crisis can be described in "cause and effect" terms, namely as a model that would account for all the aspects and dimensions of Europeanization notwithstanding the fact that it was a major economic crisis with serious social and political repercussions on many different levels. So, an agreement was reached in 2010 between Greece and a body [Troika] consisting of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in order that financial stability of the Eurozone could be achieved<sup>46</sup>. A concise way to describe the outline of the content of this agreement, which is also referred to as the bail-out agreement, is this: "bail-out loans would come with agreements ('memoranda') between the national government and these institutions making austerity measures, privatization and economic reforms a requirement for cashing the loans. The goal of these measures was to regain the trust of the financial markets",<sup>47</sup>.

This evolution altered the influence-balance between national and supranational levels, for a top-down approach to decision-making became visible. However, describing Europeanisation only in terms of the economic implications that have been observed can be misleading. In effect, most of the literature on

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<sup>45</sup> Ladrech, Robert. 2010. *Europeanization and national politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p 20, where the meaning of being a member state is discussed. Other evidence that corroborate the intense interaction is ,for instance, the amount of legislation deriving from EU level that member states adopt and the frequency of meeting between national and EU actors.

<sup>46</sup> For Information on the stability support programme, and its implementation in Greece: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-financial-assistance/which-eu-countries-have-received-assistance/financial-assistance-greece\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-financial-assistance/which-eu-countries-have-received-assistance/financial-assistance-greece_en).

<sup>47</sup> Alexia Katsanidou, Simon Otjes, How the European debt crisis reshaped national political space: The case of Greece, *European Union Politics* 2016, Vol. 17(2) 262–284, p 266

this issue tends to focus mostly on economic matters and thus narrows the scope and the meaning of Europeanisation. On top of that, many studies show a tendency to use economy as the “efficient” cause of anything that has occurred since the beginning of this phase. But, to attribute a vast array of heterogeneous and miscellaneous effects to a single cause is probably not the best method. All of this aside, the crisis was (is) not solely economic but also deeply political and social.

The relatively limited impact of Europeanization in the previous years was about to become a more coordinated power that could effect change in the national political space. The determinant that distinguishes this type of Europeanization impact is the forms with which EU policies were conveyed to Greece. Whereas previous EU policies could be categorized as “soft” in character, now a transformation of this character can be discerned, meaning that EU policies could easily fit in the category of “hard” policies<sup>48</sup>. In that regard, Gemenis and Lefkofridi elucidate this conception this way: “Hard policies require member states to implement the relevant EU legislation, whereas soft policies are those which merely create opportunity structures for change at the national level. Whether domestic actors will seize them depends on the domestic institutional and political context”<sup>49</sup>. It could be argued that the transition to this second face was not an intended one, as it was the case in the first period. Rather, it is a matter of necessity both for Greece and the EU itself.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, pp 30-31. Ladrech too remarks that this distinction should be borne in mind when investigating the EU impacts, in Ladrech, Robert. 2010. Europeanization and national politics. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

<sup>49</sup> Kostas Gemenis, Zoe Lefkofridi: The Europeanization of Greece: a critical assessment, *The Europeanization of European Politics*, edited by Mike Mannin and Charlotte Bretherton (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p 11

## Executive power

One of the main paradoxical situations as regards the impact on the executive can be expressed like this: although national executive power has been strengthened greatly regarding various ‘‘competency aspects’’, since it is the main actor that bears on the EU level, as far its ability to ‘‘produce’’ public policy-making is concerned, its powers has been significantly restricted. To begin with, in order to understand and gauge the impact on this major institution we should take into account several parameters. The nature of the EU’s policy-making processes that are characterized by the existence of a sophisticated bureaucracy and a highly technocratic grounding, requires an equally equipped domestic body as a partner, that is, the executive. Even if the executive – as it was the case in the beginning of the second phase of Europeanisation - lacks the expertise in exercising policy this way, political attitudes and behavioral propensities are highly likely to be revised by virtue of the multiple socialization processes that take place in the interaction between the executives and the EU officials. A variety of new requirements have to be met by the executive within the complex and interactive EU system which means that its scope has widened vastly. Indubitably, the executive has much more opportunities to become Europeanized than all the other domestic institutions. Concerning the Greek case, it would not be wrong to say that not only have governments internalized EU politics but also the other domestic structures that depend on it. The Greek democracy is on of the most centralized democracies on what concerns the executive power and this factor alone facilitates the interaction mentioned above.

The position of the executive, i.e. between the domestic and the EU level, allows for making it to act as a mediator with the task of negotiating and seeking compromise at both levels at the same time. Pursuing outcomes that will be beneficial for both stakeholders is essential for understanding the new kind of responsibility that the executive has assumed. However, we should not presuppose neither that the coexistence of these partners has always been an easy task nor that the executive has been rendered a passive receiver of anything that comes from the EU level. Negotiations and bargaining can bring the executives into conflict with the EU – and vice versa- as well as they can raise the possibility of a conflict of loyalties. On this occasion the phenomenon of the retrenchment of both sides is not rare. It is also indicative of the implicit tension between national interest and EU’s objectives, a clash that comes to the scene when the one side considers the demands of the other’s as unacceptable and even detrimental to its sustainability.

As regards the way this impact instigated changes concerning domestic democracy and democratic processes it can be argued that the transformations followed have been quite unique.

Evidently, it is almost inconceivable to expect or to assume that the citizenry can ever, by any means, be involved in such high level policy-making and problem-solving processes that are exclusive to the national and supranational executives. Citizenry’s direct involvement in supranational policy-making is almost impossible. From the moment that the electorate elects its national representatives, the latter become plenipotentiaries with regard to the country’s relation with the EU. And as it was many times the case in the past, even if the EU-related mandate that is given to the executives is specific and clear, things can easily change when the executives encounter opposition or resistance to their plans.

Nonetheless, the Greek case has revealed evidence of a different type of citizenry's involvement in the EU policy arena. During the negotiations for the second bail-out agreement with the institutions that Greece was collaborating in 2011, the Prime Minister announced a referendum that would allow citizens to decide on the acceptance or not of the terms of this agreement. The main reason behind this initiative was that the government strongly believed that this agreement could not be accepted domestically and thus the (negative) result of the referendum could influence the negotiations to the benefit of Greece. At the official political level, the decision to hold a referendum was justified by appealing to basic democratic principles that were absent from all the negotiations between the national executive and the foreign institutions. The latter was true and the fact that this kind of agreement bound the country to a long-term program that would determine its present and future trajectory raises indeed the question of democratic legitimacy. These kinds of political decisions need as wide a consensus as possible and the incident discussed here brings back parenthetically the issue of the "democratic deficit" at the supranational EU level. However, after having been severely criticized the proposed referendum was cancelled<sup>50</sup>. Both domestically (mainly by the opposition parties) and internationally (by a wide range of institutions and officials) the referendum was strongly opposed, mainly because of the fact, as it was argued, that a negative outcome could jeopardize Greece's membership of the Eurozone and EU in general. Nonetheless, this initiative that eventually failed to materialize, demonstrates a truly distinct response to the process of Europeanisation in this second stage. The Greek executive tried to upload the preferences of its electorate to the EU level, showing thus that a redefinition of the roles that each stakeholder plays in the process of Europeanization might be necessary and/or possible.

