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A tale of two referenda: the Greek Plebiscite of 1946 and the referendum of 2015

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ABSTRACT

This paper compares two periods of crisis in Greece separated by 70 years, the crisis surrounding the national elections and the plebiscite on the return of the Greek monarchy in 1946, and the referendum on the terms contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of July 2015, and the international involvement in and reaction to these referenda. The inspirations for the paper, were the ways in which external forces attempted to direct their outcome, and the similarities in the ways in which in both periods, external forces attempted to frame the definition of the referenda in favour of their wider strategic objectives. The pressure placed on the Greek government, both from within Greece and from without, was also noteworthy, as was the rhetoric that was used both during and after both events. The paper concludes that in these two cases, rather than providing resolution to an issue, the referenda served mainly as a vehicle of protest, extremely susceptible to manipulation, leading to a situation worse than that which had preceded them.

RÉSUMÉ

Notre objectif dans cet article est de comparer deux périodes de crise qui ont eu lieu en Grèce à 70 ans d'intervalle. D'une part celle ouverte par les élections nationales et le plébiscite sur le retour de la monarchie, en 1946, d'autre part celle provoquée par le référendum sur le mémorandum d'entente de juillet 2015. Nous nous penchons en particulier sur les ingérences extérieures dans ces référendums ainsi que les réactions qu'ils ont suscitées au niveau international. Ce qui est frappant, c'est que dans les deux cas des acteurs extérieurs ont tenté d'orienter les résultats du référendum et de formuler, en fonction de leurs objectifs stratégiques, la question soumise aux électeurs. Nous abordons aussi les pressions intérieures et extérieures sur le gouvernement grec, ainsi que la rhétorique utilisée pendant et après les deux événements. L'article conclut que, dans les deux cas, les référendums n'avaient pas pour but de résoudre le problème initial mais de canaliser le mécontentement populaire. Ces deux opérations, particulièrement sujettes à manipulation, débouchèrent sur des situations pires que celles qui les avaient précédées.

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Introduction

In September 1946, after years of civil war, Greeks were heading to the polls in order to decide the future of their country. The subject upon which they would be voting, however, was not for the Parliament and Prime Minister. Rather, the question upon which they were voting was intended to link the continuation of democracy in Greece with the monarchy. The question was not phrased this way. The question was if the Greeks wanted a monarchy or not: far too simple a question for its answer to be able to settle the deeply felt long-standing divisions in Greek society. In fact, the way this question was being asked at *that* time was in violation of an earlier agreement meant to end hostilities and provide a framework through which the warring parties could find a way to peace. Not surprisingly, this violation of the earlier agreement enflamed the divisions and hostilities flared again, driving Greece deeper into crisis and further delaying its recovery from occupation and civil war.¹

Seventy years later, a similar event played itself out in Greece. A vote took place on a question whose wording was far too complicated for the result to provide a meaningful answer to either the people of Greece or to the international community watching events unfold. In both cases, the crises highlighted the divisions in Greek society, the relative weakness of the state, and reduced the sense of legitimacy it held with the Greek people.

This paper compares these two periods of crisis in Greece separated by 70 years: the crisis surrounding the national elections and the plebiscite on the return of the Greek monarchy in 1946 and the referendum on the terms contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of July 2015. The comparison is intended to assess the international involvement in and reaction to them. The inspirations for the paper were the ways in which external forces attempted to direct the outcome of the referenda, and the similarities in the ways in which in both periods external forces attempted to frame their definition in favour of strategic objectives that lay beyond Greece.

The pressure placed on the Greek government, both from within Greece and from without, was also noteworthy, as was the rhetoric that was used both during and after both events. The paper concludes that in these two cases, rather than providing resolution to an issue, the referenda served mainly as a vehicle of protest, leading to a situation worse than that which had preceded them. Especially in light of Brexit, the overriding objectives of the paper are as follows: to illustrate the tendency of referenda to become such ‘vehicles’ through which people merely express their discontent, their usefulness to politicians who wish to refrain from taking responsibility for difficult/contentious decisions, their vulnerability to external manipulation, and the way this manipulation leads to a diminishment of a state’s legitimacy in the eyes of its people.²

Anti-Communism and the plebiscite of 1946

After four years of Axis Occupation, and a year and a half of civil war, in February 1945 the National Liberation Front (EAM) controlled by the Greek Communist Party (KKE), the British and the Greek Government met at Varkiza, a beach resort area outside Athens, and signed an agreement. It was hoped that this agreement would settle all outstanding issues contributing to the social and political strife left in the wake of the German Occupation. A key clause contained in the resulting peace agreement, the Varkiza Accord, was to hold a Plebiscite on the return of the Greek monarchy, prior to holding general elections.³ This was

significant, because even after the fighting in Athens in December 1944 had ended, those who had resisted the Germans most effectively, the EAM, were popular both within Greece and abroad, but they were also not going to support the return of the Greek monarchy. The return of the Greek Monarchy, however, was an issue that had become a non-negotiable part of British policy towards post-war Greece as early as 1943, and had not changed with the election of a British Labour government.⁴ Therefore, at the Athens beach resort of Varkiza, they signed an accord where both sides agreed to turn the issue over to the Greek people in a plebiscite, prior to holding general elections in order to settle the question.

