South European Society and Politics

ISSN: 1360-8746 (Print) 1743-9612 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fses20

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

Antonis A. Ellinas

To cite this article: Antonis A. Ellinas (2013) The Rise of Golden Dawn: The New Face of the Far Right in Greece, South European Society and Politics, 18:4, 543-565, DOI: 10.1080/13608746.2013.782838

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2013.782838

South European Society and Politics, 2013
Vol. 18, No. 4, 543–565, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2013.782838

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

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

Antonis A. Ellinas

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

Keywords: Greece; Golden Dawn; National Socialism; Far Right; Michaloliakos; Economic Crisis; Immigration; Anti-system

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

Given the dearth of scholarly analysis on the Greek or Southern European far right, the electoral breakthrough of Golden Dawn (Χρυσή Αυγή, GD) in the 2012 elections

took many by surprise. A party that received merely 0.29 per cent of the vote (19,624 votes) in the 2009 elections rose to 6.97 per cent (441,018 votes) in May 2012. Expectations that voters would desert GD after venting their frustration with the mainstream parties were belied. Even after the televised use of violence against two female politicians by one of its legislators, the party secured 6.92 per cent, 425,990 votes and 18 seats in the June 2012 elections. Despite the association of GD with violence, subsequent polls have shown the party reaching 11–12 per cent. This article seeks to trace GD's evolution and, more importantly, to explain why such an extremist political formation has gained so much electoral traction in Greece.

Given the abrupt and recent nature of the phenomenon, any attempt to explain the rise of GD can only be cursory. However, any account of GD's breakthrough must take into consideration the extraordinary conditions Greece has faced in the past few years. Following the outbreak of its sovereign debt crisis, the country received a first international bailout in 2010 and a second in 2012, both linked to a major austerity drive. The austerity measures, which included major spending cuts and tax hikes as well as reforms and privatisations, pushed the country into one of the deepest postwar recessions. Now in its sixth year, the recession has led to a cumulative shrinkage of the Greek economy by 18.6 per cent, making it the most protracted and most severe recession for an established democracy (Eurostat 2012). Even after the 1973 oil crisis, established democracies did not experience such a long and deep drop in national production (see dataset of Barro & Ursua 2008).

The length and magnitude of the Greek recession have taken a big toll on Greek society, ultimately leading to the collapse of the traditional party system. In 2012, the two major parties, which had averaged 83.8 per cent of the vote in the ten elections of 1981–2009, dropped to 32 per cent in the May election and to 41.9 per cent in June (Figure 1). The 2012 elections can hence be viewed as critical elections, 'characterised by abrupt, significant, and durable realignments in the electorate with major consequences for the long-term party order' (Norris 2005, p. 224). Comparable to the

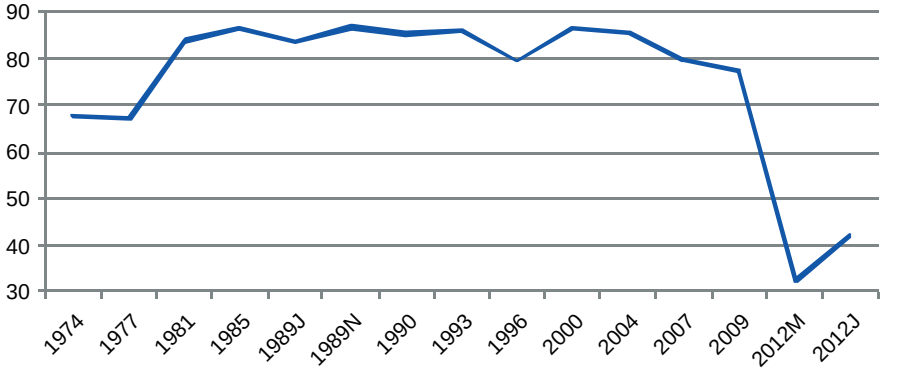

Figure 1 Bi-partyism in Greek Elections, 1974–2011 (% of vote for ND and PASOK in national parliamentary elections).

1994 Italian contest that led to the collapse of the Italian Christian Democrats or to the 1928–32 US polls that led to Roosevelt's New Deal coalition, the Greek elections of 2012 brought about a massive realignment of the electorate away from mainstream parties—what V. O. Key would have called 'a sharp alteration in the pre-existing cleavage within the electorate' (Key 1959, p. 17). This is the context of GD's rapid rise.

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

The Greek Far Right since 1974

To better understand GD's development, it is important to place it within the universe of the various far right groupings that have contested Greek national elections since the re-establishment of democracy in 1974. The first parties that appeared on the right of the conservative New Democracy (Νέα Δημοκρατία, ND) brought together former army officers, former junta officials, diehard anti-communists and loyal royalists. Mainly led by politicians belonging to the pre-1967 political establishment, these parties were largely a reaction to the policies adopted by the conservative government of Constantine Karamanlis towards junta officials, the king and the communists (e.g. Georgiadou 2013 forthcoming). These post-authoritarian far right parties were morally conservative and sought to protect 'the Helleno-Christian tradition', but stayed short of the nationalist overtones that characterise the contemporary far right in Greece and elsewhere in Europe (e.g. Eatwell 2000; Hainsworth 2000; Mudde 2007; Ellinas 2010). The post-authoritarian far right tried to rally 'nationally minded' citizens, but mostly as a reaction to leftist internationalism rather than as a positive identification with the Greek nation.

The National Democratic Union (Εθνική Δημοκρατική Ένωση) contested the 1974 election, campaigning against the conservative Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis on his handling of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the legalisation of the communist party and the treatment of ex-junta officials (Clogg 1987, pp. 59–72; Koliopoulos & Veremis 2007, pp. 134–135; Tsiras 2012, p. 93). Headed by Petros Garoufalias, a former government minister (1964–65), the party received 1.1 per cent of the vote and failed to gain parliamentary representation. Instead, ND won the election with 54.4 per cent of the vote and established itself as the major centre-right party in Greece, averaging 40 per cent in the 15 national elections held since 1974.

The conservative government faced a bigger challenge in the 1977 election from the National Camp (Εθνική Παράταξη), which capitalised on dissatisfaction with ND's modernisation policies as well as with the treatment of the King and jailed junta officers (Pappas 2001, pp. 241–242). The party received 6.8 per cent of the vote and five parliamentary seats but by the time of the 1981 election most of its members had

been coopted by ND. The rest took refuge in the Party of the Progressives (Κόμμα Προοδευτικών) led by Spyros Markezinis, a government minister in the 1950s and prime minister during the junta's brief liberalisation in 1973. The party received 1.7 per cent of the vote and no seats in the 1981 national election, and two per cent in the simultaneous European election, gaining one European Parliament seat.