A few years later another referendum, this time actualized, was used as a political expedient. Again, during the negotiations for the conditions of a new bailout agreement in 2015, a referendum was announced by the Prime Minister (Alexis Tsipras) and immediately after it was ratified by the parliament. Voters were given a week to decide if they would approve or reject the content of two documents<sup>51</sup> issued by the Troika. The Prime Minister explicitly stated that a "No" vote in this referendum would enhance Greek executive's bargaining power and a different outcome could be reached in the negotiations with the institutions. Finally, the "No" vote far outnumbered "Yes" vote<sup>52</sup>. This political act was particularly significant for many reasons. First, as far as the domestic political setting is concerned, it was the first referendum held in Greece since 1974; and contrary to the latter, which concerned the form of the republic, it was on fiscal matters<sup>53</sup>. Second, it effected changes

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<sup>50</sup> Another issue that the discussions about the referendum raised was whether or not this referendum would be constitutionally legitimate, since the Greek constitution does not provide for referenda on financial issues, but only on issues appertaining to critical national matters and social bills. See article 44 of the Constitution <http://www.hri.org/docs/syntagma/>.

<sup>51</sup> The two documents, from the institutions, referred to the referendum question were: a) [Reforms for the Completion of the Current Program and Beyond \(PDF\)](#) at referendum2015gov.gr and b) [Preliminary Debt Sustainability Analysis for Greece \(PDF\)](#) at referendum2015gov.gr

<sup>52</sup> "Yes" vote accounted for 38.69% while the "No" vote for 61.31%. Yet, it should be underlined that the turnout was low, i.e. 62,5%.

<sup>53</sup> The issue of the "unconstitutionality" of the referenda on fiscal issues, to which we alluded previously, was overcome since the Supreme Constitutional Court took position by simply stating that it was within the jurisdiction of government.





All these factors given, it appears that the empowerment of national executives is obviously conditioned by the upper EU level. It would seem that the executive power has been rendered impotent in certain aspects, since EU obligations have limited its policy options and the government has become the intercessor carrying out domestic tasks. On the other hand, the close and active collaboration of the executive with the EU has resulted in the positive reinforcement of government's competences domestically, which evidently has grown more capable of dealing with chronic and deeply-rooted problems in a more efficient way. Pushing through difficult and unpopular economic measures might not have been possible because the power that domestic lobbies and affected groups normally hold could thwart reforms. In a sense governments can avail themselves of their partnership with the EU when the fear of "political cost" comes in their way. In fact, this is particularly important for Greece, because admittedly, clientelism is one of the main problems from which the Greek state suffers. Shared responsibilities means also increased enforcement powers and thus policy outcomes have a better chance in reaching the goals set.

Moreover, when it comes to the domestic coordination, which aims at dealing with EU matters, it can be claimed that many positive democratic changes have occurred. Even though the structure and the performance of the institutions and officials respectively, reflects already established attitudes and behavioral patterns, an overall assessment would be encouraging. Specifically, it can be asserted that the political skills of all government and administration officials who are engaged in the management of EU affairs have been improved significantly. Despite the fact that opposition voices critical of the government's acts exist both within and outside of it, the executive most times incorporates the different ideas into a single and united national position. Hence, it could be argued that this type of Europeanization processes have facilitated indirectly the creation of a more consensual political framework domestically. It is not uncommon, for example, the executive to convene formal or informal meetings with all political stakeholders before attending EU summits. Notwithstanding that the coordination system is greatly Prime Minister-led, it appears to be more inclusive in recent years. Another point that corroborates the latter is, for instance, the involvement of various ministries in EU-related processes and debates. In effect, compared to the first phase of Europeanization where the ministries of Finance, Agriculture and Development played a major part in forming or implementing EU-related policies, in the second phase – mainly owing to the fact that EU policies, especially in Greece, cut across various political sectors domestically – almost every ministry expresses its opinion on every important decision that is to be made. Additionally, these (coordination) policy changes have had beneficial side effects for other political sectors. A good example of this is the re-organization of the public sector in general and the public service in particular. The latter have always been in the grip of bureaucracy that impeded any progress concerning the initiation of various coordinated projects. However, during the second stage of Europeanization, the public sector shows significant improvement in terms of its functioning and organization, since it has become a key factor both for the facilitation of national coordination and the implementation of EU-driven policies. So, all the above testify to the presence of a new and more positive understanding of policy coordination.

However, the empowerment of the executive has had significant ramifications from a political and social point of view. The concentration of power with regard to EU related issues in the hands of a few, namely the executive, has brought discredit upon the parliament and limited other institutionalized counter-powers such as the opposition, unions, social organizations and the press. We could argue that the Greek case best exemplifies the problem of the peculiar democratic deficit that arises when we

consider carefully the relation between the EU and its member states. To begin with, this term was initially coined to express the fact that EU's institutions and policy-making processes lack essential democratic characteristics such as representativeness, accountability, and transparency. Moreover, it is argued that at the EU level there are not the necessary scrutiny mechanisms as it is the case in national settings; the weak position of the European Parliament in relation to other EU institution and bodies corroborates this. Indeed, EU has been found to be of an inferior quality regarding those elements compared to national settings. At the national level, notwithstanding differences involved, the main pillars of modern representative democracy seem still to be present, if to a certain degree<sup>56</sup>. But, when it comes to analyzing the relation between the EU and the member states, we cope with the complexities of their democratic interaction. Especially, as far as lawmaking is concerned, it is evident that national parliaments have from little to no role in the upper EU level<sup>57</sup>. It would seem that the EU has taken parliament's place domestically, since there is an one-way, top-down and therefore not reciprocal relation between them. This enforced transfer of power which derives from the membership of EU has had repercussions for the position of parliaments at the national level. Hence it is questionable whether laws and policies imposed by the EU on member states can be regarded as truly legitimate from a democratic standpoint.

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<sup>56</sup> Although, some analysts have argued that the overall status and performance of democratic systems on a global scale, despite some differences with regard to time and context, is not as bad as we normally tend to believe. See for example, Pippa Norris (2011), *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revised*, Cambridge University Press. Norris concludes by stating that the decline of support in national-based representative democracy is not that significant.

<sup>57</sup> As Norton puts it: "[ the problem derives from] the limited input into lawmaking processes of the EC by directly elected representatives of the people", Philip Norton (2003), "National parliaments and the European Union", *Managerial Law*, Vol. 45 Issue: 5/6, pp.5-25



### Executive-parliament interaction.

The impact of Europeanization on domestic lawmaking processes has been major. In effect, the Greek case, as regards the status of the parliament, shows how Europeanization takes place not only indirectly but also in direct and visible ways. The fact that the EU has extended its scope of policy and concomitantly the areas over which can exercise its legislative power has been a turning point in the re-conception of the parliament. The amount of legislation deriving partially or exclusively from the EU level that the parliament has voted upon since the beginning of the second phase of Europeanization is enormous.