For many of those opposing the Greek monarchy, including republicans, centrists and other non-EAM/ELAS affiliated left-wing groups (few of which remained at liberation due to ELAS eliminating almost all but the right-wing EDES up to February 1945), there was no contradiction between voting against the monarchy and maintaining a democracy in Greece. The unpopularity of the monarchy at the time, and the Plastiras government's inability to effectively deal with the ongoing economic and social crises,⁵ had done much to discredit both, and a positive vote in the monarchy's favour was by no means certain.

The possibility that the monarchy might be voted out placed the British, and to a lesser extent the Americans, in a difficult position. Therefore, rather than having the Greek people vote on whether or not they wanted a Constitutional Monarchy or a Republic, they would make the plebiscite seem to be a vote simply on whether or not they wanted a monarchy or not, and to make the 'no' vote appear to be a vote against democracy. The Greek monarchy was, unsurprisingly, staunchly anti-communist, and Greece had been Britain's only remaining ally in continental Europe until the German conquest in 1941. Therefore, in order to minimize the risk of having the monarchy voted out, the British and Americans' objective was to prevent the decoupling of the notions monarchy and democracy. The two notions had to remain linked because if the Greek people were given the opportunity to decouple them, then there was a perceived risk of voting out the monarchy and vicariously strengthening other communist movements in Western Europe, namely in Italy and Belgium. The justification at the time as cited by C.M Woodhouse was to have an environment as stable as possible to hold a plebiscite, which the British believed would be after elections.⁶

To do so, in March 1945 the overseeing powers began pressuring the Greek government to make an official request to hold the elections first, and then to hold the plebiscite. In so doing, the existing state order of the constitutional monarchy would be implicitly legitimized and the plebiscite would then validate this legitimization. The British believed that honouring the order set out in Varkiza may have had the opposite effect. The Greek people would have voted first on the type of state Greece would become, and would then legitimize that decision by holding general elections. With the result of a plebiscite uncertain in mid-1945, it was too great a risk for the British to take. The British believed that a plebiscite against the return of the monarchy could have implicitly legitimized the Left, since it would have enabled them to be associated with a democratic process, while allowing the KKE to pursue its agenda of turning Greece into a communist state, and forging much closer relations with the USSR.⁷ The Americans' reasons for agreeing to change the sequence of elections and plebiscite, and the importance that Greece held to the United States as a result of its strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean, are revealed in United States' government briefs about their deliberations at the Potsdam Conference. The State Department stated that since they had made no public endorsement of the terms of the Varkiza Accord, they

were not bound to follow them, and could support the ‘request’ of the Greek government to hold elections first.⁸

What were the immediate effects of this decision? To start, US Ambassador Lincoln MacVeagh informed US Secretary of State James F. Byrnes that the Communist and EAM representatives on the committees for the compilation and review of Greek electoral registers had begun to resign in protest at the ongoing plans to hold elections before the plebiscite, and threatened to boycott the elections. Notwithstanding this resignation, the British and Americans proceeded with plans to hold elections, and informed the Soviet Union of their intention to do so, regardless of whether or not the Soviets would participate in supervising the elections.⁹ This had the effect of further splintering the Greek political spectrum. C.M Woodhouse stated that by boycotting the elections, the KKE and its members would be freed from taking responsibility for the wellbeing of their nation. Shortly thereafter they focused on returning to an armed struggle to achieve their political objectives.¹⁰ Even King George protested the decision to hold elections before the plebiscite by informing Secretary Byrnes that the proposal violated the Varkiza Accord and in so doing risked greater problems being created in Greece.¹¹

In spite of these developments, the British and the Americans moved forward with plans for holding elections before the plebiscite. The British pushed the United States for both governments to simultaneously issue similar statements about their role as supervisory powers. Once this was achieved on 18 August 1945, the Greek government officially approved the supervision of the elections by the Western Allied powers.¹² Next, Secretary of State Byrnes sent a telegram to the Soviet Foreign Office informing them that as a result of the Crimea and Potsdam conferences, the United States agreed to assume responsibility to assist ‘the Greek people to express their will freely at the polls.’ Byrnes also wrote to ‘express US government regret that the Soviet government could not see its way clear to participate’, but that he hoped that the Soviets would ‘adopt friendly attitude toward this duty being undertaken by three of its Allies.’¹³