In the 1984 European Parliament election, the Progressives were replaced by the National Political Union (Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωση – EPEN), a fiercely anti-communist party, nominally led by the imprisoned former colonel and dictator George Papadopoulos. The party secured a single European Parliament seat in 1984 and participated in several national elections in the 1980s and 1990s, receiving between 0.1 and 0.6 per cent and no seats. EPEN's youth group became a breeding ground for future far right leaders, including GD leader Nikos Michaloliakos and the leader of the Hellenic Front (Ελληνικό Μέτωπο), Makis Vorides. In the 1989 European elections, EPEN competed for the far right vote with ENEK (Ενιαίο Εθνικιστικό Κίνημα – United Nationalist Movement), which received 0.3 per cent of the vote before disbanding itself. Members of EPEN later joined the National Party (Εθνικό Κόμμα, NP), which was founded in 1989 to revitalise the far right and received 0.1 per cent of the vote in the 1990 election (Dimitras 1992; Kolovos 2005; Ellinas 2010).

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

In 1994, far right attempts to change the political landscape led to the establishment of the Hellenic Front (Ελληνικό Μέτωπο, HF) by Vorides and former NP members. However, the nationalist fervour that swept Greece over the Macedonia issue left no political space for HF, as an ND splinter party, Political Spring (Πολιτική Άνοιξη), led by the current ND Prime Minister, Antonis Samaras, sought to outbid the mainstream right and PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) by adopting a tough stance towards Greece's northern neighbour's claim to the name 'Macedonia'. Greece's dispute over the name with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has continued since the early 1990s and Greek nationalists have traditionally adopted maximalist positions on the issue. Identifying itself as 'nationalist' and seeking to fight illegal immigration, the Hellenic Front allied in the 2000 election with Front Line (Πρώτη Γραμμή, FL), a party led by the Holocaust-denier Constantine Plevris. They

competed for the far right vote with Sotiris Sofianopoulos and his Party of Hellenism (Κόμμα Ελληνισμού, PH), which espoused 'Hellenism' as an alternative to capitalism, socialism and communism and sought to end national decadence and to induce endogenous economic development. Each received 0.2 per cent and in 2004 Sofianopoulos joined the LAOS ticket. HF decided to disband after receiving a dismal 0.1 per cent in the 2004 election and most of its top leadership joined LAOS in 2005. This included Vorides, later a LAOS MP (2007–12) and LAOS minister (2011–12) and since 2012 an ND MP.

LAOS was founded in 2000 after its leader and popular ND legislator, George Karatzaferis, clashed with the ND leadership. Explicitly nationalist and xenophobic, the party called for the 'protection of the Nation, the Genus, the Faith, the History and the cultural identity' and for the expulsion of illegal immigrants (Ellinas 2010, p. 137). Like most of its West European counterparts, LAOS associated immigration with rising unemployment, increased crime, and national security threats. Especially during its early years, the party put forth a clearly anti-Semitic and anti-American agenda, warning that Greeks 'live in a country run by Jews' and accusing the two main parties of 'slave-like' behaviour towards the United States. Unlike its Greek predecessors, the party made an effort to appeal to leftist voters with populist outbursts against foreign-owned companies and domestic commercial banks. Indicative of the much more radical profile LAOS established in its early years, the party included four GD representatives on its 2002 local election lists (Psarras 2010, p. 124). The party surprised political pundits with its performance, receiving 13.6 per cent in the most populous prefecture of Athens–Piraeus. In 2004, LAOS won 2.2 per cent in the March national election and 4.1 per cent in the June European election, winning a European Parliament seat. In the 2007 election, the party received 3.8 per cent and ten seats, followed by 5.6 per cent and 15 seats in 2009.

The collapse of the party system brought about by the Greek economic crisis did not benefit LAOS, which lost its outsider status by supporting the Memorandum of Understanding accompanying the May 2010 bailout and, later, by participating in the Loukas Papadimos government of 2011–12 which negotiated the second bailout. The electoral pressures LAOS faced were already evident in the local 2010 election, as the party failed to capitalise on the growing popular discontent with the Memorandum (Verney 2012, p. 209). In May 2012 the party's vote fell to 2.9 per cent and further dropped to 1.6 per cent in June. LAOS lost all its parliamentary seats and a number of its leading members joined ND.

Golden Dawn

Golden Dawn was founded on 14 February 1983 by its current leader, Nikos Michaloliakos, under the name 'People's Association – Golden Dawn'. The statutes of the party state that it is a popular movement 'with faith in the ideology of nationalism' (GD 2012a, p. 2). Its symbol is a Greek meander reminiscent of the Nazi swastika. The party was inactive for a decade and started its political activity in 1993 in the midst of

the nationalist fervour that swept the country over Macedonia (Danforth 1957; Ellinas 2010). 'We started in a Leninist way: we decided to issue a newspaper, Golden Dawn, and to build a party around it. Back in the 1980s, we flirted with all sorts of ideas of the interwar years, including National Socialism and fascism. But by the 1990s, we had settled the ideological issues and positioned ourselves in favour of popular nationalism.'[1] Indeed, after the 1990s GD made an effort to avoid explicit reference to National Socialism and to present itself as a Greek nationalist party (Psarras 2012, pp. 250–251).

Until very recently, the party stayed on the margins of parliamentary politics. As shown in Table 1, it contested the 1994 European election and the 1996 national election, receiving 0.11 and 0.07 per cent, respectively. In the 1999 European elections, the party joined forces with Plevris and his First Line, the alliance receiving 0.75 per cent. Throughout the 1990s, the party gained notoriety for incidents of violence and Nazi propaganda. Party members were involved in numerous violent attacks against immigrants and leftists. In one of these attacks, in 1998, a group of GD members, including the party's number two and member of its political council, Antonios Androutsopoulos, nearly killed a student and seriously wounded two others. In 2006, Androutsopoulos was convicted and sentenced to 21 years in prison (Psarras 2012, pp. 84–139). After briefly suspending its political operations and founding the Patriotic Alliance, GD decided at its sixth congress in 2007 to contest the next local, national and European elections independently. The party failed in the 2009 European and national elections, receiving 0.46 and 0.29 per cent, respectively.

