

Divided We Stand -- The Greek *Indignados* phenomenon: Legitimizing mutually exclusive interests and ideologies through non-partisan, popular, anti-capitalist protest milieus.

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Abstract:

The phenomenon of the Greek *Aganaktismenoi* (“those who are indignant”), or *Indignados* (to use the more familiar Spanish term) gathered to itself many different, and at times mutually exclusive, political and ideological elements under the common themes of *protest against foreign lenders* and *protest against governmental corruption and austerity*. However, despite such inclusiveness, the movement is viewed primarily as a leftist, anti-capitalist initiative, inspired by the Spanish *Indignados* and similar to the usual protest events against summits organized by the leading industrial powers, though less aggressive and more grassroots-oriented. When one considers the participation of the (far-right) Golden Dawn political party adherents, the Greek Orthodox Church, and anti-Orthodox neo-pagans, among others, one concludes fairly quickly that apart from a shared desire for media exposure, the only cohesive element is a set of common symbols of national heritage (despite antithetical interpretations thereof) and a corresponding attitude of superiority to other European countries on the dubious historical grounds that “Direct Democracy” (*Amesi Demokratia*), which purportedly holds the key to solving the nation’s current crisis, originated in Greece.

This paper examines the symbols, rhetoric, grievances, and conspiracy-related phraseology connected with the Greek *Indignados* movement. It is argued that in the eyes of the general public, the *Indignados* serve as legitimation and justification for various mutually-exclusive ideologies, interests, and objectives. The European crisis has provided a common enemy allowing different groups to present their activity as patriotic, popular/populist, anti-fascist (even ultra-nationalist groups make this appeal), anti-capitalist, and progressive. The Greek *Indignados* movement is thus the political equivalent of money laundering—legitimacy is gained by immersion into a pool of pan-Greek collectivity, so that the indignation of the protesters purports to echo that of the common people, the citizenry in whose name direct democracy is said to function.

Introduction

The *Indignados* movement DOES NOT have any official website, and it also DOES NOT have representatives. ... Also, we must note that the first facebook webpage titled “*Indignados at Syntagma Square*” [*Aganaktismenoi sto Syntagma*] was created by an eighteen year-old guy and two of his friends with the hope that Greece will wake up. (Logios Hermes, 2011, para 10)

The *Indignados* were walking around holding big cardboard notebooks taking down signatures in order to reach 500,000 so that they could bring about a referendum. The content of the referendum is too early to specify. They are working on it right now. (Papanikolaou, 2011, paras 3, 4)

The local resistance here does not raise the issue of what should be done next, but wants to put a stop to the current political course. That’s the most urgent point!” (Perrier, 2011, para 2)

The phenomenon of the Greek *Indignados* began in the spring of 2011, shortly after the gatherings of the original Spanish *Indignados* at Puerta Del Sol in Madrid. The immediate causes were the austerity measures demanded by Greece's creditors (the International Monetary Fund and the European Union), as delineated in a Memorandum of Understanding, and enforced by the governing Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK). By that time, the entire Greek political system was widely regarded as corrupt, a view reinforced by the increased austerity measures of the subsequent Lukas Papademos administration (Nov. 2011-May 2012), and the coalition government led by Antonis Samaras (from June 2012) and consisting of his New Democracy party (ND), PASOK, and the Democratic Left (DEMAR).

The Greek *Indignados* movement emerged in the context of the Arab Spring mobilizations, the Real Democracy NOW movement which inspired the original Spanish *Indignados* (Mason, 2012), and also the earlier Greek mobilizations of I Won't Pay (*Den Plirono*)—initially a 2008

reaction to freeway tolls, and subsequently to other austerity measures (Tsaliki, 2012). Although the Greek Indignados phenomenon centered on Syntagma (Constitution) Square in front of the parliament building in Athens, the claim was one of national popular representation (Mason, 2012; Tsaliki, 2012).