With regard to the potential of bringing about more democracy it can be observed that the framework of democratic accountability that regulated the relation between the parliament and governments has been considerably weakened as a result of Europeanization processes. The parliament, a unicameral body consisting of 300 deputies elected for four-year terms, is the main legislature body that upholds the representative character of Greek democratic system. But, since the Constitutional amendment of 1986 the executive, whose head is the leader of the party that received the highest number of votes in the parliamentary elections, has been enlarged in terms of the legislative capacity of the prime minister and its cabinet. So, governments besides enjoying large support from the parliament, since they derive from it, have also the latitude in taking legislative initiatives. Hence, the majoritarian character of governance does not allow the parliament to have a decisive role in the domestic legislative process<sup>58</sup>. Also, a supplementary – and compared to the latter minor - factor that has been reducing parliament's productivity is the cumbersome state apparatus, which has allowed for the enlargement of public bureaucracy. This prevailing configuration alone, that is, the quite complex system of legislative power being shared between the parliament and the executive, raises concerns about the democratic legitimacy of the way legislative power is formed and implemented. We should notice that this structural arrangement was not induced by the membership of the EU. But, the latter, especially if we consider the form that EU has taken over the years, has increased in direct and indirect ways the already existing democratic deficit.

So, the main task of the parliament is to scrutinize whatever falls within its jurisdiction. However, since national policies have been dominated by those stemming from the EU, the parliament cannot exercise effective control over the legislation that is given to it; nor over the executive as regards EU-related policies. On that account, the gap between the parliament and the executive<sup>59</sup> has widen, for the

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<sup>58</sup>Ladrech also refers to the UK and Ireland to exemplify the fact that in majoritarian systems the executive has a predominance over the legislative process. Ladrech, Robert. 2010. *Europeanization and national politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p 75.

<sup>59</sup> As Ladrech rightly pointed out the factors that contribute to the executive's strengthening are: "The greater access to information (through COREPER, for example); the positions taken and bargains struck during inter-governmental negotiations; The ability to contribute to occasional grand initiatives through European Council summits; Initiatives launched during rotating presidencies; All of these actions are conducted by national executives very much to the exclusion of other government institutions, such as national parliaments. This position of authoritative procedural influence at both the European and national levels, couple with political influence at both levels, makes the national executive the key nodal point of EU-domestic relations". Ibid, pp 46-47.

latter has become the main agency in charge of negotiating and (co-)drafting reforms with the EU that are to be implemented without the former being a principal actor in these processes. In other words, the parliament is in the difficult position of having to ratify and implement laws, which otherwise would not approve. The collision between accountability and efficiency is particularly relevant to the Greek case<sup>60</sup>. Parliament's role should not be a barrier to executive's efficiency, but at the same time it has to maintain its representative characteristics by uploading and expressing citizenry's preferences. Checks and balance mechanisms have been loosened and a more passive role has been given to the parliament, owing to the fact that the EU has "granted" various privileges to the executive.

Nonetheless, we should not overlook the fact that there are some institutionalized mechanisms that can potentially influence the executive with regard to EU affairs and maybe even directly the "headquarters" of EU. For example, The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC), seeks to bring together the EU affairs committees of national Parliaments, as well as Members of the European Parliament<sup>61</sup>. As it is envisaged by the Article 10 of Protocol (No 1) on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union of the Treaty of Lisbon, COSAC "may submit any contribution it deems appropriate for the attention of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. The Conference shall in addition promote the exchange of information and best practice between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, including their special committees. It may also organize inter-parliamentary conferences on specific topics, in particular to debate matters of common foreign and security policy, including common security and defense policy"<sup>62</sup>. However, the Protocol continues: "Contributions from the Conference shall not bind national Parliaments and shall not prejudge their positions"<sup>63</sup>. Ipso facto the outcomes of this institutionalized "mechanisms" have limited influence both over domestic and EU policy-making. However, the importance of such initiatives should not be underestimated, for they can serve as a communicative network and a means of parliamentary socialization.

As regards the Committee on European Affairs, which as we indicated it was established in 1990, things are not different. Though it is an institutionalized attempt to promote the role of national parliaments in the EU policy-making, in practice this Committee does not have profound influence neither over the national parliament nor over EU lawmaking. The main reason that accounts for the Committee's ineffectual role is that, as it can be seen in its composition, it is dominated by members of

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<sup>60</sup> What Benz has described as "scrutiny dilemma". Arthur Benz, 'Path Dependent Institutions and Strategic Veto Players: National Parliaments in the European Union', *West European Politics* vol. 27 no. 5 (2004), pp. 875-900

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/relnatparl/en/conferences/cosac.html>.

<sup>62</sup> PROTOCOL ON THE ROLE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:0204:0206:EN:PDF>.

COSAC dates from 1989 and gained formal recognition with The Amsterdam Treaty. For the evolution of COSAC see Knudsen, M and Carl Y, COSAC – its role to date and its potential in the future, in Barrett, G (ed.), *National Parliaments and the European Union*, Clarus Press, 2008, pp. 455-483.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, article 10

the ruling parties (or party in the past)<sup>64</sup>. Hence, its party-led character does not allow it to act impartially and fulfill its potential. For instance, were members of the opposition parties to avail themselves of the access to EU-related information that this Committee offers could contribute to the increase of accountability, since they could hold the executive accountable for its actions in a more comprehensive way.

Along with this mechanism national parliaments have been given the opportunity to raise their concerns when it comes to EU legislation. The “Early Warning System” set by the Lisbon Treaty<sup>65</sup>, provides for the involvement of national parliaments in the assessment of EU legislation – especially about whether or not it is in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity - and provides national parliaments with some “tools”<sup>66</sup> with which they can express their objections to and hesitations about the proposed legislation. But, as it has been pointed out<sup>67</sup>, parliaments with strong majority parties/governments are less likely to engage with these procedures.

All these factors considered, we could conclude that since the parliament does not exercise effective control over the executive in regard to EU affairs, cannot upload directly the national preferences to the EU level and also participate directly in the EU decision or lawmaking processes, it has been marginalized by the current political system. As Ladrech puts it: “Their primary role in the process of European governance is at the end of the legislative process, that is, to ratify EU legislation that has been put before them by the national executive”<sup>68</sup>. So, the exclusion of national parliament from all the above possibilities, could be seen as nothing new, for the parliament has not actually lost anything that used to have in previous times. But, this is not true. As it has been indicated, the membership of the EU has further exacerbated the already unequal power balance between the parliament and the executive. Apart from this, the parliament has been deprived of its principal character which is to legislate, as an institution representing and deriving from the national citizenry.

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<sup>64</sup> Out of 31 MPs that constitute the current Committee 18 belong to the governing parties. <https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/KoinovouleftikesEpitropes/CommitteeDetailView?Committeeld>.

<sup>65</sup> See Protocol (No 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008M/PRO/02:EN:HTML>.

