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Greece

# Fear triumphs, but hope continues

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**The troika sighs with relief. There will be a new pro-Memorandum government in Greece. The weakest link in the Euro zone has not snapped. The financial oligarchy has lived through a worrying few days, as if a ghost had returned to haunt them, but yesterday bought some time, giving a precarious underpinning to a collapsing scaffold. But the ghost has come back to stay.**

The reality is that the economic and social crises have been transformed into a generalized political crisis, in Gramscian terms a crisis of hegemony and an "organic crisis of the state". Structural adjustment policies have imploded Greece's traditional party system and the breach opened will not easily be closed.

Fear, fed by a veritable media campaign of terror from the right and the neo-colonial blackmail of the Troika, triumphed over hope. But the Troika's joy may prove ephemeral. The new government will be weak, formed by discredited parties lacking legitimacy, and will have the task of continuing with unpopular policies which will lead to new and decisive mobilisations. The statement of the New Democracy candidate Samaras acknowledging his victory, which talked of returning to the "path of prosperity", was little more than an exercise in cynicism that will soon be denied by reality.

No Future is all that the policies of the Troika offer to the Greek people. Although tired by two years of tenacious resistance, this people has decided not to die without a battle, nor to abandon its indignation. From the accumulation of defeats, the Greek people have paradoxically recovered their best weapon - confidence in the ability to overcome.

The rise of Syriza, out of the ashes of a broken and ruined PASOK, is based on its ability to combine political and social credibility with electoral credibility, in a context of prolonged social uprising. The key to its success is appearing as a "distinct" formation which is untainted with respect to collaboration with the cuts, unlike PASOK, and which has not been responsible for governing regions and municipalities and implementing cuts there. Its proposal for the formation of an anti-Memorandum government of the left during the campaign for the May 6 elections was the lever that propelled it electorally and changed the coordinates of the electoral debate. Suddenly, the possibility of a "left government" appeared as a specific and feasible way out of the nightmare of the cuts, as a quasi magical formula to a part of the Greek people in the midst of destitution

The positive and impressive rise of Syriza has given a ray of hope to Greek workers, but it also captured the imagination of the European left, lacking practical successful references and experiences and aware that the most decisive battle of the continent against finance capital's plans is taking place in Greece. It is important, however, not to uncritically idealise Syriza, a plural coalition in which distinct orientations coexist – some of them very moderate, others consistently anti-capitalist. Its weaknesses in terms of organisation and social implantation are huge and its programmatic proposals and political discourse present significant limits and inconsistencies. From May 6th to June 17th there was a slight shift in Syriza's proposals on the Memorandum, the debt and other key questions towards formulations which were a little more ambiguous and less for a radical break, while maintaining a clear profile of opposition to the logic of structural adjustment, which underpins its political credibility and identity.

In this new scenario, the strengthening of self-organization in the neighbourhoods and workplaces continues to be the key variable because there can be no rupture with the policies of structural adjustment without a mobilized and organized society. It is also a crucial task for this new stage for those opposed to the Samaras government to seek ways of unity and collaboration for the main components of the Greek left, in particular between Syriza and the anti-capitalist coalition Antarsya, weak electorally (0.33 % yesterday) but with a social implantation equal to or greater

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than the former, without forgetting the KKE (4.4% yesterday), the main leftist party in militant terms and whose sectarian policies practiced thus far have clearly failed.

“The future does not belong to the frightened, but to the bearers of hope”, Tsipras said yesterday after learning the results. In his final speech before hundreds of supporters and followers, a little disappointed by what might have been, but realizing that the fight is long, he came out strongly against the cuts and stressed the need to continue the mobilisation. A battle was lost yesterday, but this is far from over. When Tzipras finished his speech the voice of Patti Smith came through the speakers, sending a direct message to the Troika – “People have the power”.

Athens 18 June 2012