Golden Dawn's breakthrough came in the 2010 local government elections. 'In 2010 we said we should take over Athens in order to spread the message to the rest of Greece, as well. We strategically participated in this election for this reason. We knew we would succeed.'[2] Indeed, Michaloliakos surprised most observers by receiving 5.29 per cent of the vote in Athens and a seat on the city council. Michaloliakos was

Table 1 Golden Dawn's Electoral Performance, 1994–2012

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

Source: Greek Ministry of Interior: http://www.ypes.gr/el/Elections/
† With First Line (Πρώτη Γραμμή).
‡ As Patriotic Alliance (Πατριωτική Συμμαχία).
§ Athens municipal election.

particularly popular in the sixth district of Athens, where he received 8.38 per cent of the vote. The high concentration of immigrants in the Agios Panteleimon area and the seeming abandonment of the area by the state highlighted the electoral potential of the immigration issue and pointed to the possibility of using anti-immigrant violence and vigilante-type activities as a means to mobilise support. As in the case of far right parties elsewhere in Europe (Kitschelt 1995, pp. 99–102), this breakthrough in a secondary election became the springboard for GD's twenty-fold electoral growth in the 2012 elections.

Ideology

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

This ethnocratic conception of politics does not stop at excluding non-Greeks from the state but also incorporates a call for the radical transformation of society. According to GD, the establishment of a nationalist state will help create a new society and a new type of individual. The party calls for the 'radical renewal of discarded and fake social values' to save the nation from national decadence. 'Nationalism is the only absolute and genuine revolution because it pursues the birth of new moral, spiritual, social and mental values'. Golden Dawn 'does not intend to rescue anything from the established economic and social interests that lead the Nations, the People and the Civilisation in decadence' (GD 2012b).

While GD denies the National Socialist or Nazi label that others use to describe it, party documents make no secret of an ideological lineage from interwar ideologies. Party members are asked to embrace a biological form of nationalism reminiscent of Nazi ideology. 'For nationalism, the People is not just an arithmetic total of individuals but the qualitative composition of humans with the same biological and cultural heritage' (GD 2012b). Party documents point out that 'the people' is born from the race, and, according to party MP and political council member Elias Panagiotaros, the Greek race has particular standards.[3] According to GD, the party does not ignore the law of diversity and difference in Nature. Respecting the intellectual, national, and

racial inequality of humans we can build a just society based on equality before the law' (GD 2012b, emphasis added). In the Greek Parliament, GD legislator Eleni Zaroulia, who is Michaliolakos's wife, accuses the political establishment of 'equating Greek expatriates with every sort of subhuman that invaded our country, with various diseases he carries' (Greek Parliament 2012). The biological basis that GD considers necessary for national belonging sets the party apart from its far right predecessors as well as from most far right parties in Europe. Even parties described in the literature as neo-Nazi (e.g. Carter 2005, pp. 50–52) do not make such explicitly racist appeals.

The ideological profile of the party is reinforced by the violent activity of its members and leaders. In a report issued after the June 2012 election, Human Rights Watch documents the rising violence on the Greek streets against immigrants and associates increasing anti-immigrant crime with GD members. The Greek police have detained or put on trial GD candidates and MPs for attacks against immigrants during 'cleansing' operations in Athens—vigilante-type activities aiming to clear Athenian neighbourhoods of foreigners and to protect citizens from crime (Human Rights Watch 2012). The party denies direct involvement in the increasing incidents of violence against foreigners but GD leaders have not shied away from using violence themselves. Party MP Elias Kasidiaris, gained world notoriety in June when he assaulted two female political opponents on television.[4] In September, MPs George Germenis, Elias Panagiotaros and Constantinos Barbarousis led a group of GD members in Rafina and Mesologgi against dark-skinned merchants. After 'verifying' they had no permits to sell their goods, the black-shirted GD supporters used their Greek-flag poles to destroy the merchants' stalls. As Germenis stated afterwards, 'we reported to the police that some illegal immigrants were selling their goods without papers, and did what Golden Dawn had to do'.[5] In addition to the association with Nazism, the violent behaviour of GD members and leaders distinguishes it from all other far right formations that have surfaced in Greece in the past decades. The racist ideology and violent image of GD also set it apart from radical right parties in Europe which share a nativist or nationalist worldview (e.g. Mudde 2007) but do not necessarily embrace a biological understanding of national belonging or use violence as a means to achieve political ends.

The ideological proclivity to Nazi ideas is reinforced by GD's anti-system, anti-Semitic and anti-Communist rhetoric. Michaloliakos calls the Greek political system a 'pseudo-democracy' and the party asks its members to reject every authority, including 'the dictatorship of parliamentarism' (Michaloliakos 2012b; GD 2012b). Like LAOS, GD uses populist attacks against the 'corrupt political establishment' that executes orders from abroad, selling off Greek national sovereignty (GD 2012c). In the nationalist state that GD seeks to establish, there is no room for political parties: 'political authority belongs to the People, without party patrons' (GD 2012b). Golden Dawn considers the media to be part of the corrupt establishment that has helped 'loot' the country. In an hour-long interview on Skai TV channel, Michaloliakos accused the channel and his host, among others, of 'taking orders from the *New York Times* and international Zionism' (Michaliolakos 2012c).[6] Indeed, like other far right

parties in Europe and Greece, GD is explicitly anti-Semitic, accusing Jews or Zionists of seeking to eliminate the Greek nation through US-induced globalisation and cosmopolitanism (e.g. Karaiskos 2012). Discussing the Holocaust, Michaloliakos said, 'there was an extermination of the Jews in the concentration camps. Regarding the number of those exterminated—if it was six, four or three million, nobody knows. They were exterminated by all people' (Michaliolakos 2012c).

In addition, the party is explicitly against communism, an ideology that GD associates with internationalist ideas that seek to level national differences. While presenting nationalism as an alternative to communism, GD adopts aspects of the anti-plutocratic rhetoric that is usually associated with communism. Reminiscent of claims made by LAOS in its earlier programmes, GD proclaims that 'the multinationals are operating without control, generating consumer norms and fictitious needs' and asks its members to oppose big property (GD 2012c). Golden Dawn opposes plutocracy because it undermines the productive capacity of the country by imposing barriers to indigenous developmental efforts. 'A characteristic example: the retailer chains that promote imported goods and undercut Greek products' (GD 2012c).

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

Like most of the parties witnessing an electoral spurt in the 2012 Greek elections, and unlike LAOS, GD has taken a firm stance against the Greek bailout agreement. Golden Dawn wants to cancel the Memorandum outlining the bailout terms, arguing that 'the only solution to the Greek problem is the immediate write-off of the illegal and unbearable debt the Greek people are paying' (GD 2012c). Golden Dawn wants the immediate audit of the public debt and all loan agreements made by the Greek state since 1974, to show which part of the debt is illegal and to expose all those who took bribes. Golden Dawn considers the adoption of the euro a disaster for Greece and points to the importance of having a national currency, 'which is equivalent with national independence'. To achieve national independence, 'the first goal is Greek autarky in all basic items necessary for the survival of the Greek people', like food,

medicine, fuel and guns. Although it does not explicitly demand exit from the European Union, it considers Greece's membership has led to the destruction of the primary sector and of Greek industry (GD 2012c).