<sup>66</sup> We refer to the “yellow” and “orange card” procedures as they are enshrined in the Protocol (No 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008M/PRO/02:EN:HTML>.

<sup>67</sup> Thomas Christiansen, Anna-Lena Högenauer & Christine Neuhold, National Parliaments in the post-Lisbon European Union: Bureaucratization rather than Democratization?, OPAL Online Paper Series | 11/2012

<sup>68</sup> Ladrech, Robert. 2010. Europeanization and national politics. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p 73.

### Party system-Parties.

Contrary to the formal and for that reason visible impact of Europeanization on the previous institutions and actors examined, the effects on parties and party system occur in subtle ways. It has been argued that Europe has had a limited impact on national party systems<sup>69</sup>, especially as regards the number and the nature of the parties as well as the mode of interaction firstly between the main parties and secondly between the parties and government. However, in the Greek case both the “format” and the “mechanics”<sup>70</sup> of the party system has been affected significantly by Europeanization processes, as it will be shown further down. Moreover, it can be claimed the way party system has processed the impact of Europeanization has been considerably beneficial to the development of democratic mentality and practices.

To begin with, EU policies are presented as depoliticized, and this phenomenon has also been used by the executive, since any ideological obstacles that could emerge can now be removed relatively easily. This fact also accounts for the advent of “technocratism” in both national and international politics, which is supposed to mean that governance, generally speaking, is or has become a task akin to a scientific undertaking and therefore those who are suitably qualified for understanding politics and exercising policies are not necessarily the (elected) politicians. This elitist approach to politics, which has been launched to a large extent by the current structure of the EU and has been endorsed by the capitalistic expansion globally, has in a sense disenfranchised many traditional political agents and subsequently alienated society from the political state of play. One of the actors that have been significantly affected by this second wave of Europeanization is undoubtedly the parties and more generally the party system.

Whereas the dominance of the division between Left and Right was immediately obvious during the first stage of Europeanisation, their lines blurred rapidly. In addition, the two-party system that had prevailed over a period of almost 30 years (from the end of the junta onwards) lost its ascendancy. On top of that, the rapid changes led to a meaningfully multi-party system and the introduction of a more consensual style of management. The identity labels<sup>71</sup> that used to be the most salient characteristic of parties and subsequently determined voters’ choice were redefined mainly due to the adoption of a stance on matters relating to the EU-Greek relations. Parties found themselves in a context where the relation of the state with the EU was crucial for its sustainability and many of them proved to be unprepared for entering this new phase of redefining and reassessing Europeanisation-impact.

After the bail-out agreement had been reached the political issue of the EU and, most importantly, the new type of Integration that the country started to experience permeated the political and social

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<sup>69</sup> Mair, P. (2000). The limited impact of Europe on national party systems. *West European Politics*, 23(4), 27-51.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> As Lyrantzis puts it: “The Greek political parties, as it is the case in other European countries, used the Left-Right divide as a means to create and promote a political identity and its content was manipulated by the exigencies of the political conjuncture”. *Politics and Policy in Greece: The challenge of “Modernisation”* (2006), edit, K. Featherstone, ch 1 : The changing Party system: Stable Democracy, Contested “Modernization”.

spectrum. A shift from the Left-Right division to a pro/anti European came to light, which had quite peculiar characteristics though. Parties capable of contesting power, either the traditional ones or the newly formed, hesitated to express a clear anti-European position, knowing the degree of country's dependence on the EU. Thus, they confined themselves to criticizing the EU (and the other institutions involved in the agreement) for placing an unfair burden on Greece. Their stance was accompanied by suggestions of political agendas that would ameliorate the situation and help the country to regain its previous state. But, one could ask: what about the strong and profound meaning of Left and Right ideologies, which is at the same time the factor that makes them distinct? Has this meaning been rendered obsolete, that is, merely a formality? Parties have struggled to retain ideological elements that would allow them to differentiate themselves from their political competitors, albeit they have tried to transpose them, in a sense, to the setting of the EU-discourse. The domestic debate about the coordination between national government and EU and the agreed policies can still be framed by the one about which political wings can better carry out these projects. The left wing claims<sup>72</sup> that can implement EU-driven policies in a beneficial for the lower and weaker strata way and also that can affect the formation of EU's rationale as well as its overall performance. The right wing tends to place emphasis on the positive future results that the successful completion of these programs can bring as well as on the positive developmental character of some aspects of the policies themselves.

The two ruling parties (New Democracy and PA.SO.K) that had been upholding the bipartisan tradition for almost forty years were about to shrink impressively. The party that was in power (PA.SO.K) when the country entered into the agreement with the foreign partners was dramatically affected, as witnessed by the electoral results. The 2009 elections were the last manifestation of the political hegemony of these two parties<sup>73</sup>. At the next parliamentary elections held in May 2012 right after the second bailout agreement in March, PA.SO.K lost almost the two thirds of its power and New democracy about one third. A noteworthy event that happened at these elections is the rise of a new political party, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SY.RI.ZA), whose electoral percentage quadrupled compared to that in 2009, as the major opposition party. However, at these elections no party managed to gain the majority of parliament seats. All the attempts to form a government –stipulated by the Constitution- failed, and new elections were announced in June. In June the election results re-affirmed more or less the previous situation and confirmed the trend towards the emerging of new parties who claimed to be new and different from the traditional ones. At the most recent elections which were held in January and September 2015 respectively SY.RI.ZA came to power as the first party ever ruling except from the two traditional ones and forms almost entirely the executive to date.

What exemplifies the most striking change in the party system in this second phase of Europeanisation is the record number of political parties. Since 2010 more than 60 new parties have been established, which is symptomatic of the fragmentation of the political scene. Some of them can be characterized as attempts of old parties to metamorphose into something different that would allow them to adapt to the

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<sup>72</sup> It has been also suggested that " Given that the pro/anti-EU dimension dominates economic issues, all that remains for the general left-right dimension to tap into are cultural issues". Alexia Katsanidou, Simon Otjes, How the European debt crisis reshaped national political space: The case of Greece, *European Union Politics* 2016, Vol. 17(2) 262–284, p 267. However, this might be a simplistic view of the issue.

<sup>73</sup> See, Hellenic Parliament, Election Results, <https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/To-Politevma/Ekloges/Eklogika-apotelesmata-New/#Per-12>.



changing and uncertain environment, while most of the newly emerged party formations are not associated with the previous establishment or at least they are distantly related to it. This event is also indicative of the changing patterns of behavior among the electorate. We could argue that a transition from political apathy to the expression of political interest has become evident. As it has been already implied, we ought not to connect the level of political participation in general with the high or low turnout in the elections. Politics have become again a matter of interest in everyday life and lay citizens have started to feel that they should participate more actively in the political debates in order to affect policy-making. It could be argued that all these economic and political circumstances have shown that they can create an environment favorable for the re-introducing of politics and more specifically the meaning of democratic participation to the Greek society. Along with this, the meaning of being European citizen that concerns the citizenry and that of Greece's membership of the EU that concerns mostly the institutional format, ceased to be as alien and elusive as it was the case previously.