The movement's origins came to be connected to what may be called the myth of the Spanish wake-up call. According to rumor, some Spanish Indignados displayed a sign urging their fellows to protest more quietly, lest the Greeks be roused from their slumber (Tsaliki, 2012, p.1). The rumor was reported as fact (Exadaktylos, 2011; Malkoutzis, 2011; Erevna, 2001), although sources from Puerta Del Sol denied the story (Niaoti, 2011). That the myth most likely originated in Greece rather than Spain is suggested by a commentator who explicitly mentioned 23 May as the date the Spanish sign supposedly appeared (Keep Talking Greece, 2011). The site in question contained many postings by Greek users, but only one Spanish tweet (@GonChristopher) calling on Greece to wake up; the only complaints of Greek complacency were registered by Greeks. A possible inspiration for the wake-up myth can be found in a post by a Greek user, @2metrapalikari:

@GonChristopher: GREECE from Spain we say to you WAKE UP!!! go out to the street and claim freedom!!!! THE TIME IS NOW!!! #greekrevolution #spanishrevolution ...

@2metrapalikari: Ok, it's simple: those of you that want a #greekrevolution, show up at Syntagma on Sunday noon. Those of you that don't want ... shut up and let us sleep. (Masouras, 2011, paras 6 & 7)

In any case, Greeks responded with the slogans, "We are awake" and "What time is it? It's time they left" (referring to their politicians) (Wherlock, 2011).

Geographical, ideological, political, and social categories.

From the start, distinctions were made between the Upper Square (*Ano Plateia*), the area immediately facing the parliament building, toward which many obscene gestures and profanities were directed; and the Lower Square (*Kato Plateia*), the area farthest from parliament. The Upper Square was relatively right-leaning, and more theatrical, with one group displaying cardboard gallows (NewsIt.gr, 2011). A left-wing element was prominent in the Lower Square (riff-raff, 2011), the site of committees that organized everything from media outreach to hospital services, to assemblies and "horizontalist" decision-making secretariats (Mason, 201b). In the popular perception, it was the Lower Square which best represented the movement as a whole, while the Upper Square was characterized by a hodgepodge of unrepresentative "minority" opinions.

The Upper Square featured slogans directed against the mainstream media, the international banking elite, and domestic political leaders (Logios Hermes, 2011). Among the political stances represented there were a group of Reserved Special Forces personnel speaking in essence against multiculturalism and religious pluralism (Takis2x11, 2011; George Drakos, 2011); some priests of the Orthodox Church (Apollodorus, 2011; yseegr, 2011); the Supreme Council of Ethnic Hellenes (YSEE), a nativist neo-pagan organization whose slogans called for taxing the Church (it should be noted that the Greek neo-Pagan community is diverse but shares varying political shades of nationalist exclusivism –see Voulgarakis, 2011) (yseegr, 2011); far-right groups and adherents (Feleki, 2012; theinsider, 2011); and anti-Masonic conspiracy theorists (nikoskoukakis1, 2011). The Lower Square was home to We Occupy Athens (Barrett, 2012); the Greek branch of Real Democracy NOW; the reportedly left-oriented Greek Committee Against the Debt (Livitsanos, 2011); labor unionists calling for the politicization of the Indignado movement (Perrier, 2011); and various immigrant protesters, e.g. calling for the downfall of Syria's al-Assad regime (SAKIS LAKIS, 2011). Economist Yannis Varoufakis, a professor of the University of Athens and former advisor to the PASOK government, states that such diversity is inevitable, and that the presence of extreme or marginal voices should not detract from the innovative possibilities of the movement (Krogias, 2011).