In spring 1946, just a year and a half after the end of the German occupation, Greek society, divided and displaced, was unprepared to hold either elections or a plebiscite. Long-term political stability was sacrificed for short-term anti-communist objectives. The British and Americans wanted to legitimize the current Greek government and the programmes it was attempting to implement.¹⁴ The long-term results for Greece were dramatic. The KKE boycotted the elections, which contributed to the sweeping victory for the Right, and violence resumed soon after.¹⁵ For all intents and purposes the Varkiza Accord was dead and set the stage for the ‘third round’ of the Greek Civil War.

By having the Greek government hold elections before the plebiscite, the British were able to accomplish three objectives. The first was to gain an implicit acceptance on the form of the pre-existing Greek state from all those who voted, that is, a constitutional monarchy. Second, with the KKE abstention, the results of the election were skewed, seeming to indicate even greater acceptance on the part of Greek people to remain part of the Western sphere of influence. The result therefore could be interpreted as an open declaration on the part of the population to accept Greece’s place in the West. The third objective was realized with the holding of the plebiscite in September 1946. The overwhelming result in favour of the return of the monarchy was a vindication of British policy. It was clearly the will of the Greek people, and further proof that they were committed to remaining with the West. However, in so doing, the British and Americans also damaged the prestige of the Greek

government, which was unable to demonstrate its competence, and therefore legitimacy, to much of the population.

By successfully influencing the meaning of the results and order of the elections and plebiscite, the Western powers, illustrating the emerging Cold War suspicions, were able to justify all the steps they had taken to achieve them. The resumption of hostilities shortly after the elections, the mass persecution of leftists and ‘fellow travellers’, and the loading of the government, police and armed forces with former collaborators, were all justifiable actions to be made in pursuit of anti-communism, which in turn would prevent Greece from falling into the Soviet sphere of influence. By the end of 1947, there were still almost a million Greeks left homeless, and the country’s economy and social stability continued to decay. Anti-communism became the blanket accepted justification for all sorts of persecution of leftists and the lack of resources dedicated to reconstruction efforts. By 1947, the Greek government was still in need of substantial foreign military and economic aid to combat the Communists, but was not willing to reform the structure of their state to secure it, even though such a reformation would not have resulted in the Communists seizing power, and could have prevented a return to armed violence. The British and Americans, so frustrated with Greek intransigence and confronted with an aggressive and expanding USSR, would then gradually drop their demands for reform and focus increasingly on maintaining stability.¹⁶

Austerity and the referendum of July 2015

There is perhaps no more polarizing a word in contemporary European politics as ‘Austerity’. It has come to encapsulate the struggle between competing visions of what the Eurozone, and more generally the EU, is supposed to be, how it is supposed to operate, and what provides it with legitimacy.¹⁷ Where, after the Second World War, economic and social policy in Europe was heavily influenced by anti-communism, today the word austerity has become the focal point for the struggle between the ideas of how the economies of Eurozone members should function.¹⁸

When SYRIZA called the referendum in late June 2015, the debate outside of Greece was on what the question should be and what the results would mean. The foreign actors opposing the Greek Referendum of 5 July 2015,¹⁹ tried to make the referendum question about membership in the Eurozone.²⁰ They did not want the question to be one which implied a rejection of austerity-related policies, but rather for the question to be for an acceptance or rejection of the Euro itself. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Germany, and its like-minded European partners, wanted their economic policy and the Euro inextricably linked. In 1946, the British and Americans wanted the monarchy and democracy inextricably linked, and in 1946 the British and Americans were successful in establishing this link. In 2015, the Referendum results threatened to de-couple these ‘rules’ from the single currency.²¹ The Greek referendum of 5 July 2015 and the reactions to it abroad showed that some Europeans believe that the Euro can exist without the prevailing Eurozone rules. The prevailing economic philosophy in the EU institutions held that they must react strongly to counter that idea. Where the EU institutions’ reactions to the election results indicated that a somewhat hard line would be adopted in dealing with the left-wing Greek government, the much louder and unified ‘oxi’ (‘no’) of the referendum would necessitate an even harder EU institutions’ response. This could be seen the evening of the referendum, with statements

from other EU member governments and the comments from then Eurogroup president Jeroen Dijsselbloem saying, ‘This result is very regrettable for the future of Greece.’²²