All the above are reflected in the major transformations of governmental power. The concept of a consensual style of management that could potentially lead to coalition parties and even more coalition governments was almost entirely absent in the after junta political history of Greece. The main reason for this was, as it has been implied, that elected governments used to hold parliamentary majorities. Another factor in which the lack of a consensual political culture is reflected is the electorate system, which is intended to enhance governmental stability by awarding "extra" power to the party with the highest percentage of votes<sup>74</sup>. The starting point for the formation of a coalition government was in 2011 when the prime minister of the ruling PA.SO.K government resigned during the negotiations for the second bailout agreement in order for the formation of a transitional government that would enjoy wider acceptance. Thus, it was replaced by a coalition of national unity, consisting of three parties (PA.SO.K, New Democracy and L.AO.S) led by a prominent Greek technocrat<sup>75</sup>. Also, parenthetically, we can mention that the appointment of an unelected non-politician as prime minister is indicative of the fact that the transformations of the party system work in parallel with the introduction of a technocratic style of governance. The second coalition government was formed after the second elections in 2012 and although it was, at least seemingly, very heterogeneous, it proved durable and sustainable, since it last for almost three years. The most surprising fact that characterizes this government is that it was composed of the two main traditional parties (PA.SO.K and New Democracy) which were supposed to be diametrically different in a political sense, during the whole previous history. Also, another smaller center-left party (DIMAR) joined this formation thus making it a tripartisan coalition. The last incident of a coalition government can be found in the current structure of the government. After winning the two general election in 2015 SY.RI.ZA agreed to form a coalition with AN.EL, a small right-wing populist party, because even if it won the elections it could not have a

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<sup>74</sup> " The electoral system of Greece has a "mixed" logic that produces majoritarian results in the way it distributes parliamentary seats among parties. The main logic is quite simple: 250 out of the 300 parliament seats are distributed proportionally between all the parties that reach the 3% nationwide electoral threshold. The rest 50 seats go to the first party as a "bonus". There are 56 electoral districts in Greece, ranging from 1 to 42 seats each, where a total of 288 MPs are elected. The remaining 12 MPs are elected through nationwide lists". Source: <http://metapolls.net/country-facts-2/greece/greek-electoral-system/>.

<sup>75</sup> Loukas Papademos was Vice President of the European Central Bank from 2002 to 2010 and Governor of the bank of Greece from 1994 to 2002.

majority in the parliament. This coalition is equally extraordinary in that it is comprised of a left and a right-wing party. In fact, this peculiarity has drawn international attention and has become of great analytical significance, since according to some analysts it represents “the first ever governing alliance of left-wing and right-wing populist parties in Europe”<sup>76</sup>.

Another significant effect that can be ascribed to the particular type of Europeanization impact that Greece has been experiencing relates to the concept of populism. The vast majority of political analysts share the view that the 1980s was the “golden decade” of populism. The distinguishing features of that type of populism were the worship of the charismatic – at least in terms of his communicative skills – leader, namely the Prime Minister, and the development of policies that aimed to satisfy the people without taking into account the true needs and capabilities of the state. In a sense, this type of populism could be described as primitive or superficial since it seems to be more like a political tactic, a tool or a style of political communication striving to gain or increase electoral support<sup>77</sup>. On the other hand, it could be argued that the multiple Europeanization effects have triggered a different “populist response”. What we see is an “anti-austerity” populism which means that the contested parties, and mainly the ones that form the current governmental coalition, sharply criticize the EU-led reforms that do not find great acceptance domestically. Interestingly, it seems that all the parties especially after 2009, have espoused this specific populist rationale for the public frustration concerning the economic trajectory of the country has grown significantly. Greek parties have been struggling to reshape their political agendas in a way that would render them more responsive to the rapidly changing demands, behavior and reactions of the electorate. This specific type of populism that has been instigated by the mode of the interaction between Greece and EU has been integrated into the parties’ format. Indeed, it seems to have become an integral part both of their theoretical foundation (ideology) and their practical operation. It has the characteristics of being a thin-centered ideology that can be attached to virtually every pre-existing structural configuration of parties. Thin-centered means that it is not a full ideology since in order to “survive” needs to work in parallel with the main normative, core ideological grounding of the parties. Mudde and Kaltwasser have approached populism in different ways but we think that one definition is particularly relevant to this point. They define populism as “a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic camps, “the people” versus “the corrupt elite”, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonte generale* (general will) of the people”<sup>78</sup>. The transposition of this account of populism into the Greek setting reveals that the EU has taken the place of the “elite” that is juxtaposed with the “people”.

Both of the parties that currently form the coalition government have used this rhetoric since Greece has been faced with more tangible effects of Europeanization. In the case of AN.EL, the junior partner

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<sup>76</sup> Paris Aslanidis & Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (2016) Dealing with populists in government: the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition in Greece, *Democratization*, 23:6, 1077-1091, p 1077

<sup>77</sup> We tried to analyze some elements of Greek populist parties as part of a paper submitted in the previous semester. Also relevant to this approach is what Taggart claims: “populism is understood to be saying what people want to hear or to be simplifying political matters”, Taggart, P. (2000) *Populism*, Buckingham: Open University Press, p 73

<sup>78</sup> Cas Mudde, Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017, *POPULISM*, a very short introduction, Oxford University Press, pp 5-6

in the current governing coalition, we recognize that this kind of EU-related populism has been merged with elements of patriotism that often seems to be nationalism in disguise<sup>79</sup>. Also, the concept of a “lost” sovereignty is an integral part of this party’s manifesto as well as the idea that Greece has been a victim of a well-coordinated foreign conspiracy. In effect what this type of populism tries to declare is that “the real power does not lie with the democratically elected leaders [...] but with some shadowy forces that continue to hold on to illegitimate powers to undermine the voices of the people”<sup>80</sup>. Along with these factors that more or less have determined the political stance of many parties, and particularly that of AN.EL, stands the issue of the immigration crisis. AN.EL holds a particularly hard line against illegal immigration and as many other political actors, has linked this problem with the EU. Greece, owing to its geographical location received an enormous amount of refugees fleeing from countries plagued by war. The fact that the European Union has shown a serious lack of willingness to cope with this problem effectively was perceived as an attempt to abdicate its responsibility in dealing with the crisis as a “united union”. Except from the last element, namely the immigration crisis, SY.RIZ.A also adopted a more or less same approach to populist rhetoric as the majority of political parties and actors. However, as far as the definition of the “elites” is concerned, we observe that it includes (or at least included up to a certain point) both the creators of the domestic establishment to which they oppose and the EU elites. However, this rhetoric has been drastically moderated from the moment that these parties assumed power, as it was expected. No matter how much it has been moderated, the above are indicative of the particular “Europeanization of populism” that has cut across the political spectrum.