The Greek Indignados movement presents itself as a manifestation of nationwide popular

sentiment which, though spatially and temporally localized, is claimed to be non-ideological and nonpartisan in nature, notwithstanding de facto collective positions critical of such things as international banking and neo-liberal capitalism. Not infrequently, protesters saw their own group as the true voice of the broader Indignado movement, while dismissing others as merely its self-proclaimed representatives. Donatella della Porta's work on global movements suggests that the apparent absence of ideology is accomplished through a kind of fluidity among participants who are more accustomed to interacting in small groups than to participating as representatives of formal organizations (della Porta', 2005). This fluidity was prominent in the Greek Indignados case, but intranationally, i.e., not in the della Porta paradigm of international collaboration of protest groups)

The protesters attempted to ban partisan expressions and group insignia from the Square, over the objections of certain leftist groups. Stathis Gourgouris of Columbia University notes that “the politics of this totalizing ritualistic renunciation ... can never lead to any sort of alternative constituent power...” (Gourgouris, 2001, paras 3 & 4). However, members of political parties attended as individuals (Nuns, 2012, para 33), notwithstanding the incongruity of appearing to protest against themselves. Rena Dourou, an MP from the far-left Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) party who camped in the square, commented that the crowd's nonpartisan demeanor did not preclude support for suitable, non-mainstream parties, presumably including her own (Mason, 2012). This inclusiveness has been observed among activists elsewhere, outside the Square (Hatzopoulos & Parsanoglou, 2012, para 45). Other groups—including some totally opposite to SYRIZA—called for the fulfillment of various political promises that their parties had failed to deliver. In the disconnect between the movement's nonpartisan identity and the pursuit of viable political alternatives, Gourgouris sees the risk of domination by reactionaries or provocateurs (Gourgouris, 2001, para 13). The presence of anarchists (Mason, 2012), itself evidence of the diversity of the participants, enhanced the anti-capitalist, anti-fascist character of the Lower Square. According to one report (Nunns, 2012), anarchists and Indignados share a dim view of the traditional left.

Marantzidis describes how the (far-right, anti-immigrant) Golden Dawn and SYRIZA influenced the crowds on Syntagma Square:

There, in the "Upper Square," they became one with the multitude. They expressed the multitude's feelings when they were passionately singing the national anthem...throwing obscene hand gestures at Parliament... spitting at the MPs, even...trying to attack the Parliament building. (Marantzidis, 2012, para 2)

On the other hand, Antonis Liakos of the University of Athens notes that Golden Dawn never made an official appearance in the square (having tried only once, unsuccessfully), and accordingly rejects the suggestion that its rise to prominence was due to participation in the Indignado protests (Liakos, 2012). In theory, the nonpartisan ideology of the Indignados offers no compelling reason for excluding the Golden Dawn, considering its success in the general elections; yet no one would suppose the Indignados to be as comfortable with right-wing groups as with leftist parties like SYRIZA. At the same time, talk of "the usurers of the Troika and the IMF" (Margaronis , 2012) is heard across the political spectrum, including among the Indignados.

Reception

Media reactions to the Indignados phenomenon have been generally positive (Veneti, n.d.; sxoliasmoi, 2011) In May 2011, MEGA Channel described the Indignados as "independent, non-partisan, kind-hearted" people who understandably displayed “a lack of trust not only toward politicians but also us journalists," and as a "reaction by people who feel that the future of their children is being undermined" (Zappitvideo, 2011). The positive image of the movement was maintained even during the notorious attacks against members of parliament and their staff the following month (OneWildShark, 2011), and journalists have been described as “quick to present romanticized images of the protesters and to expose polls put together in haste that show a high degree of sympathy and support for the movement by the wider Greek public opinion.” (Exadakylos, 2011, para 1)

The Church's stance was one of cautious support, apparently in order to avoid being targeted by the movement. In addition to the above-mentioned clerical presence on the Square, there was also the statement of Metropolitan Anthimos of Thessaloniki—well known for his ethnocentric sermons—in favor of the gatherings and critical, typically, of "the Europeans" who pressure the people for debt payment (inews.gr, 2011b, para 1). Although one month later, protesters in Thessaloniki booed Anthimos and blocked his car (tvseleo, 2011), neither he nor the Church changed their attitude toward the Indignados.