However, the difference between the two events lies in the results. In 1946 the Greek government cooperated, and was rewarded with continuing support from abroad and did not have to be cut off in order to prevent communist contagion from spreading. In 2015 the Greek government was non-compliant by holding the referendum in the first place, and would be sanctioned after the results were known.²³ After having achieved such a strong result in demonstrating public opposition to current EU economic policy (61.31% voted no), and supporting the idea that the Euro should exist without it, Greece had to be punished further and possibly even cut out of the Eurozone to prevent further contagion.²⁴

Based on the international creditors’ reactions to the referendum, it seemed as though the referendum represented almost as great a threat to contemporary European economic policy, as the KKE represented to the British and American foreign policy in 1946. The reaction to the calling of Greece’s referendum was the closing of Greece’s banks a week before it was held by suspending the ECB’s Emergency Lending Assistance (ELA), and then keeping them without sufficient liquidity for three weeks after the 5 July 2015 referendum. The suspension of ELA and the resulting capital controls that were imposed on the Greek people and Greek businesses also crippled the Greek economy during the summer of 2015, not only by limiting the Greeks’ ability to withdraw cash to support themselves, but also by preventing Greek businesses from purchasing stock from abroad, leading to critical shortages in numerous sectors.²⁵ In the week leading up to the referendum, the Greek government officially committed to implementing reforms outlined by the creditors, but it was still cut off from borrowing, because it had not implemented the reforms exactly as the IMF, ECB and EU wanted.²⁶ After SYRIZA called the referendum and after the results of it became known, the international creditors refused to offer the agreement they had proposed prior to the referendum call. Instead, they chose to force even harsher measures upon Greece, and it is here that the central argument of this paper is made.

The Referendum gave the opportunity to the creditors to send a strong political message to the Greek government.²⁷ Where the referendum is simply a question of economics to the creditors, they could have offered the previous deal to the SYRIZA government. The fact that they did not do so indicates that they wanted to send a political message to all those opposing austerity in Greece, and, by extension, the Eurozone.²⁸ The perceived threat to current EU economic thought represented by the referendum and SYRIZA’s statements leading up to it, as well as the risk of contagion spreading through the Eurozone, provoked an extreme reaction from Greece’s international creditors which has been criticized by numerous economists, including many who, though voting ‘yes’ in the referendum, did so because they believed doing so would allow them to secure better terms for Greece.²⁹ After winning a general election earlier in 2015 with promises to end austerity and to restore hope but after the referendum, Prime Minister Tsipras was unwilling to follow through on the statements he had made publicly before it. Apparently he intended simply to use it as a way out. With the polls and media predicting a close or even a ‘yes’ vote, it is possible to assume that the leadership of SYRIZA intended to lose the referendum, allowing them to sign whatever agreement the creditors presented them with afterwards. If not, then the decision of SYRIZA following the referendum was all the more puzzling, since they claimed to be operating in the interest and at the behest of the people, yet after the results were known, the decision ‘of the people’ was ignored. For a state that has historically struggled

with projecting a sense of political legitimacy to its people and abroad, the 2015 referendum did nothing to enhance the perception of its legitimacy.

Economist Georges Siotis wrote that:

In the medium term, growth, to be sustainable, requires continuous productivity improvements. Without them, growth is an optical illusion that usually ends up in tears. It is quite telling that the first and second MoU only mention productivity in the context of market liberalization; the third MoU does not mention it even once.³⁰ Though in favour of reforms, Siotis also acknowledges that the market fundamentalist policies of market liberalization will not on their own lead to growth. Two months after the referendum, Economist Gikas A. Hardouvelis of the University of Piraeus, like Stiglitz, argued that the Greek Crisis has exposed the faults in the very structure of the Eurozone, which need to be addressed if the cycle of crises is ever to end.³¹ Over the coming years, it will be up to historians to determine if they were right.

Conclusion

It may be problematic attempting to compare two events, separated by 70 years, especially when the most recent of the two was held so recently. However, this article is original and the comparison important for three reasons. First, at the submission of this article, the comparison between these referenda is unprecedented. Second, the comparison clearly shows the vulnerability of referenda to external influence, especially for countries which are weak either politically or economically. And, finally, third, it highlights their unsuitability to be used in responding to crises.

There are important lessons to be drawn from the comparison of these two referenda in terms of how foreign actors attempted to control the timing, question, subject and implications of the referenda. In 1946 the British and the Americans did not need to reverse the order of the elections and plebiscite to achieve their objectives. Most historians today accept that the reversal of the plebiscite and elections, the abstention of the Communists and the right-wing vote fraud were enough to alter the results only by degree, indicating a larger percentage in favour of the Monarchist/Anglo-American preferred result, than was present in reality.