Organisation

Golden Dawn's organisational structure is similar to that of far right parties in Western Europe, with near absolute concentration of authority in the hands of the leader (e.g. Betz & Immerfall 1998; Georgiadou 2008, pp. 104–112; Mudde 2007). Most of the power in GD rests—both formally and informally—with the party General Secretary, Nikos Michaloliakos, who has held this position since the party's foundation in 1983. The 54-year-old leader boasts tenure in the Greek nationalist movement since the age of 16 and served time in the late 1970s for illegal possession of explosives (Ios 2002; Psarras 2012). He has authored a number of historical, ideological and political books in which he outlines his ideology and worldview.

The towering presence of the founder is evident in the party structure. The highest organ in GD is the party congress, which meets every three years and sets the general ideological and political principles of the party as well as its political planning and strategy. The 300 members participating in the congress are elected from GD's local cells and they elect the general secretary and the members of the central committee. While the party congress is officially the highest organ, party documents make no secret of the enormous authority granted to the general secretary. The party statutes note that 'the general secretary is the highest party organ in the period in between the regular congresses, and his decisions are compulsory and bind all party organs' (GD 2012a, p. 10). His three-year tenure is automatically renewed unless an absolute majority of congress participants asks for an election. The statutes vest the general secretary with the authority to choose, among central committee members, the members of the political council of the party, to appoint the party general manager and to choose the candidates in national, European and local elections (GD 2012a, pp. 11, 20–21). This formal organisational structure creates a significant hierarchical distance between the general secretary of the party and everybody else. The authority vested by the party statutes in Michaloliakos is evident in his interactions with other GD members, including the rest of the party leadership. For example, everyone from the telephone operator to his wife (an MP) addresses Michaloliakos as 'chief' (αρχηγός).

Besides the party congress and the general secretary, the central organisational structure of GD is made up of five additional organs. The next in the party hierarchy is the central committee of the party, which is made up of 60 elected members and the general secretary. The central committee is supposed to help the general secretary in setting the ideological, political and programmatic positions of the party and it elects two other organs, the ethics and audit committees. The political council is in charge of GD's daily operations as well as the execution of the decisions of the general secretary and the central committee. The council members 'are chosen, at the total discretion of

the general secretary' and 'during their tenure the general secretary can decide for important reason to replace any member'. The party statutes do not specify the number of political council members, but the latest version of the statutes is signed by five members: Michaloliakos, Germenis, Kasidiaris, Lagos and Panagiotaros (GD 2012a, p. 14). The ethics committee is appointed by the central committee to examine disciplinary issues, which include social behaviour that exposes the member and the party. The audit committee includes five members appointed by the central committee to find resources, draft the party budget and control party finances. The last organ in the party hierarchy is the five-member committee for the evaluation of potential party members, appointed by the central committee.

'Any Greek citizen or Greek in genus' can become a member of the party after a recommendation by two existing party members (GD 2012a, p. 3). Once approved by the relevant committee, new members need to spend a year of active involvement in the party before they acquire the right to vote or get elected in intraparty elections. Golden Dawn's electoral ascent has increased membership applications, but, according to Michaloliakos, the party remains very selective in recruiting new members. 'We do not have many members. We do not aim at a large membership base. The party has around three thousand members today.'[7] Golden Dawn is much more active in establishing new local organisations, which report directly to the central committee. In October 2012 alone the party set up 15 new local cells, increasing their number to 43. The General Secretary claims that the rapid extension of the local organisational network is carefully planned to avoid incoherence and opportunism. 'If someone tells us that he wants to set up a local organisation, we do not simply tell him go ahead. We examine who this person is, for how long he has been a member of the party, if he has been a loyal member, an active member, etc. We do not want opportunists in the party' (Michaloliakos 2012c).

The party's multifold electoral growth means that it finds itself today in organisational flux, as new structures need to be set up to accommodate the new realities. For example, due to its rapid organisational expansion, GD is paying increasingly more attention to organising its local cells in northern Greece at the regional level. Another example is the audit committee, which is a recent addition to the party statutes, since, according to Michaloliakos, the party had no financial resources or state funding in the past (Michaloliakos 2012a).[8] Despite this organisational fluidity, there is enough evidence to suggest the organisational resemblance of GD to other far right parties in Western Europe. The concentration of authority in the party leader is a typical characteristic of such parties, sending 'a programmatic message to voters and party activists about the kind of society that party is willing to realise' (Kitschelt 1995, p. 71) and giving these parties the label *Fuehrerparteien*. Golden Dawn's hierarchical structure, institutional set-up and organisational density are also reminiscent of communist parties—an argument also made for other far right parties, like the French National Front (e.g. Mayer 1998, p. 14). Asked about the organisational resemblance of GD and communist parties, Michaloliakos quickly rejects the suggestion. 'We have a military organisational

model. We have a first, second, third and fourth office dealing with operations, personnel, etc., just like in the military' (Michaloliakos 2012a).

Electorate

Golden Dawn's electoral breakthrough in the 2012 elections has provided substantial information about the party's voter profile. Geographically, GD polled higher than its national average in prefectures located in Central Greece, Attica and the Peloponnese. In regions like Central and Western Macedonia the results are mixed while in the rest of Greece, GD is much weaker. It is particularly weak in the Greek islands as well as in Epirus. Like LAOS, GD performed particularly well in some—albeit not all—of the most populous prefectures, like Attica (9.96 per cent) and Piraeus B (9.28 per cent). Unlike LAOS, GD's over-proportionate support in Peloponnesian prefectures, like Laconia (10.87 per cent), Corinth (9.99 per cent) and Argolida (9.44 per cent), suggests the party is not solely an urban phenomenon (Table 2). Indeed, opinion polls show that GD is under-represented in urban areas (*Public Issue* 2012a; 2012b). Moreover, the party has not been as successful as LAOS in northern Greece. The geographical distribution of GD voters indicates that the party has managed to attract a different combination of constituencies than LAOS. The over-representation of GD voters in the Peloponnese parallels the performance of the National Camp in the 1977 election (Tsiras 2012, pp. 196–200), suggesting the mobilisation of traditional nationalist constituencies.