As one might expect, this type of populism leads to or works in conjunction with a Euro-sceptic view. How could this Euro-sceptic view be situated in this wider political context? Szczerbiak and Taggart have proposed two definitions of Euro-scepticism based on a distinction between what they term “hard” and “soft” Euro-scepticism. According to them: “Hard Euro-scepticism is where there is a principled opposition to the EU and European integration and therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived” whereas “Soft Euro-scepticism is where there is not a principled objection to European Integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that “national interest” is currently at odds with the EU’s trajectory”<sup>81</sup>. If we apply these definitions to the Greek context, it is easy to see that Euro-scepticism leans towards the second one. Although from time to time some parties seemed to adopt a hard (and even aggressive) stance towards EU, as it was for example the case in the early 1980s, this did not last long. The reasons are that political parties and actors came to realize that the potential benefits from the participation in the EU might outweigh the disadvantages and therefore they

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<sup>79</sup> Our analysis of some elements of Greek populist parties (as part of a paper submitted in the previous semester) has referred to the case of AN.EL.

<sup>80</sup> Cas Mudde, Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017, POPULISM, a very short introduction, Oxford University Press, p 12

<sup>81</sup> Aleks Szczerbiak, and Paul Taggart, 2008, OPPOSING EUROPE, The Comparative Party Politics Of Euroscepticism, Oxford University Press, ch 1, pp 7-8



have “rationalized” their political positions after having assumed power or after having been subjected to domestic or foreign criticism.

## Civil Society.

Civil society is often excluded from analyses that set out to gauge the impact of Europeanization on specific domestic settings. Indeed, this is not surprising if we consider the fact that civil society is not an institution in the way all the previous political actors examined are. In this kind of research the concept of civil society is replaced by that of the citizenry or the electorate. However, if we adhere to the very concept of civil society itself, namely if we regard it as an autonomous political actor it can be inferred that it has been affected significantly by the Europeanization impact. On top of that we contend that the civil society's response to European Integration facilitated the advent of democracy in society and particularly in the lower social strata.

Since the beginning of the global financial turmoil Europe, and especially the countries of southern Europe have undergone significant alterations. Most profoundly, they have experienced changes in regard to the way civil society behaves, acts and thinks. Admittedly, the defects of contemporary forms of Democracy, along with the effects of the economic crisis have transformed the Greek political and social setting. In the first instance, the mistrust of politicians and politics altogether has created a fertile soil for the emergence both of populism and extreme nationalism<sup>82</sup> in Greece<sup>83</sup>. This phenomenon of mistrust and disbelief urges many people to conflate politics with politicians. As a result they reject the very concept of politics and they choose not to participate in the political life<sup>84</sup>. Traditionally, civil society in Greece has not been superlatively active, except in some cases where it showed a remarkable strength – the most salient example of which being the outstanding resistance movement in 1973 against the military junta that run the country from 1967 to 1974. This movement which started as a peaceful student's protest-gathering at the Athens Polytechnic School transformed into a massive demonstration, which included every kind of lay citizens, against the dictatorial regime that had been severely oppressing basic civic and political rights. The violent termination of this uprising by the use of military force did not mean at all that society's active forces abated or backed away. On the contrary, the emancipative character of this major event unleashed the potency of many societal forces, which had already warmed up slowly in the previous years. The dictatorship was overthrown one year later, an event that is indicative of the various and decisive effects that this social uprising had.

Since then, the dynamics of civil society have been significantly downplayed and attenuated. Movements aiming at the protection and promotion of concrete interests took the lead and protests became more or less an occupation of organized syndicates and unions claiming that act on behalf of the whole citizenry. The majority of lay citizens either have been complacent about the existing status of the political system or they have wanted to distance themselves from strictly organized and partisan-like initiatives feeling that they are ill-represented. Evidently, during the last decades civil society all over the world has been remarkably restricted, a fact that has increased the gap between those who

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<sup>82</sup> See for example the rise of Golden Dawn, which is a neo-Nazi party with an increasing number of supporters.

<sup>83</sup> These conclusions have been demonstrated also on a paper submitted in the previous semester as part of an essay concerning Greek populist parties.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

govern and those who are governed. This gap cannot be filled sufficiently by political parties for each of them in order to exist and succeed as a political actor has to oppose to other members of the society thereby constructing new cleavages and patterns of dispute over common problems and solutions. The formal political setting that more or less all the European countries share, ostensibly seems to offer ways whereby citizens could engage themselves in politics ( in the public space in general). But even if someone argues that the formal setting in and through which we share our lives is the best possible, still doubts about whether all the democratic values are realized within every political environment persist.

However, since the beginning of the second stage of Europeanization civil society has become very active despite the fact that it seems impotent to influence the decision-making. The gap between democratic institutions and the citizenry grew, to the extent that the former seemed to have annihilated the latter. The fact that the citizenry did not have a say neither in the decision-making nor in the outcome of it, sparked off reactions and set in motion a chain of events that would eventually culminate in the revitalization of civil society.

What marked a major change in politics was the so-called “Square Movement”<sup>85</sup> in 2011, a massive mobilization of citizens that lasted for over three months<sup>86</sup>. However, even before this movement appeared, many demonstrations, protests and strikes in the public and private sector had been taking place mostly in the capital city. In the same period many mobilizations increased in breadth and intensity both in Europe and globally following the path of the Arab Spring: “the Indignados” in Spain, the “Israel’s Social Justice Movement, the Global Justice Movement, the Occupy Wall Street etc. The Greek “Square Movement” seemed to have been mostly inspired by the “Indignados” movement in Spain<sup>87</sup>. The common denominator of all these movements was the demand for (more and even direct) Democracy, transparency and more generally the improvement of the current economic state of affairs. Even if the Greek “Square Movement” did not evolve into an organized and coherent movement or a new political party it had some remarkable distinguishing features.

To begin with it proved to be the most inclusive mobilization ever occurred. It was neither a partisan-led mobilization nor driven by organized unions, associations or syndicates as were all the previous until then. In effect, this event was initiated by the social media (and especially Facebook), where appeals to people emerge. This kind of internet campaign, which aimed at mobilizing support for peaceful demonstrations, resonated well with the charged atmosphere and soon the results were

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<sup>85</sup> It has been also referred to as: “The Indignated”, “The outraged”, “The infuriated”. See, for example, Leontidou L. (2012), Athens in the Mediterranean ‘movement of the piazzas’. Spontaneity in material and virtual public spaces, City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action, 16, pp. 299-312, and Makridis P., Pagiatsos A. (2011), Οι Αγανακτισμένοι: ένα κίνημα που συγκλόνησε την Ελλάδα το καλοκαίρι του 2011, Athens: Xekinima.