However, this does not mean that the Anglo-American influence over these events was without consequence, for while the end result was not altered, the perception of both the validity of the process and the results was damaged. The KKE was able to present the Anglo-American actions as foreign interference, further justifying their rejection of the democratic process in Greece, the legitimacy of the existing state, and then resuming their armed struggle. To the Right, it showed them that they could persecute leftists and engage in vote fraud without fear of repercussion from the foreign powers, while also squeezing out the moderates that the West hoped may have been able to form a government. Thus, the stage was set for the final round of the Greek Civil War, and the marginalization of the moderate centre.

Other comparisons can be drawn between different referenda in Greek history, such as the one of 1920 and of 2015. Greece held a referendum against the wishes of foreigners, and paid the price for doing so by losing their support. However, the parallels end there, and in any case the scope of this article is different. Domestically, conditions in 1946 and 2015 were more similar than with 1920. In 1920, Greece was a burgeoning regional power, and in 1946 and 2015, to say the least, it was not. In the later periods, the country was in the midst of

economic and social crises from which there appeared to be no immediate solution or exit, and the referenda were presented as being a vehicle through which Greece's current crises could be solved. Despite the results of the referenda going in opposite directions, one in favour of the wishes of foreigners and one against, the outcome was comparable; it increased the perception of the Greek government's lack of sovereignty and legitimacy and gave both the foreign actors and the Greek government a way to justify anti-constitutional actions.

In both 1946 and 2015, foreign actors in a position to exert pressure on Greece attempted to prevent an idea contrary to a key policy of theirs from exercising an undesired influence beyond Greece's borders. In 1946, the British policy was to ensure that Greece retained its monarchy, and in 2015, it was for the international creditors to have the referendum be reduced to a yes or no to continued membership in the Eurozone, and, failing that, to use the result as an excuse to impose even harsher conditions on Greece to send a message about how the Eurozone was supposed to function.

In both cases, the Greek government and people represented an obstacle to the foreign actors being able to meet their objectives, not only in Greece, but also in Europe. In 1946, it was the threat of encouraging the spread of communism in Europe; in 2015, it was the potential to encourage resistance to austerity-linked policies. In both cases it was also feared that an unfavourable result in Greece could lead to similar unfavourable results elsewhere. To prevent such a precedent, many sacrifices were demanded of the Greek people by the Greek government, in order for the objectives of foreigners to be achieved – the most significant of which may be the nation's very sovereignty. Where the diplomatic records for 1946 clearly show how the Greek government surrendered its sovereignty to the British and Americans behind closed doors, the surrender in 2015 occurred, not in secret documents, but in public.³² Ironically, the referendum they protested so forcefully against provided the creditors with the perfect avenue through which they could apply their policies even more forcefully, and gave SYRIZA the ability to impose whatever conditions they deemed necessary to meet the creditors' conditions.³³

Since the Eurozone crisis began in 2009, it may be argued that Greece has been held out as an example for an economic policy.³⁴ The referendum of 5 July 2015 highlighted the way in which this ideology has asserted itself, with domestic sovereignty (pensions, wages, public services, schools, universities, energy, monetary and foreign policy) being sacrificed in order to 'qualify' for foreign (IMF/EU) loans. The word 'austerity' itself has become a contentious word in contemporary European politics, in many cases seeming to be equated with morality and competence,³⁵ thus justifying the application of harsh economic measures to meet the creditors' objectives.

Today, in spite of mounting evidence that such measures are in reality continuing to divide Greek society and driving the Greek economy further into recession, they continue, much as did the anti-communist policies of the late 1940s, which at the time were explained as being implemented to restore stability and cohesion to Greek society. In reality these policies further divided it. In both cases, referenda were the perfect vehicle through which foreign powers could influence the Greek government and people to follow their policy objectives, which were more important than actually repairing the damage to the Greek economy and society.

Perhaps the most important lesson from these events is what they demonstrate about notions of democracy and sovereignty. Indeed, the generations living in the aftermath of these referenda saw foreigners dictate policy to their government; they saw social divides

increase and movements towards the political extremes. In both periods the centrist parties were wiped out, as the perception of lack of control, progress and legitimacy led people to choose fringe parties.³⁶ The ease with which the meanings of both referenda were manipulated also allowed them to be used by politicians who were not willing or able to take a decision to deal with the crises with which they were confronted.