The demographic profile of GD voters is similar to that of extreme right parties elsewhere in Europe (e.g. Betz 1994; Mayer 1998, p. 19; Riedlsperger 1998, p. 35). Although GD draws support from heterogeneous constituencies rather than a homogeneous pool of modernisation losers (Mudde 2007, p. 225), there are some noticeable similarities with voting trends documented in other countries. As is usually the case with extreme right parties (e.g. Givens 2004; Georgiadou 2008, pp. 480–482) as well as with LAOS, GD draws over-proportionate support from male voters and is relatively under-represented among women (VPRC 2009; see also Georgiadou 2013). As shown in Table 3, in the May 2012 election GD received 8 per cent of the male and six per cent of the female vote; in the June elections, the proportions were ten and four

Table 2 The Geographical Profile of Golden Dawn's Vote (17 June 2012 election): Electoral Constituencies with Highest and Lowest Share of the Vote

Highest vote share	% of vote	Lowest vote share	% of vote
Laconia	10.9	Lasithi	2.6
Corinth	10.0	Heraklion	3.5
Attica	10.0	Rethymno	4.1
Argolida	9.4	Rodopi	4.2
Piraeus B	9.4	Arta	4.4

Source: Greek Ministry of Interior.

per cent, respectively. Another similarity with the social profile of European extreme right voters, as well as with former LAOS voters, is the age distribution. Support for GD among young voters (18 to 24 years) is almost double the national average. Support for GD is well over ten per cent among younger voters, dropping sharply with age and falling to two or three per cent among the oldest voters. In terms of education, GD voters are under-represented among the least and most educated, while those reporting moderate levels of education are more likely to vote for GD. The occupational profile of GD voters bears some similarities with that of far right voters elsewhere. Golden Dawn tends to draw over-proportionate support among employers and the self-employed, private-sector employees, the unemployed and university students (Table 3).[9]

Rather like the experience of many extreme right parties in Western Europe, the 2012 breakthrough of GD came largely at the expense of other parties on the right. As shown in Table 4, in the May 2012 election a tenth of ND voters in the 2009 elections and nearly a fifth (18 per cent) of 2009 LAOS voters defected to GD. In contrast, the three parties of the left—PASOK, SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left) and KKE (Greek Communist Party)—experienced minor losses to GD. Golden Dawn performs particularly well among constituencies that have not previously voted for the five

Table 3 Social Profile of Golden Dawn Voters: Gender, Age, Education and Occupation (% of the electorate, elections of May and June 2012)

	May 2012	June 2012
Total GD vote	6.97	6.92
Gender		
Male	8	10
Female	6	4
Age- group, years		
18–24	14	13
25–34	12	16
35–44	11	11
45–54	7	7
55–64	5	4
65 +	3	2
Educational level		
Lower	4	3
Middle	9	9
Higher	6	6
Occupation		
Employer/self-employed	9	11
Public-sector employees	8	6
Private-sector employees	8	11
Unemployed	10	12
Pensioners	4	3
Housewives	7	3
University students	12	7

Source: *Public Issue* polls for May 2012 election ($N = 4,607$; data collected February–May 2012).

Table 4 Sources of the Golden Dawn Vote: Percentage of Voters of Each Party Who Switched to GD in May and June 2012

Party	% of 2009 voters who voted for GD in May 2012	% of May 2012 voters who voted for GD in June 2012
ND	10	1
PASOK	4	1
SYRIZA	1	1
KKE	2	2
IG	–	5
GD	–	70
Democratic Left	–	0
LAOS	18	†
New voters	22	–
Non-voters	7	5
Other parties	19	12

Source: *Public Issue* polls for May 2012 ($N = 4{,}607$) and June 2012 elections ($N = 5,862$).
† No information provided.

parties that made up the previous parliament. It received 22 per cent of all new voters, seven per cent of non-voters and 19 per cent of all those who voted for other parties or gave other responses. The June elections belied expectations that GD voters would return to the political mainstream after expressing their protest. The largest portion of the GD's June electorate (70 per cent) had also voted for the party in May, suggesting that GD is drawing support from a relatively large pool of voters who did not simply cast a one-off protest vote against the established parties (*Public Issue* 2012a; 2012b).

Facilitators of Electoral Success

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

In addition, the austerity policies disrupted the clientelist networks that major parties had used to distribute patronage, especially public-sector jobs, and limited the

resources they had at their disposal. This alienated their political clientele, facilitating the defection of traditional constituencies to other political parties. In the absence of effective institutional channels of political participation, the collapse of the clientelist networks through which this participation was previously channelled facilitated the emergence of radical forms of participation.[10] The failure of the political system to provide alternative forms of political participation can partly explain the legitimation of and support for political violence as a means to express political dissatisfaction. The effectiveness of this means relates to the tolerance, or even, the complicity of state authorities, which have arguably turned a blind eye to violent expressions of political dissatisfaction.

The realignment of the Greek electorate was also brought about by increasing public concerns about immigration and by growing perceptions that the Greek state is incapable of controlling the flow of undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers. Since as early as the 1990s, when Greece was transformed from a net sender to a net host of migrants, Greek public opinion has viewed immigration with considerable scepticism (e.g. Baldwin-Edwards & Safilios-Rothschild 1999). Repeated Eurobarometer polls show Greeks to be much more apprehensive of immigration than most Europeans (e.g. Eurobarometer 2003; 2009). The latent xenophobia of the Greek electorate remained untapped by mainstream parties and the issue did not become politicised until recently, when immigration flows from Africa and Asia started changing 'the demographics of the entire country' (Human Rights Watch 2012, p. 4). The economic crisis exacerbated the challenges posed by unchecked migration to Greece, bringing to the surface the failed immigration and asylum policies of the past decades as well as the incapacity of the Greek state to control its eastern borders. In recent years, then, the immigration issue has provided fertile ground for the political mobilisation of frustrated voters who felt strongly about the need to end uncontrolled migration flows and to address the challenges posed by immigration.

Golden Dawn was best positioned to benefit from the realignment of the Greek electorate. An outsider to parliamentary politics for nearly three decades after its foundation, GD was able to turn its pariah status into a symbol of its genuine and authentic opposition to the political system. As GD had spent so much time in the political wilderness, it was much easier for the party to present itself as one seeking to radically transform Greek politics. Golden Dawn's main competitor on the radical right, LAOS, had already moderated its programmatic profile to become a mainstream, coalition-ready partner of the established parties (Tsiras 2012, pp. 127–133). On the issue of immigration, which gained salience during the economic crisis, LAOS witnessed the entry into its programmatic territory of GD and, to some extent, of the Independent Greeks (IG), a new ND splinter party founded in February after a substantial number of ND MPs refused to follow the party leadership in voting for the Second Memorandum.