Turning to political reactions, Prime Minister Giorgos Papandreou described the protesters as "addressing national democratic systems which today are ...much weaker than in the past." Similarly, then-opposition leader Antonis Samaras stated,

We are listening ...We rejoice with the people's peaceful protests in the squares, the protests which are not taking place any more with partisan ...banners but with large, nation-wide mobilizations under symbols which unite: Greek flags!... (eklogika.gr , 2011b)

On the left, SYRIZA party leader Aleksis Tsipras noted in a speech that " The spontaneous and peaceful presence of the people [*o laos*, a singular noun, identifying the Indignados with the Greek people in unity]... is the most powerful negotiation card." A similar response was made by DEMAR (eklogika.gr , 2011b). The Greek Communist Party (KKE) took a relatively detached, critical approach, viewing the Indignados' lack of organization as the result of manipulation by the media and capitalist interest groups (kkemedia, 2011). Its main aim, like that of the labor unions, was to portray itself as the true representative of laborers, who are the foundation of society and the majority (Nunns, 2012). Challenging the popular perception that the Indignados represented "the People," without alienating the protesters, was thus very important to the KKE.

Themes

Nationalism. The phenomenon of the Indignados was less a "movement" than a mass reaction to shocking political developments, a reaction which was inevitably nationalistic, despite the reservations of the Lower Square. A full analysis of Greek nationalism would carry us too far afield. Suffice it to say that it affirms the notion of a continuous diachronic cultural and linguistic presence (Fishman, 2001); frequently embraces ethnocentrism and xenophobia, in opposition to multiculturalism or Europeanization; and is catered to throughout the political spectrum (Veremis, 2011), not only by the right.

The national flag was often displayed at the protests, though mostly on the Upper Square. As leftist academic Panagiotis Sotiris puts it, "Even the mass use of Greek flags in the rallies, a practice that some segments of the left misread as 'nationalism', is an expression of the need for popular sovereignty, social cohesion and collective social dignity" (riff-raff, 2011, paras 28-9).

The nationalist motif of Greek innocence (of culpability) here manifested as a general reluctance to admit that Greece bore *any* responsibility for its economic crisis. As one commentator explains,

The "common people" [*o aplos laos*] are never to blame, even when they forget to pay taxes, when they build houses on burned forest lands, when they press for a job in the civil service "for the kid," or when they pay bribes to obtain preferential hiring [or] when they were giving their vote to whoever among the politicians was securing for [the people] freedom from legal consequences [*atimorisia*]. On the contrary, the people were systematically punishing whoever proposed reforms unfavorable to their comfort [*volema*, security combined with indifference for public good]. (Bakogiannakis, 2012, para 6)

Another recurring motif—voiced by smaller political parties (GeorgeGreekTrucker, 2012), radio programs (sakis24, 2011), and mainstream TV shows (sxoliasmoi, 2011)—describes Greece as a guinea pig experimented upon by "European" banks. Yet another hails Athens as the "cradle of democracy," a motif probably motivated by collective embarrassment at having

been prodded into action by the Spaniards. At the first open assembly at Syntagma Square on May 25, protesters were told that "Democracy began here, in Athens. Politics is not something bad. To improve it, let's take it back into our own hands... The Spanish people have shown us the way, but democracy started here." (riff-raff, 2011, para 16).

At the time of the protests, Greek nationalism often took the form of anti-German sentiment. Hyperbolic and tasteless comparisons to Nazism (e.g., photomontages depicting German chancellor Angela Merkel as Hitler) were often encountered, even on television talk shows (Lowen, 2012, para 11). In that spirit, SYRIZA party leader Alexis Tsipras labeled his Memorandum-signing political rivals as "unpatriotic," and in a speech replete with World War II imagery (inews.gr, 2012), roused a local government workers' association into issuing a statement accusing the government of collaboration with the Germans (parapolitiki, 2012). Some members of the association later attacked the German Deputy Minister of Labor during a November 2012 conference in Thessaloniki. In another instance, two SYRIZA MPs employed World War II nationalist rhetoric during a parliament session, complaining of German occupation, usury, and a threat to the survival of the Greek race (parapolitiki, 2012). SYRIZA MP Manolis Glezos similarly connected popular protest to the defiant "NO!" uttered to the invading forces in 1940 (sxoliasmoi, 2011b). KKE MP Liana Kanelli expressed the same language of national sovereignty and defiance:

We feel bold, and beautiful! It's chilly in Athens, but you still need the Acropolis to have an idea of European civilization. We are still bold and beautiful!" ... Winston Churchill said, about a century ago, that it's not that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks. (minimatakis29, 2011)

Incoming prime minister Antonis Samaras employed the "Nazi threat" motif in a rather different way, by appealing to European fears of a collapsing Greece exiting the Eurozone (à la the Weimar Republic), and to domestic fears of rising fascism, in light of the recent electoral success of the Golden Dawn (Mason, 2011). The Golden Dawn (*Chrysi Avgi*) is more than a mere political party or nationalist group. Though not admitted by its spokespersons, it is a neo-Nazi organization (channel 4 News, 2013), complete with displays of anti-Semitism—its "honorable" MPs once read passages from the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* into the official parliamentary record (JTA, 2012; xryshaygh.com, 2012)—and a reputation for beating up immigrants. Note that even mainstream political parties struggle to balance their desire to remain at the center of the political spectrum, with the need to appease voters frustrated by the obvious failings of Greek immigration policy (Kallis, 2012).

Anti-fascist anarchists reportedly tolerated the far-right groups, at least before the violence of June 15:

they are not Nazis in the classic sense, they are just old-fashioned far-rightists ... As such, any targeting of them...was rightly considered pointless. These people were simply unable to shape events, they are simply non-existent, and they will either be unavoidably incorporated into the body of the real procedures of the movement (assemblies, etc.) or they will leave on their own. (riff-raff, 2011, para 31)

This (temporary) co-existence of mutually exclusive ideologies and interests under the banner of nationalism was not artificial. On the other hand, neither should it be taken as evidence of any particular tolerance on the part of the Indignado movement. Rather, this was a tolerance born of convenience, out of a need to appeal to the fears and frustrations of the wider population, but with its ethnocentrism repackaged as indignation.

Direct Democracy. The term "Direct Democracy" (*Amesi Dimokratia*) gained popularity as the supposed Greek equivalent of the "Real Democracy" of the Spanish Indignados, to the point that a dispute over nomenclature broke out between rival committees claiming to represent the movement (NewSGreek, 2011; Ellinikovima, 2011). It was never very clear just what was intended by the phrase, and the only attempts to apply it practically were inspired as much by the subculture of anarchist squatters (as in Vila Amalia; see ekathimerini.com, 2012) as by classical antiquity (Gourgouris, 2011). When a substantial segment of the population has been

demoralized by the loss of future prospects, and considers the parliamentary system as unrepresentative of the public will, then the rule of law threatens to give way to mob rule. For example, a manifestation of “direct democracy” by a parent’s association at a school in Halandri successfully defied the legally-mandated integration of Roma (Gypsy) children into the student body (To Feleki, 2012). By this principle, asks one commentator,

would not other "indignant" and "politicized" activists have the right to enforce popular mandates [*laika psifismata*] and to terrorize whatever political system they wished in order for their platform to be heard? (ellinaki, 2011c, para 3)

The danger of appearing to support mob rule, or anti-minority vigilanteism organized by neighborhood councils, was recognized as something that could give the Indignados a bad name, and allow exogenous far-right elements to infiltrate the ranks of the protesters (Exadaktylos, 2011), but such voices were not thought of as part of the Indignado movement itself, hence, the inverted commas in the quote above. And yet, the one defining aspect of the Indignados was their a-political, non-organizational, non-ideological, all-inclusive representation of the People, and that would have to include those far-right segments of the People which had decided to join the popular protest. In that sense, the use of inverted commas suggests the same selective approach to defining the Indignados as Antonis Liakos’ mentioned below (Liakos, 2012)