<sup>86</sup> From the end of May until August in 2011. See a chronicle of the movement in C. Giovanopoulos, D. Mitropoulos, 2011 (Eds), *Δημοκρατία under construction: Από τους δρόμους στις πλατείες*,

<sup>87</sup> “On 15 May 2011, the Spanish Indignados occupied the squares Puerta del Sol in Madrid and Plaça de Catalunya in Barcelona. In late May 2011 multiple calls-outs appeared in social media (especially on Facebook) calling on people to protest peacefully, without holding any party flags or banners, on 25 May 2011.” In Marilena Simiti, 2014, Rage and Protest: The case of the Greek Indignant movement, GreeSE Paper No 82 Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe, p 5

obvious. The spontaneous reactions expressed both in material and virtual public spaces<sup>88</sup> were positive and a series of events followed. Demonstrations in almost forty cities took place in the first days of the mobilizations<sup>89</sup>. What is impressive and unique is that the protests occupied public squares (first the largest square in Athens, namely the “Constitutional Square”, which symbolizes many democratic struggles of modern Greece) and set up camps, where they spent almost all their day. As said, the previous strong ties, which had been developed within a clientelism framework, between the electorate and the political parties had started to loosen noticeably and this movement offered a great opportunity for alternative modes of public-political expression. Hence, people who were affiliated with the existing parties or political actors felt as if they were no longer committed to them, since it became apparent that in reality their voices could not be heard, let alone be taken into account. For that reason the diversity of protestors found within the movement was remarkable; people of different ages, occupations and background set aside their differences and tried to bridge the divide. Even if some parties or party-like movements attempted to appropriate the whole concept of this mobilization, eventually they failed. Remarkably enough, we could argue that this movement developed ad hoc “defensive mechanisms” that allowed or enabled it to remain largely intact from any such premeditated interventions. However, we should not assume that ideological elements were completely expelled from the protest<sup>90</sup>, but certainly this did not lead to the movement’s being manipulated and exploited by any particular political fraction. Hence, it would seem that it was in a sense an apolitical movement with very political purposes though. Indicative of the massive character and expansion of this movement is what Sotirakopoulos and Sotiropoulos mention: “According to poll research, more than 2 million citizens (20% of the population) have participated in one way or another in the movement (Public Issue, 2011)”<sup>91</sup>. This fact coupled with the non-partisan character of the movement led Douzinas to suggest that: “everyone in Syntagma (“Constitution”) Square was at the same time Crowd, Multitude and Demos, constantly reshaped by their interactions”<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>88</sup> Leontidou examines rigorously the element of spontaneity, , Leontidou L. (2012), Athens in the Mediterranean ‘movement of the piazzas’. Spontaneity in material and virtual public spaces, City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action, 16, pp. 299-312

<sup>89</sup> From the end of May until August in 2011. See a chronicle of the movement in C. Giovanopoulos, D. Mitropoulos, 2011 (Eds), *Δημοκρατία under construction: Από τους δρόμους στις πλατείες*, pp 273-324.

<sup>90</sup> Sotirakopoulos N., Sotiropoulos G. (2013), ‘Direct Democracy now!’: The Greek indignados and the present cycle of struggles, *Current Sociology*, 61, pp. 443-456. Also, we should point out an interesting occurrence that has drawn the attention of the research. At least during the early stages of the Constitutional Square encampment the presence both of left and right wing contingents was obvious and interestingly, they kept separate from one another by occupying different places within the same Square. For a more in-depth analysis of this type of “localism” see, Goutsos, Dionysis; Polymeneas, George, Identity as space: Localism in the Greek protests of Syntagma Square, *Journal of Language and Politics*, Volume 13, Number 4, 2014, pp. 675-701(27)

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. See also one the many public opinion polls on that issue in <https://www.publicissue.gr/1785/plateies/>.

<sup>92</sup> Douzinas C (2011) *Αντίσταση και Φιλοσοφία στην Κρίση: Πολιτική, Ηθική και Στάση Σύνταγμα* [Resistance and Philosophy during the Crisis: Politics, Ethics and Syntagma Bus-stop]. Athens: Alexandria Publications, p 221.

As far as the hopes and aspirations of this mobilization are concerned, it can be asserted that the primary demand was that of the betterment of current democratic status. The sense of permanent alienation of the people from their representatives both at the national and European parliament, the domestic and international institutions and the decision-making processes stimulated the demand for alternative democratic models<sup>93</sup>. Specifically, the radical changes in the way of interaction between the EU and the state, which were felt much more intensely in the countries of the southern periphery, led to the drafting of policies and measures that affected the whole population. The form that this interaction had taken was heavily criticized but through the critic of the domestic institutions<sup>94</sup> and political actors. This means that although in this specific context the critique was centered mostly on the national executive and the involved actors, the final recipient was the EU itself. The demands were both of a general and specific in character. In effect, they were specific insofar as they addressed to national and international politicians and institutions, and general to such an extent that encompassed almost all the self-evident in a democracy rights, like the civil, political, economic and cultural. It could be argued that through this movement a big step was taken towards overcoming the barriers erected by the Left-Right cleavage, which had been the predominant distinguishing factor for so long. The new pro and anti EU distinction that came to the fore on large scale gradually penetrated debates on politics and cut across ideologies and parties.

Furthermore, there are other elements that urge us to think that this movement was an exceptional case of reshaping civil society and exercising politics beyond the traditional patterns. Besides having a high level of diversity and reflexivity, it developed a democratic nature and tried to reintroduce civil society to politics and vice versa. The movement organized itself in a remarkable way. First and foremost the basic framework whereby the movement operated was determined by direct democracy procedures. Even before people consolidate their hold on the Squares, popular assemblies were held to manage practically everything related to the movement. The Square transformed into an “agora” where the “demos” could convene to discuss about politics and exchange ideas and experiences. This public forum was really conducive to communicating, interacting and encouraged constructive dialogues between the participators. Lay citizens of different social strata engaged in fruitful and productive discussions in a respectful way trying to develop their political skills. The same can be said for the online dimension of the movement. The internet sites and the social media had a prominent role in the initiation and also in the organization of the mobilization. Also, they facilitated the active participation of all the people who could not be physically present at the Squares and the diffusion of the ideas that were emerging during the evolution of the movement. This endeavor was an example of a “new generation” collective action since the role of the internet was decisive and also an attempt to reinvent traditional democratic practices. With regard to the latter the most innovative practice adopted was that of the open public assembly. Everyone could express their opinion and voice their concerns freely as well as to contribute to decision-making processes that culminated in resolutions. In addition to this, the movement utilized the presence of the wide array of people with different backgrounds and set up

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<sup>93</sup> Indeed, the first vote of the people’s Assembly of Syntagma Square emphasizes on ,among others, the demand for direct democracy: “For a long time now, people have been taking decisions on our behalf, without consulting us” [...] “ We are here because we know that the answer to our problems can only come from us [...]”. C. Giovanopoulos, D. Mitropoulos, 2011 (Eds), *Δημοκρατία under construction: Από τους δρομους στις πλατείες*, pp 273-324.

<sup>94</sup> The symbolic character of this mobilization is reflected also on the choice of this Square (the “Constitutional” Square) since it is located right opposite the parliament.

working groups<sup>95</sup> and think tanks where people could share their expertise more effectively and offer an informed focus on various specific issues. An equally innovative idea was the use of sortition system<sup>96</sup> in order to ensure that powers and responsibilities were delegated fairly.