More importantly, LAOS quickly lost its anti-system status by supporting the Greek bailout agreement and, later, by participating in the Papademos coalition government of November 2011 to May 2012 with PASOK and ND. Its support for the

Memorandum of Understanding reduced LAOS's capacity to capitalise on public resentment against the terms of the bailout agreement and to benefit electorally from the protest sentiment that the latter generated among mainstream party voters. Its subsequent participation in the coalition government further limited LAOS's protest appeal. Although it exited the coalition government after a few months, LAOS's brief presence proved to be a strategic miscalculation. The effect of its government participation is captured by public opinion polls showing a sudden drop in the party's support, from nine per cent in October 2011, one month before its entry into the government, to six per cent in December (Tsiras 2012, pp. 180–184). In May 2012, only 27 per cent of its previous voters stuck with LAOS while 23 per cent defected to the IG. Golden Dawn gained 18 per cent of former LAOS voters, which shows that its success is not based only on the LAOS electorate. Golden Dawn received the second-biggest share of new voters (22 per cent, compared with 30 per cent for the radical left SYRIZA), which may be suggestive of its capacity to attract voters who have not previously been integrated into the political system.

Golden Dawn was also able to benefit from the realignment of the Greek electorate by putting forth extreme nationalist positions. As mentioned earlier, these positions addressed a wide variety of policies, including immigration, which has gained political visibility in the past years. Before the onset of the economic crisis, LAOS was perfectly positioned to capitalise on growing anti-foreigner sentiment, but chose to moderate its position on immigration by avoiding the rhetorical excesses of earlier years (e.g. Ellinas 2010, pp. 137–138). Even after its absorption in 2005 of the Hellenic Front, which had built a strong anti-immigrant profile over almost a decade, and even as the issue started becoming part of the political discourse, LAOS avoided explicit programmatic calls for the expulsion of illegal immigrants (e.g. LAOS 2007; Tsiras 2012, pp. 127–133). The IG also had a tougher position than LAOS on immigration, as they advocated the expulsion of illegal immigrants and the establishment of an immigration quota of 2.5 per cent of the population. But the new party stayed short of adopting a distinctive nationalist—or any other—ideology. Post-election polls have showed that IG has the most ideologically heterogeneous electorate among the seven parliamentary parties.

In contrast, GD seems to be one of the most ideologically coherent parties, belying analyses that it merely attracts protest votes. Nearly half of the GD electorate (46 per cent) consider themselves to be 'nationalists', compared with merely six per cent of nationalist voters in the total electorate (*Public Issue* 2012c). The party's anti-immigrant profile is reinforced by its members' violent activity against immigrants. The combination of its nationalist worldview and violent activity has helped GD establish ownership of the immigration issue.

Golden Dawn's positioning in competitive space may go a long way towards explaining why it benefited from the realignment of the Greek electorate, but raises questions about the capacity of such a small party to send its programmatic signals to this nationwide audience. As suggested by GD's activity in high-immigrant areas like Agios Panteleimon, the party has invested in building grassroots support and links to

local communities. This contrasts with LAOS, which failed to invest in subnational politics, relying instead on the communication resources of party leader Karatzaferis (Verney 2012, p. 206; see also Ellinas 2010; Tsiras 2012). But while GD currently boasts an extensive organisational network, it is unclear whether its electoral breakthroughs are the result or the consequence of its organisational capacity. Apart from information on its frequently updated website, the party's organisational resources and intra-organisational workings remain unknown.

Most of what is now known about the party is due to the media, which showed increased curiosity about GD after its 2010 municipal election breakthrough, and started covering its activities in the run-up to the 2012 elections. While major television channels seem to have ignored GD,[11] the party managed to attract considerable interest from online news sites and in the press. The increased media attention was partly due to opinion polls in early 2012 showing that the party could pass the electoral threshold and enter parliament. The opinion poll results were amplified by the other political parties, especially by LAOS, which repeatedly warned the electorate against voting for GD. [12] Media spotlights also turned onto to GD due to the mobilisation of anti-fascist, human-rights and pro-immigrant groups against it.[13] On many occasions, media reports about GD focused on its members' involvement in violent activities.[14] In one incident on the 45th anniversary of the 1967 military coup, party supporters assaulted a prominent socialist candidate and former minister.[15]

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

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

Conclusion

Golden Dawn is one of the most extreme political formations in Europe. Like most of its West European counterparts, the party has a nationalist agenda, calling for the expulsion of illegal immigrants and the exclusion of non-Greeks from the political community. As is typical of extreme right parties, authority in GD is concentrated in the hands of the leader, who controls all the major decisions of the party and sets its programmatic orientation. The party's voter profile is also similar to that of European extreme right voters: young males with moderate levels of education and often no job. However, there are at least two characteristics that distinguish GD from other extreme right parties. The first is its explicit attachment to National Socialist ideas: party documents reveal a worldview founded on a firm belief in racial inequality and party legislators have referred to foreigners as 'subhuman'. The second distinction relates to the clear association of GD with the use of violence. Amplified by the media, the party's violent activity sends strong programmatic signals, reinforcing its radical image and pariah status in the Greek party system.

What is most surprising is that an extreme political formation like GD has such broad voter appeal. In the rest of Europe, extreme right parties associated with violence, like the Dutch Centre Party '86 or the German National Democratic Party, have failed to attract more than a few percentiles of the national electorate and have stayed on the margins of parliamentary politics. In contrast, GD in the 2012 elections managed to receive nearly seven per cent of the vote and is now polling 11–12 per cent, making it the third-biggest political party.

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

Given the importance and urgency of these developments, it is worth speculating about GD's future. Will it prove to be a flash party that will vanish from the electoral

map as quickly as it appeared? Or will it be able to sustain and extend its initial electoral gains and establish a permanent presence in the Greek party system? To some extent, GD's fate lies in its own hands. As the fate of LAOS seems to suggest, once parties pass the Sartorian threshold of relevance (Sartori 1976, pp. 121–129), their fate depends less on what their competitors do than on their own strategy and organisation (Ellinas 2010). In terms of strategy, GD's future will depend on its capacity to adjust to the changing political environment. For as long as the electorate rewards its violent tactics, GD will be able to sustain and perhaps extend its initial electoral gains. But once the economic crisis ends, the future of the party will depend on how effectively it can adapt to the new political context. As the conditions that facilitated its electoral ascent dissipate, the party will have to choose between pragmatism and moderation on the one hand and idealism and radicalism on the other. The emphasis that GD places on violent tactics mobilises militant street-fighters who are even more radical than the party leadership. Should the strategic need for moderation arise, the party will find it difficult to demobilise its militant base and avoid voter defection to more moderate political alternatives.

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

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Vasiliki Georgiadou, Yiannos Katsourides, Ioannis Kolovos, Iosif Kovras, Neophytos Loizides, Dimitris Psarras, Stavros Tombazos, the editors of *South European Society and Politics*, Susannah Verney and Anna Bosco, and the journal's anonymous referees for their useful comments and suggestions.

Notes

[1] N. Michaloliakos, interview with author, Athens, October 2012.

[2] Ibid.