"The demand at Syntagma," Gourgouris writes, “is ultimately not economic but political: the radical alteration of Greek political culture” (Gourgouris, 2011, Para 7). In fact, the protesters were seeking to change the system, not the culture. The political culture was precisely the one manifesting in Indignado rhetoric and behavior. For this reason, the political system's malfunctions were presented as endemic to the system itself, rather than the failure of various political players (including the electorate) to apply it properly and fairly.

Violence and Anomy. Many commentators present the Indignados as a peaceful movement in danger of being dragged into violence by external agents (Damtsas, 2011). Yet their *raison d'être* was the overthrow of the political system, however vague the proposition may have been. We have already mentioned the cardboard gallows on display at the Square, and the minor physical attacks on politicians (e.g., by throwing yoghurt). “Wanted” posters were displayed (NewsIt.gr, 2011), and mock courts were being called for, for the purpose of identifying traitors in the government. On June 15, 2011, thousands of demonstrators surrounded the parliament building and tried to enter, chanting “Burn! Burn down this brothel of a parliament!” They carried Greek flags, as if to legitimize their verdict (user8707, 2011).

Stathis Kalyvas of Yale University writes about the manifestations of anomy in Greek society (e.g., blocking national highways with trucks or tractors, occupying university departments and high schools), including the phenomenon in which violent anti-state protesters [*antiekousiastes*] enjoy the same tolerance and protection as peaceful protesters. “The phenomenon has endured for three decades now, including and spanning times of great affluence” (Kalyvas, 2010, paras 2 & 3). Similar articles have identified other manifestations of anomy: illegal parking, a general disregard for anti-smoking laws (Kastanas, 2011), the construction of unlicensed housing complexes, the practice of bribing doctors in order to obtain speedier treatment, entire communities conspiring to fraudulently receive disability benefits (Angelos, 2012), rampant nepotism in the civil service, and the social acceptance of tax evasion, to the point that attempts to crack down on the practice have led to violent, community-wide sieges of police stations (Athens News, 2012). A so called anthropological cross-section of the movement was similarly indicative:

- Tainted long-term professional trade unionists with clear political agendas and ambitions;
- Extremely young pensioners who having worked for the public sector for 15 years could file for early retirement if they had minors in the family;
- Former employees in privatized public companies (Greek telecoms, Olympic Airways et al.) who opted for voluntary resignations for a hefty compensation;
- Older public sector workers who seeing the upcoming salary harmonizations filed for retirement to secure their pensionable rights;
- Parents who managed to secure jobs in the public sector for their offsprings through party or other

- political connections;
- Contractors who employed uninsured Greek and immigrant workers or who more than often struck deals for overvalued and overpriced municipal public works through similar political acquaintances and family ties;
- Doctors registered in the Greek public health system who accepted bribes to fast-track patient treatment, and who at the same never provided receipts for their services in their private practices;
- So-called 'eternal' university students that have been registered in the higher education system for years and reaping the respective benefits;
- Tax officers who turned a blind eye to tax evasion for the right price or urban planning officers who took advantage of their authority;
- Merchants of all kinds who never produced invoices for their trade; and even farmers who were receiving long-term subsidies but were no longer in the profession. (Exadaktylos, 2011, para 7)

The culture of anonymous disobedience has been commented upon by journalists (Mandravelis, 2011) and academics (Tsoukas, 2011), in which light the outbreak of violence by the Indignados becomes more understandable:

The worship of violence was cultivated on a social soil already prepared to receive it... The Civil Servants' lack of respect toward the citizens, but also the citizens' scorn toward anything that serves the public sphere, [...] tax evasion, corruption...assault with yoghurt against politicians, I Won't Pay groups, all testify to a society already ideologically prepared... (Siakantaris, 2012, para 4)