The main conclusion to be drawn from the analysis is the danger that referenda can pose to democratic processes and accountability, as a result of their susceptibility to interference from 'special interests', both domestic and foreign, which reduces the perceived legitimacy of the state in the eyes of its people.³⁷ In light of how they were used in 1947 and 2015, the nature of referenda as democratic tools must be called into question. Surely elections, and the possible change of government, is a safer and more appropriate tool to ensure democratic principles are employed and heeded in the EU. That which is apparent is that there is a glaring lack of dispassion in contemporary European politics when it comes to economic policy, and it seems to have become more important to send a message than to work towards a solution. However, this is not the only warning to be drawn from such a comparison. In 1946 and 2017, the referenda served mainly as vehicles of protest for the people of Greece, whose very answer to the question they were asked was a subject of debate prior to the vote. In both cases, the results failed to secure the promised outcome, highlighted the State's loss of sovereignty and perceived legitimacy, and drove Greece even deeper into crisis.

Notes

1. Though ELAS had violated the Varkiza Accord by not surrendering all of their weapons as they had agreed, this article focuses on the British and Greek government violation of the Accord by reversing the order of the Elections and plebiscite. Additionally, in 1976's 'the Struggle for Greece', C.M. Woodhouse, citing both British Ambassador Leeper and KKE central committee member Kosta Karagiorgis, states that EAM/ELAS' hiding of weapons after Varkiza was an insignificant factor in the progression of the Civil War, since the British were able to uncover most of them shortly after Varkiza was signed (Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, 137).
2. For a work that examines the sources of a state's political legitimacy, see: Barnard, *Democratic Legitimacy*.
3. Details about the contents of the treaty can be found in Richter, "British Intervention in Greece."
4. British Embassy to Department of State (868.01/397) April 24, 1943, FRUS 1943 Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, 137–8. Cited in: Paravantes, *Britain, The United States and Greece after WWII*, 28; Sfikas, *The British Labour Government and the Greek Civil War 1945 to 1949*, 57–8.
5. Sfikas, *The British Labour Government and the Greek Civil War 1945 to 1949*, 50.
6. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece*, 153. Why were stable conditions for the plebiscite important to the British if not to secure the desired outcome of securing the return of the monarchy?
7. Ibid., 76–7.
8. "Greece: Government and Elections," No. 442, Briefing Book Paper, Washington, June 29, 1945, in United States Department of State/Foreign Relations of the United States: diplomatic papers: the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), 1945, vol. I. <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=turn&entity=FRUS.FRUS1945Berlinv01.p0784&id=FRUS.FRUS1945Berlinv01&size=M>. Though the Greek government officially requested support/approval for holding the elections first, it is clear from the archival records that such a request was made at the insistence of the British with the knowledge and support of the United States.

9. Macveagh to Byrnes (886), August 11, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 136; MacVeagh to Byrnes (846), August 13, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 140; Byrnes to Harriman, USSR (1861), August 18, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 143.
10. C.M. Woodhouse, *The Apple of Discord*, 253.
11. King George to Byrnes (CFM Files – Lot M 88, Box 31) September 22, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 160–1. There is a counter view stating that King George protested because the Labour government was not enamoured with the idea of the king returning to Greece and wanted to delay it. This interpretation is not consistent with an in-depth reading of the cabinet papers of the time. It is important to note that Labour's view of the Greek king was insignificant in terms of its effect on policy formulation. Atlee and Bevin, especially the latter, were determined to restore Britain to its pre-war status. Maintaining Greece in Britain's sphere of influence at this time was a key part of that plan. Though they were socialists, they were British first and socialists second, and a reading of the cabinet papers of the time reveal this clearly. The reversal of the order of the plebiscite and elections was to give time to secure the outcome they desired. See: Kenneth Morgan, *Labour in Power*, 62–78, see also: Sfikas, *The British Labour Government and the Greek Civil War 1945 to 1949*, 55–7 (“Britain as a great power still”); 57–8 (“Labour’s position on King George II”).
12. Telegrams between Foreign Office and Department of State, August 13 to 18, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 141–3. MacVeagh also informed Secretary Byrnes that the few Communist and EAM representatives that had been part of the Greek government had begun to resign. This was possibly due to the Soviet government’s refusal to participate in the supervision of Greek elections and may have been interpreted as a sign that the Soviets would assist them, at least indirectly, by not supporting the current government or the Anglo-American plans for Greece.
13. Byrnes to Harriman, USSR (1861) August 18, 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, 143. Note: The Soviets did not adopt a ‘friendly attitude’, and refused to participate.
14. This is not to argue against holding elections in these countries, just that in times of great instability, they can provoke even more instability if not held at the proper time with committed participation from all sides.
15. It is important to note that the KKE abstention did not alter the outcome of the elections themselves, but rather it indicated a greater level of support for the current system of government. The main point of the article here is to show that the type of manipulation in which the British and Americans engaged would not have affected the outcome of elections. The majority of the Greek population did not wish for the country to become a communist nation. However, their actions allowed the KKE to argue that the system was ‘rigged’ against them, further justifying a return to an armed struggle.
16. Paravantes, *Britain, The United States and Greece*, Chapter 4.
17. Economists trained in the Chicago School of liberal economic thought, made famous by economists like Milton Friedman, or the Freiburg School of Ordoliberalism, not only advocate less government intervention in the economy, but, some critics have said, associate morality with economic practices and performance.
18. The purpose of this section is not to reject the idea that reform is needed in Greece: indeed, the country is in desperate need of economic reform in a number of areas. However, the application of the reforms advocated by the ‘market fundamentalists’ have been disastrous for Greece, and this section will explain how the referendum of July 2015 provided justification for their ongoing application, in spite of their demonstrated lack of success.
19. The questions was to be answered ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. It read as follows: ‘Should the plan of agreement be accepted, which was submitted by the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, in the Eurogroup of 25.06.2015, and comprises two parts, which constitute their unified proposal? The first document is entitled “Reforms for the completion of the Current Program and Beyond” and the second ‘Preliminary Debt Sustainability Analysis.’