As far as the transformative potential of this movement is concerned, it could be argued that it has revolutionized, to a certain extent, civil society's self perception. The socialization framework that was created led to the engagement of many, previously passive, citizens in politics and introduced democracy and opportunities to exercise critical thinking at a bottom level. In effect, socialization processes do not refer only to the domestic context but also to the international one. That is, the movement coordinated its efforts with other movements that were taking place in many European countries at the same time, thus making national civil society more extrovert. It could be said that the creation of a European demos acquired a momentum of success. EU affairs became an integral part of national politics and more people became aware of the importance of belonging to the EU. As a result, a more comprehensive notion of citizenship started to be cultivated in that it included the notion of a European citizenship<sup>97</sup> too.

As regards the direct and more tangible results yielded, it could be argued that the consensual mindset that grew within the movement effected changes at a higher institutional level. It would seem that the democratic consensual way of exercising politics beyond the institutionalized patterns transmitted from the movement to the political and party system. The citizenry questioned openly the legitimacy of the decisions taken by the then government and that resulted in the resignation of the prime minister and the formation of the first coalition government as we have already alluded to. This case illustrates the complexities of Europeanization process and their multidimensional character when it comes to analyzing the mechanisms used to respond to EU pressures as well as the multifaceted impacts so domestically as internationally.

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<sup>95</sup> Marilena Simiti, 2014, Rage and Protest: The case of the Greek Indignant movement, GreeSE Paper No 82 Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe, pp 8-9

<sup>96</sup> C. Giovanopoulos, D. Mitropoulos, 2011 (Eds), *Δημοκρατία under construction: Από τους δρομους στις πλατειες*, pp 273-324.

<sup>97</sup> Paolo Gerbaudo (2017) The indignant citizen: anti-austerity movements in southern Europe and the anti-oligarchic reclaiming of citizenship, *Social Movement Studies*, 16:1, pp 36-50.



## Conclusions

Inarguably Europeanization is a dynamic process and the impact produced is continuously evolving. That implies also that Europeanization does not necessarily have fixed or concrete characteristics. In addition, it means that the impact, even if it is presented as unified and single it becomes complicated once is seen within a country's matrix. These remarks are better understood should we take into account both the intergovernmental and supranational character of the EU. The tension between these two identity elements is reflected in the impact generated on member states, since the way decisions are taken at the EU level creates competition and disputes that are transposed to the national settings. The central role of states that is premised on the concept of national autonomy seems to fade away especially as regards smaller and less developed peripheral countries. However, the fact that cooperation and interdependence are basic concepts of EU's integration project seems to have the potential of transforming state's sovereignty by making it a more open and inclusive concept that would incorporate collective and consensual practices into its "functioning".

Evidently, Europeanization might well be characterized as the direct impact of European integration on political structures, domestic policies and institutions<sup>98</sup>. However, in order for the EU to achieve the goals posed on a political, economic and social level an interaction process must take place. This process of Europeanization depends on the complicate interaction between the domestic and European policies, norms, institutions, principles, rules and has as a principal aim to augment the possibility of convergence among national state systems in Europe. But, a successful convergence is achieved both through top-down and bottom-up processes.

As regards the meaning of Europeanization that pertains particularly to Greece two major categories can be discerned. According to the first, Europeanization is equivalent to modernization/westernization. Besides having a quite vague aim this type of Europeanization is characterized by the fact that the state itself made (or should make) an effort in order for the impact to be as wide as possible. Also, as far as the domestic governance and policies are concerned, it can be said that their quality was overhauled, even if their democratic credential were not enhanced significantly. As for the party system and the non-state actors, no major changes can be detected. According to the second, it is evident that Europeanization can acquire a more obligatory sense and be felt as an external power. Under this constrained regime formal, namely, institutional democracy is experiencing many problems. On top of that, the freedom to pursue policies that resonate with the mandate given by the electorate has been effectively narrowed. On the other hand, this type of Europeanization has empowered in indirect and implicit ways non-institutional democratic practices and triggered off a kind of a systemic oppositional populism which although it is a product of Europeanization it purports to oppose to it mainly in order to consolidate itself within the volatile domestic setting. However, both cases support the idea that Europeanization in order to have an actual effect there must be a synergistic cooperative process that facilitates the reception of its meaning. Thus, it follows that the impact of Europeanization might be

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<sup>98</sup> Cepel Z. , *Europeanization of Union Rights : A comparative analysis between Turkey and Croatia*, IJSSER, Vol. 1(2), 2015 , p.355

taking place as a process that does not have tangible and measurable effects unless certain domestic conditions are met.

As for the nature of the impact taken in itself several more concrete conclusions can be drawn. First, the effects of Europeanization happen to relate to many different aspects of a domestic setting even if they purport to be very specific with respect to their scope and limits. To illustrate, the impact on economy, as it has been shown, has had various consequences and aftereffects on governance, party system and civil society. It is important to discern these interconnections because otherwise we will not be able to grasp the way the impact extends and consolidates. The so-called side effects that every impact produces turn out to be an integral part of the whole Europeanization process. Second, it can be deduced that the nature of Europeanization impact on a specific context can change in terms of its quality, quantity and scope depending on the time and the surrounding circumstances, such as the power that EU holds and the concurrent political will expressed by national governments. These idiosyncrasies give rise to various and differentiated domestic responses as regards the democratic status quo.

With respect to the democratic deficit, which seems to be more persistent at the EU than at the national level, there is an important lesson to be learned by the analysis. It is true that the European model of governance restricts and even sometimes contradicts domestic democracy<sup>99</sup>. The impact of Europeanization on governance has rendered representative democracy almost obsolete since essential institutions, such as the parliament, have been weakened and different – more technocratic and market-oriented - approaches have been introduced. As a result the concept of democratic accountability and legitimacy tends to be undermined for policymaking does not concern effectively the citizenry affected. Consequently, when this kind of Europeanization impact is internalized by domestic settings it might give rise to opposing views. Each of the institutions examined (the executive, the parliament, the party system and civil society) has processed this impact in a way that corresponds to their specific nature and functioning. In addition, , new conceptualizations of demos have appeared creating theoretical and practical confusion as regards the status of citizenship within the EU, a fact that has brought many contradictions to the fore.

Thus, different responses have been produced showing that there is the potential for the instigation of a bottom-up process of Europeanization. Along with this possibility another important development emerged. Latent domestic democratic dynamics, which for various reasons remained unfulfilled, began to evolve out of a process of osmosis that reintroduced politics and concerns over the quality of democracy to a broad social and political spectrum. Europeanization has also a transformative potential that is to be discovered and utilized properly by domestic settings. The opportunities for new forms of political mobilization (not only those undertaken by civil society) offered by these processes are crucial for the maintenance of democratic continuity. Hence, as we can see, even if an impact is believed to be problematic as regards its democratic perspective it can still provoke and elicit beneficial effects for democracy. However, this prospect depends on the nature of domestic structures as well as the responsiveness of the citizenry. Ultimately, whether or not Europeanization can enhance the quality of domestic democracy is for each country to determine.

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