The same anomy is arguably behind the Greek failure to see any justification for tighter loan terms after three decades of malfeasance (ellinaki, 2011). Kastinas notes the extent to which the political legitimization of anomy has legitimized individual law-breaking (Kastanas, 2011, 2011b). Such attitudes reflect famous apophthegmata of now near-mythical political figures like the late Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou and his April 1989 election campaign statement "There are no institutions. There is only the People!" [*Den yparxoun thesmoi. Yparxei mono o laos!*] (Aristotelidis, 2013, para 2). Some observe a Greek tendency to appeal to personal and special group interest in order to justify anonymous political disobedience (ellinaki, 2011b):

This attitude leads to the notion that change does not come from changing governments but from extra-parliamentary power...From the illegal parking of cars on sidewalks, to small groups' rallies which paralyze transportation ... the interest of the guild mentality prevails over any logical alternative. The others must suffer in order to be forced to support us... to give in to our demands so that inconvenience may cease. (Tsakyrakis, 2012, para 8)

The Greek Indignados attempted to downplay class-struggle rhetoric. Riff-raff, an internet site devoted to left-leaning political commentary, put it thus:

A major emphasis... was the condemnation of proletarian violence ... This democratism ... sees proletarians as treated unfairly, not as exploited... It sees citizens instead of classes. Contradictorily, these same citizens attack politicians whenever they happen to encounter them... [At any rate] there was a shift ... after the confrontations with the police on June 15, a shift that led to the major clashes on June 28 and 29. This shift affirmed the class character of the present conflict and the proletarian component of the movement, and this was most clearly manifested at the moment of its virtual death. (Riff-raff, 2012, para 24)

The proletarian face of the June 15 violence, according to the above commentary, started to define the Indignado movement in Greece in terms of a "working class versus the state" type of conflict—a shift in the Indignado dynamics which emerged with the general strikes, and which carried with it a decrease in the tolerance of far-right elements, leading to attacks against them (Riff-raff, 2012).

After the 1974 legalization of the KKE, the left has traditionally enjoyed what has been described as a great political capital of ethical advantage over its right-wing rivals, whose support for the dictatorship, it was said, made them unfit to criticize anyone (Panoutsos, 2012). This capital is said to have been nearly exhausted in recent years due to political anomy (Triantafylidis, 2012). Right-wing voices have begun pointing out numerous instances of violence, or the encouragement of violence, from the left (Kasimatis, 2012). Accusations

against SYRIZA were made as early as 2008 (in.gr, 2008), a time when the sons of several SYRIZA MPs were arrested for taking part in violent attacks by hood-wearing rioters [*koukouloforoi*], only to be set free without further investigation at the request of their fathers (knossopolis, 2010). Four years later, a similar event involving a Golden Dawn MP was recorded on live TV (Petridis, 2012). One of the same SYRIZA MP's sons was also arrested in connection with the 2012 occupation of Villa Amalia in Athens, an anarchist-autonomous center which, according to the police, contained ingredients and equipment for riot-related activities (ekathimerini.com, 2012).

Thanasis Theophilopoulos of Panteio University (Athens) observes that the Golden Dawn, like the parties of the left, expresses

strongly anti-Memorandum rhetoric... accusations against "traitors," laments for a "lost national sovereignty," and a scorn toward the whole of political sector which leads even to physical attacks... can achieve political gains by investing in nationalist, conservative, and even anti-parliamentary reflexes of a substantial segment of the electorate. In such a political atmosphere, the rhetoric and practices of the Golden Dawn cease to appear all that "extreme" any more. (Theophilopoulos, 2012, paras 3 & 4)

Some of the most active NGOs spoke out against the theory of the two extremes, seeing yoghurt-throwing and squatting as less threatening than organized and systematic racist violence (Papaioannou, 2012). Panayote Dimitras of the Greek Helsinki Monitor agrees that racist violence is more serious than mere political violence. (Dimitras, 2012).