20. Transcript of President Jean-Claude Juncker's press conference on Greece (Brussels, 29 June 2015). http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-5274_en.htm
21. Mark Deen and Helene Fouquet, 'Hollande Says Greece's Referendum Will Determine Euro Membership', Bloomberg Online, June 29, 2015: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-06-29/hollande-says-greece-s-referendum-will-determine-euro-membership>.
22. Right after the referendum results were known Deijsselbloem made this statement. He also hinted at harsher conditions to come, 'for recovery of the Greek economy, difficult measures and reforms are inevitable.' At the emergency Eurozone summit from 12 July to 13 July 2015, these predictions were born out, after reaching a preliminary agreement. Deijsselbloem stated that the Greek Parliament had to ratify the preliminary conditions of the agreement by Wednesday, 15 July 2015. He then stated that the rest of the Eurozone member parliaments would also vote, but that each member was sovereign and has its own timetable to pass such legislation. For a partial transcript of Deijsselbloem's statements see: 'Greek Deal Reached after Marathon Talks', *Sigmalive* (13 July 2015). <http://www.sigmalive.com/en/news/greece/132071/greek-deal-reached-after-marathon-talks#>. see also Jean-Claude Juncker's speech: cited earlier, note 21.
23. With a 62% voter turnout, the results were decisively for the 'no' side at about 61.32%. This was a major difference from what the polls and media were predicting, and went against the wishes of Greece's external creditors.
24. Stiglitz, *The Euro*, 124.
25. 'Though they would most certainly deny it, the ECB's decision to shut off funds to the Greek banking system in the summer of 2015 was an intensely political act.' Stiglitz, *The Euro*, 59.
26. Valentina Za, "Varoufakis says Greece Committed to Reforms, Rules out More Austerity," Reuters.com, May 26, 2015. Available from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/26/us-greece-austerity-varoufakis-idUSKBN0B0FZ20150526?mod=related&channelName=ousivMolt>.
27. <http://www.heritage.org/index/country/greece>. This site lists Greece as a mostly un-free market. The reforms that are said to be needed include 'openness, freedom, competitiveness'. However, these terms are subjective, and often used by Market fundamentalists to describe economies that are based on a different model. The rankings support a particular economic school of thought to which I do not subscribe as a historian. I do not feel that the solutions they propose are supported by historical evidence. Furthermore, by calling for the Greek economy to become more 'competitive' they have also called for lower wages, which in turn they argue will lower prices, thereby restoring competitiveness. This has not occurred. Since 2014, though wages in Greece have declined over 16%, and pensions on the average are below the poverty line, prices have remained consistent, which, when combined with lowering wages, means that they have increased relatively. For a detailed explanation of how and why this occurs, see: Stiglitz, *The Euro*, 347–9. For a list of Greek economists in favour of continuing Greek membership in the Eurozone, and certain reforms, see: George-Marios Angeletos, MIT; Costas Azariadis, Washington University in St. Louis; Costas Arkolakis, Yale University; George Constantinides, University of Chicago; Harris Dellas, University of Bern; Nicholas Economides, New York University; Michalis Haliassos, Goethe University Frankfurt; Yannis Ioannides, Tufts University; Costas Meghir, Yale University; Stylianos Perrakis, Concordia University; Emmanuel Petrakis, University of Crete; Christopher Pissarides, London School of Economics, Nobel Prize in Economics; Vasiliki Skreta, University College London; Thanasis Stengos, University of Guelph. Statement on Grexit, Final, English Version. <http://greekeconomistsforreform.com/wp-content/uploads/Statement-on-Grexit-2017-English-Final.pdf>. Although these economists argue for Greece to remain in the Eurozone, they also state that by doing so, there may be 'the possibility to continue negotiating with our European partners for better terms, for growth-friendly policies, and for debt restructuring'. (p. 2) They also stated that Greece's European partners have focused primarily on fiscal issues, rather than the deep structural reforms the economy needs in order to be truly free and competitive, and that such policies have until the present ensured that 'the country has been trapped in the