[3] In a televised discussion on 26 October 2012, Panagiotaros stated that the Greek national-team basketball player Sophocles Schortsianitis, who is black, is not Greek. 'We do not consider Schortsianitis, according to the standards of the Greek race, to be Greek. His two parents have to be Greek and to belong to the European race' (http://www.sport24.gr/multimedia/video/Podosfairo/panagiwtaros_o_sxortsianiths_den_einai_ellhnas.1984870.html, accessed 27 October 2012).

[4] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVH9LlgLSLU (accessed 29 October 2012). For an analysis of the electoral effect of this event, see Papasarantopoulos (2012).

[5] George Germenis, statements recorded from: http://www.skai.gr/player/tv/?mmid=232181, accessed 30 October 2012.

[6] See also his 26 October 2012 interview on Contra TV, in which he denied that he had condemned the Holocaust and repeated claims about the number of Jews who were exterminated. He also stated that it was not just the Germans who had concentration camps but others as well, like the Americans for the Japanese (Michaliolakos 2012a).

[7] Michaliolakos, interview with author.

[8] Golden Dawn is also giving emphasis to helping the Greek Cypriot party National Popular Front (Εθνικό Λαϊκό Μέτωπο, ELAM), which Kasidiaris calls the 'Golden Dawn of Cyprus'. Golden Dawn displays ELAM prominently on its website and MPs Kasidiaris and Lagos sought to boost the Cypriot party's electoral fortunes in the February 2013 presidential elections in Cyprus, by taking part in the announcement of ELAM's presidential candidate.

[9] The joint exit poll by Metron Analysis, Alco, Marc, MRB and Opinion for the June 2012 elections uses different occupational categories and finds over-proportionate support for GD among farmers (9 per cent), professionals (9 per cent), public sector employees (8 per cent), the unemployed (10 per cent) and university students (9 per cent) (http://www.metronanalysis.gr/access/poll/downloadpdf.asp?poll=pub1664_expol, accessed 12 November 2012).

[10] The return of 'street politics' was evident as early as 2008, before the onset of the economic crisis, when the violent riots in Athens over the police shooting of a schoolboy, mentioned above, led to widespread looting of public and private property (Andronikidou & Kovras 2012).

[11] According to official data reported in the newspaper *To Paron* about the coverage that each party received prior to the May 2012 election, GD received merely 0.2 per cent of the total TV time (http://www.paron.gr/v3/new.php?id=77229&colid=37&catid=28&dt=2013-02-03&search=%E5%F3%F1+%F7%F1%F5%F3%DE+%E1%F5%E3%DE, accessed 9 February 2013).

[12] Some examples (all in Greek): 'Hard talk by Karatzaferis against Samaras, attack against Golden Dawn' (*To Vima*, 24 April 2012); 'George Karatzaferis: I fear election night', (*To Vima*, 22 April 2012); 'Alexis Tsipras: Venizelos and Samaras are political crooks' (*Proto Thema*, 2 May 2012).

[13] Some examples (in Greek): 'Salonica: gathering of antifascist organisations' (*To Vima*, 15 January 2012); Greek Union for Human Rights and for the Rights of Citizens, 'The political system in disintegration: Nazism in parliament?' (*To Vima*, 27 April 2012).

[14] Some examples (all in Greek): 'Serious clashes with three wounded on the Zografou university campus' (*To Vima*, 29 March 2012); 'Anarchists assaulted Golden Dawners handing out campaign material in Livadia' (*To Vima*, 26 April 2012); 'Clash of anarchists and Golden Dawners in Livadia' (*Proto Thema*, 29 March 2012); 'Nationalists "hit" an ANTARSYA stall at Chania' (*Proto Thema*, 25 April 2012).

[15] 'Golden Dawn against a PASOK campaign event' (*To Vima*, 21 April 2012); see also two GD members interviewed about the incident on Skai, 10 May 2012 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx-_miz4WD0, accessed 12 January 2013); 'The attack against Efthymiou "united" the parties against Golden Dawn' (*Proto Thema*, 22 April 2012) (both newspaper articles in Greek).

References

Andronikidou, Ai & Kovras, I. (2012) 'Cultures of rioting and anti-systemic politics in Southern Europe', *West European Politics*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 707–725.

Baldwin-Edwards, M. & Safilios-Rothschild, C. (1999) 'Immigration and unemployment in Greece: perceptions and realities', *South European Society and Politics*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 206–221.

Barro, R. J. & Ursua, J. F. (2008) 'Macroeconomic crises since 1870', *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, pp. 255–350.

Betz, H.-G. (1994) *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe*, St. Martin's Press, New York.

Betz, H.-G. & Immerfall, S. (eds) (1998) *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Carter, E. (2005) *The Extreme Right in Western Europe: Success or Failure?* Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Chatzistefanou, A. (2012) 'Golden Dawn has infiltrated Greek police, claims officer', *The Guardian*, 26 October, available online at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-infiltrated-greek-police-claims

Clogg, R. (1987) *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy*, Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

Danforth, L. (1995) *The Macedonian Conflict: Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Dimitras, P. (1992) 'Greece: the virtual absence of an extreme right', in *The Extreme Right in Europe and the USA*, ed. P. Hainsworth, Pinter, London, pp. 246–268.

Eatwell, R. (2000) 'The rebirth of the "extreme right" in Western Europe', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 53, no. 3, pp. 407–425.

Ellinas, A. (2010) *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe: Playing the Nationalist Card*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

Eurobarometer. (2003) 'Citizenship and sense of belonging', Eurobarometer 199, European Commission, available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_199.pdf

Eurobarometer. (2009) 'Future of Europe', Eurobarometer 71, European Commission, available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb71/eb713_future_europe.pdf

Eurostat. (2012) 'Real GDP growth rate: 1990–2013', available online at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00115

Featherstone, K. (1990) 'The "party-state" in Greece and the fall of Papandreou', *West European Politics*, vol. 13, pp. 101–115.

GD. (2012a) 'Καταστατικό του Πολιτικού Κόμματος με την Επωνυμία «Λαϊκός Σύνδεσμος – Χρυσή Αυγή»' [Statutes of the political party with the name 'Popular Association – Golden Dawn'], Athens, document given to the author by GD

GD. (2012b) 'Θέσεις: Ταυτότητα' [Positions: identity], available online at: http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/kinima

GD. (2012c) 'Θέσεις: Πολιτικές Θέσεις' [Positions: political positions], available online at: http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/kinima

Georgiadou, V. (2008) *Η Άκρα Δεξιά και οι Συνέπειες της Συναίνεσης* [The Extreme Right and the Consequences of Consensus], Kastaniotis, Athens.

Georgiadou, V. (2013 forthcoming) 'Populismus und extremismus am rechten rand – der rasante Aufstief der Goldenen Morgenröte im Krisenland Griechenland', in *Rechtsextremismus in Europa: Laederanlysen, Genstrategien und Arbeitsmarktorientierte Ausstiegsarbeit*, ed. M. Minkenberg, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Berlin.