The Indignados did not create the above-mentioned culture of anomy and political violence, and, therefore, they did not bring Golden Dawn to parliament. They did, however, provide a locus for the politicized expression of anomy and potential violence by assembling in a specific geographical space in which the far left and far right were constituents (not infiltrators), covered under the moral authority of "the People." It is this moral authority which led to the selective attention on the apolitical, left-leaning, anti-mainstream, non-violent elements of the Indignados, thus allowing for Liakos to describe the two extremes through the equally selective categories of "racist attacks" and "racist violence," on the one hand, and "popular mobilizations" and "social protest" on the other. He justifies this selectivity by regarding the left's complicity in political violence as unproven and unofficial (Liakos, 2012b). Another commentator disagrees:

The left and the far right share... the scorn against ...representational democracy. How many times has the left denied the "legality" of governmental policies with which it disagreed? And how many times have we been told that real legality does not come from parliament but from the "social struggles" in the streets and on the sidewalks? (Kapsis, 2012, para 6)

Conclusion: Legitimacy

The Square is the public sphere, the People. It is also the fixed space, the material, spatial symbol for the nation, much like the flag being the iconic one. The Square gives legitimacy by virtue of its down-to-earth, non-elite, everyday quality—the vulgar profanity of slogans attests to this (Tzanetti, 2011).

Despite its rhetoric, the Greek Indignados movement failed to eliminate clientelism. Although the results of the two summer elections were celebrated as the people's rejection of the Memorandum and the political mainstream (Lesser, 2012), the 2012 voting results showed an enhanced pattern of clientelism, with new parties formed by breakaway PASOK and ND MPs, almost all of whom promised to oppose the Memorandum (implicitly even to the point of an exit from the Eurozone), and with voters expressing their rejection of the bigger parties by supporting their corresponding offshoots in an obvious show of ideological (and almost tribalistic) loyalty (Theodosiadis, 2012).

This return to the discredited parliamentary procedure was not because the voters differed from the protesters in some crucial respect—the Square, as discussed, represented every variety of popular sentiment. The absence of cohesiveness, centralization, and planning (see this work's

three opening quotations) made failure inevitable. Two statements by a pro-Indignado analyst illustrate this point most accurately:

with no common affiliation, thus gaining credibility... they have refused, so far, to be hijacked by self-proclaimed saviors, representatives and spokespersons, with limiting agendas. (Tzanetti, n.d., p. 2)

And yet,

The strength of the Syntagma movement is not in offering answers **-that's the elected officials' job-**, but in providing a reality check, a reminder of the terms of the **social contract**. (Tzanetti, n.d., p. 4, emphasis added)

The election results mirrored the analyst's last statement as much as they did the Indignados' self-contradictory attitude: the protest originated in the Square and claimed the authority that was Parliament's. But since the defining characteristic of that authority was not a set of cohesive principles but only a locale, appeals were made back to representative democracy, thereby contradicting the entire scheme of Direct Democracy:

In a nearly carnivalesque Syriza rally ... [the presenter] made an introductory remark, asking...Syriza to acknowledge its debt to the [Indignados]. "The multitude occupying the squares of Greece," he continued, "will be transformed on June 17 to a people whose vote will bring Syriza to government". Even if we take this remark, seriously, at least in terms of political rhetoric, [his] aim is more towards **an ephemeral, momentary transformation: the multitude is to band to a people on the 17th and then immediately disband back to its previous multiplicity**. The political success of Syriza is precisely based upon the fact that Syriza could not and did not attempt to *represent* the multitude [which SYRIZA] has invaded so persistently and so intensively the public space during the last years. (Hatzopoulos & Parsanoglou, 2012, para 5, emphasis added)

That "carnavalesque SYRIZA rally" (Syrizaios, 2012) well describes the attitude of the entire political mainstream toward the Indignados.

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