- “black hole” of endless austerity without an expectation of growth. The eight-year crisis has subjected people and institutions to unbearable strain. The reduction of the standard of living is merciless and unprecedented. We need to exit from this black hole. This requires a change of course and reforms inside the Euro’ (2); see also http://www.dianeosis.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/production_model_research_dianeosis_final.pdf.
28. Stiglitz, *The Euro*, 24–6.
 29. Forexample: Paul Krugman, “Europe’s Impossible Dream” NYTimes Op-Ed, July 20, 2015). http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/20/opinion/paul-krugman-europes-impossible-dream.html?rref=collection%2Fcolumn%2Fpaul-krugman&action=click&contentCollection=opinion®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&contentPlacement=7&pgtype=collection&r=0; and Joseph Stiglitz, “Europe Must Back Away from Greek Austerity Cliff,” *USA Today* Opinion, July 7, 2015, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2015/07/07/greece-crisis-referendum-eu-austerity-column/29763347/>. see also: <http://greekeconomistsforreform.com/>. As stated in n. 21, many of these economists differ from Krugman and Stiglitz only in their stance on the referendum (arguing for a ‘yes’ vote). Many here call for similar reforms to the Euro and to Greece’s economy, as outlined by the former, deriding the catastrophe that austerity-related policies have wrought thus far. See also: “Greece Debt Crisis: Varoufakis says Bailout ‘Won’t Work’” August 12, 2015, partial transcript of an interview with BBC One: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-33880217>.
 30. Georges Siotis, “Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.” <http://greekeconomistsforreform.com/wp-content/uploads/Plus-c%CC%A7a-change.pdf>.
 31. Gikas A. Hardouvelis (University of Piraeus), Keynote Address entitled: “Greece & Europe: Beyond the Financial Crisis,” Harvard University Center for European Studies in the 2nd Annual Summit on the Future of Europe (September 22–23, 2015), http://greekeconomistsforreform.com/wp-content/uploads/Hardouvelis_Summary_ENG_Harvard-lecture.pdf.
 32. After winning the referendum, SYRIZA did something inexplicable if they had truly desired to win it in the first place, and signed an even harsher agreement than the one they had asked the Greek people to vote on. This shows how in the summer of 2015, the referendum was used both within Greece and outside, for different political purposes. Within Greece, it was, at least officially, supposed to present SYRIZA with a stronger mandate for the negotiations with the foreign creditors. For an alternative /contentious explanation of events immediately preceding and following the referendum see: Varoufakis, *Adults in the Room*, 443–74. With this work, he has gone on record stating that he never intended to pull Greece out of the Eurozone, and that the ‘no’ vote for which he campaigned was one which had as its objective achieving a manageable compromise with Greece’s creditors.
 33. Four months before the referendum SYRIZA planned to take funds from pension funds to pay creditors. Since the referendum, Greek pensioners have experienced long delays in collecting them; see: Luke Hurst, “Greece Likely to Raid Pensions and EU Subsidies to Meet IMF Payments,” *Newsweek* online, March 3, 2015, available from <http://www.newsweek.com/greece-likely-raid-pensions-and-eu-subsidies-meet-imf-payments-311080>; “SYRIZA Built Surplus By Delaying Pensions, Curbing Investments,” October 9, 2017, available from <https://www.thenationalherald.com/177604/syriza-built-surplus-delaying-pensions-curbing-investments/>.
 34. This policy has been labelled by Joseph Stiglitz as “Market Fundamentalism;” Stiglitz, *The Euro*, 24–6.
 35. For example, former Italian PM Mario Monti stated that in Germany, economics was perceived as a subfield of moral philosophy. See: “Germany and Economics: Of Rules and Order. German Ordoliberalism has had a Big Influence on Policy during the Euro Crisis,” *The Economist*, May 9, 2015; available from <https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21650565-german-ordoliberalism-has-had-big-influence-policy-during-euro-crisis-rules-and-order>.
 36. The fact that a neo-Nazi party is represented in the Greek Parliament today, after the legacy of the *Wehrmacht* in Greece is well known, is a testament to the instability created by such crises.

37. Buchanan, "Political Legitimacy and Democracy;" Buchanan, *Justice, Legitimacy and Self-Determination*; Green, *The Authority of the State*; and Heywood, A. "Political Ideologies: an Introduction."

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