Givens, T. (2004) 'The radical right gender gap', *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 30–54.

Greek Parliament (2012) Minutes of the plenary session of the Greek Parliament, 18 October, p. 59 (in Greek)

Hainsworth, P. (2000) *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*, Pinter, London.

Human Rights Watch (2012) 'Hate on the streets: xenophobic violence in Greece', available online at: http://www.hrw.org/features/greece-hate-on-the-streets

Ignazi, P. (2003) *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ios (2002) 'Οι γιάφκες του Καραμανλή: Η ξεχασμένη τρομοκρατία', [The cells of Karamanlis: the forgotten terrorism] *Eleftherotypia,* 29 September, available online at: http://www.iospress.gr/ios2002/ios20020929b.htm.

Karaiskos, A. (2012) 'Σιωνισμός και Παγκοσμιοποίηση' [Zionism and globalisation], 25 September, available online at: http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/enimerosi/view/siwnismos-kai-pagkosmiopoihsh#.UJDZh2fZWSo

Kastanides, Ch (2009) *Κρίση και Μεταρρύθμιση του Πολιτικού Συστήματος* [Crisis and Reform of the Political System], Livanis, Athens.

Key, V. O. (1955) 'A theory of critical elections', *Journal of Politics*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 3–18.

Kitschelt, H. (1995) *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Koliopoulos, J. & Veremis, Th (2007) *Greece: The Modern Sequel*, 2nd edn, Hurst, London.

Kolovos, Y. (2005) *'Ακρα Δεξιά και Ριζοσπαστική Δεξιά στην Ελλάδα και στην Δυτική Ευρώπη, 1974–2004* [Extreme Right and Radical Right in Greece and in Western Europe], Pelasgos, Athens.

Kontiades, X. (2009) *Ελλειμματική Δημοκρατία: Κράτος και Κόμματα στη Σύγχρονη Δημοκρατία* [Deficient Democracy: State and Parties in Modern Greece], Sideris, Athens.

Kontiades, X. & Anthopoulos, Ch (eds) (2008) *Κρίση του Ελληνικού Πολιτικού Συστήματος* [Crisis of the Greek Political System], Papazisis, Athens.

LAOS (2007) *Πλαίσιο Θέσεων* [Framework of Positions], Athens.

Lyrintzis, Ch (1984) 'Political parties in post-junta Greece: a case of "bureaucratic clientelism"?', *West European Politics*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 99–118.

Lyrintzis, Ch (1987) 'The power of populism: the Greek case', *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 15, pp. 667–686.

Mayer, N. (1998) 'The French National Front', in *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, eds H.-G. Betz & S. Immerfall, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 11–26.

Michaliolakos, N. (2012a) Interview on Contra TV, 26 October, available online at: http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/polymesa/videos/P216#prettyPhoto

Michaloliakos, N. (2012b) 'Οταν πέφτουν οι μάσκες: Οι ψευτοδημοκρατία τους και η Χρυσή Αυγή' [When the masks fall: their pseudo-democracy and Golden Dawn], 10 June, available online at: http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/gengramateas/view/otan-peftoun-oi-maskes-h-pseutodhmokratia-tous-kai-h-chrush-augh#.UJC_aGfZWSo

Michaliolakos, N. (2012c) Interview on Skai TV, 24 October, available online at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxOwSYgRPPU, accessed 31 October 2012

Mudde, C. (2000) *The Populist Radical Right in Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Mudde, C. (2007) *The Ideology of the Extreme Right*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Norris, P. (2005) *Radical Right: Voters and Parties in the Electoral Market*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Papakostas, A. (2001) 'Why is there no clientelism in Scandinavia? A comparison of the Swedish and Greek sequences of development', in *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation: The European Experience in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, ed. S. Piattoni, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 31–53.

Papasarantopoulos, P. (2012) 'To big bang της Χρυσής Αυγής', [Golden Dawn's big bang] *Books Journal*, vol. 23, pp. 12–19.

Pappas, T. S. (1999) *Making Party Democracy in Greece*, St Martin's Press, New York.

Pappas, T. S. (2001) 'In search of the center: conservative parties, electoral competition, and political legitimacy in Southern Europe's new democracies', in *Parties, Politics, and Democracy in the*

New Southern Europe, eds. N. Diamantouros & Gunther, Johns Hopkins, University Press, Baltimore.
Psarras, D. (2010) *Το Κρυφό Χέρι του Καρατζαφέρη* [The Hidden Hand of Karatzaferis], Alexandria, Athens.
Psarras, D. (2012) *Η Μαύρη Βίβλος της Χρυσής Αυγής* [The Black Book of Golden Dawn], Polis, Athens.
Public Issue. (2012a) 'Εκλογές 2012: Ακτινογραφία της Ψήφου' [Elections 2012: radiograph of the vote], May
Public Issue. (2012b) 'Εκλογές 2012: Ακτινογραφία της Ψήφου' [Elections 2012: radiograph of the vote], June
Public Issue. (2012c) 'Η ιδεολογική «ακτινογραφία» του εκλογικού σώματος' [The ideological 'radiograph' of the electorate], September–November, available online at: http://www.publicissue.gr/2058/ideology-2/
Riedlsperger, M. (1998) 'The Freedom Party of Austria: from protest to radical right populism', in *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, eds H. -G. Betz & S. Immerfall, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
Sartori, G. (1976) *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Simitis, K. (2007) *Η Δημοκρατία σε Κρίση;* [Democracy in Crisis?], Polis, Athens.
Sotiropoulos, D. (1996) *Populism and Bureaucracy: The Case of Greece under PASOK, 1981–1989*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IN.
Tsiras, St (2012) *Έθνος και ΛΑ.Ο.Σ.: Νέα Άκρα Δεξιά και Λαϊκισμός* [Nation and LAOS: New Far Right and Populism], Epikentro, Thessaloniki.
Veremis, T. & Tsoukas, H. (2011) *Η Ανατομία της Κρίσης* [The Anatomy of Crisis], Skai, Neo Faliro.
Verney, S. (2012) 'The eurozone's first post-bailout election: the 2010 local government contest in Greece', *South European Society and Politics*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 195–216.
VPRC (2009) 'Βουλευτικές εκλογές 2009: Ποσοτικές έρευνες' [Parliamentary elections 2009: quantitative surveys], available online at: http://www.vprc.gr/uplds/File/vouleytikes%20ekloges%202009/Graphs_VoteAnalysis_WeightedBasedOnFinalResults.pdf

Antonis A. Ellinas is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Cyprus. He is the author of *The European Commission and Bureaucratic Autonomy* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).