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Master Thesis:

Political Radicalization of Greek young adults

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Introduction:

For the past 4 years, Greece has been witnessing an economic crisis of profound proportion, perpetrating every corner and level of its social fabric and reality. The national elections of May (1st round) and June (2nd round) of 2012, made it clear that the old two-partyism system succumbed under the circumstances. They also made it quite clear that a new departure point had been established as far as political representation in Greece is concerned (Dinas & Rori, 2013). The voting patterns of Greeks changed in a substantial manner in a matter of merely 3 years (since the last national elections). Parties with a smaller appeal and with much more poignant rhetoric received increased amounts of support and in a few cases even electoral seats in the parliament. Among them political formations that are labelled as radical and extreme.

Although in the beginning most approaches revolving around the matter considered this to be a temporary phenomenon based on the frustration of the Greek citizens towards the austerity measures and the overall socio-economic and political reality present in the country, extreme cases of corruption, police brutality and severe unemployment to name some (Heyer, 2012), current opinion polls being published portray a completely different image of this political situation, cresting and not devolving as many pundits speculated. Simultaneously, the percentage of potential voters that declared absence from the electoral procedure climbed to almost 38% (Greek Ministry of Interior, 2012). These two seemingly unrelated trends, the disengagement from the electoral procedure and the support of increasingly more radical and extreme political parties and practices, are of course not a native Greek political issue (Putnam, 2002). Alas, it is considered a phenomenon that has to do with the overall distrust towards democratic institutions, from the part of their citizens, which has been apparent in the past 4 decades globally (Inglehart & Catterberg, 2003), only to be escalated by the current economic conditions and their results.

The subject of this paper is not of course to question and investigate on whether the fragility of democracy can survive this current era. This would be the job of historians and political scientists I presume. On the contrary, the objective of this paper is to discuss how political trust, social trust, education and age affect the political radicalization of Greek young adults as far as their disengagement from the political process is concerned. The significance of such an inquiry can be underlined by the spatial representation of party competition as depicted by Downs (1957). If one can study the related figures about Greece and then compares them to the theoretical propositions of Downs, then he/she can assume that Greece has entered what the author refers to as a ''Dysfunctional political system with a high probability of civil conflict''. This is also stressed by the article of (Dinas & Rori, 2013), depicting the Greek political reality as it has evolved in the past 4 years.

Therefore, with this paper I want to ask the following question: What makes Greek young adults disengage from the political procedure?

Theoretical steps:

Due to the academic nature of political radicalization; and the specific aspect which I shall examine in this paper which is political disengagement, as well as its related issues, it is safe to assume that there is no single theoretical approach one could follow. Rather than that, it seems that one should

follow a path consisted of a hodgepodge of approaches, all focusing on a specific expression of the matter at hand. Therefore, my initiative will follow the step by step mentality; incorporating and analysing the different expressions of the issue under inquiry that so far seem to be the most substantial.

General Discussion:

Political Trust:

''Democracy requires trust, but also presupposes an active and vigilant citizenry with a healthy scepticism of government and willingness, should the need arise, to suspend trust and assert control over government.'' – Mishler&Rose (1997)

I consider this quote from Mishler&Rose to be the perfect opening statement for this endeavor in the field of political radicalization. Studying publications on the matter, I realized after spending some time, that most efforts on the issue entrenched themselves behind specific and rather short-viewed aspects of radicalization (Githens-Mazer & Lambert, 2010). Especially since the ''War on Terrorism'' has been proclaimed by the United States; and the global involvement of national governments in the counter-terrorism political agenda, publications have narrowed themselves in matters of political and religious violence with a focus on fundamentalist extreme versions of Islam, as the pathway to this radicalization procedure (Richards, 2011). Furthermore, another troubling aspect of the issue, is that the few empirical approaches on the matter of political radicalization, (even the ones that approach the subject in a broader manner and take into consideration matters such as activism or extreme right populist parties as agents of radicalized politicization), tend to narrow their ''inquiries'' in specific focused aspects of those ''agents''.

With this project, I first of all argue that political radicalization, as we witness it in our days, is the offspring of the erosion of the ''Third Wave of Democracy'' (Huntington, 1991). This approach suggests that the double-edged element of trust/scepticism ,as portrayed in the opening quote, expresses the origins of the decline in political trust and disengagement from mainstream politics as being witnessed in our times (Catterberg &Moreno, 2005). At this point, we should really stress the fact that political trust in particular, is a crucial element in democracy, since democratic regimes cannot resolve in coercive measures in the extent that more authoritative regimes do.

Up until the end of the Second World War and the ''outburst'' of welfare states, it is argued that the legitimization of democratic regimes was mainly achieved through the provision of the basic means to organize and support the welfare of their citizens. Nevertheless, post-industrialism and post-materialism as experienced by the populations of older and newer democracies, supported by the fact that newer generations internalize more intensively pro-democratic orientations (Dalton, 2002, Klingemann, 1999), resulted in a population that, with established material well-being, begun to openly criticize the political establishments of their respective countries and be more demanding in their aspirations towards their governments (Inglehart, 2003, Offe, 1999, Patterson, 1999). Individuals

lose confidence in their political institutions because they are getting increasingly more sophisticated; and therefore the functional importance of trust loses ground because they deem it important to start participating in the whole process of political decision making and influencing. A choice that in the past was not taken into consideration, because the cleavage between what was perceived as common political interest and what was conceived as the political interest of the representatives of the people was much less significant (Catterberg & Moreno, 2005).

A great number of literature points to the fact that there is uniformity in the decline of political trust, from the part of the citizens, in a large number of industrial nations; nations that don't necessarily share electoral systems, number of parties or type of representation; nations that do not necessarily experience dire economic conditions. Regardless, the pattern remains the same. Whether one takes it into consideration by examining the related voter turnout percentages or the related ones about participation in election campaign activities or finally the engagement in simple actions like reading newspapers or watching programmes of a political character, the result is a downward trend in the matter of consideration. Important in this dynamic is the ever-increasing perception of unresponsiveness from the part of the political establishments towards their citizens (Denemark & Niemi, 2012).

As far as the importance of expressed political trust from the part of the citizens is concerned, first of all, it has been proved empirically that political trust is influential in a great manner towards the attitudinal perception of democracy. This means that less trusting individuals also become less politically efficacious and interested in the representative instruments of democracy. This can prove to be a really troubling situation for national governments, especially the ones that are in the unfortunate position to run a country that is under an economic or other kind of crisis (like in our case Greece), because they cannot operationalise their national planning on the basis of a much needed strong citizen support towards the choices that need to be taken. However, there has been no direct linkage between low levels of political trust and anti-democratic attitudes, which means that low levels of political trust don't necessarily mean a population that requests a political doctrine other than the democratic one as far as the set-up of the political management of their country is concerned (Martin, 2010).

It is really interesting that in recent publications there have been really positive approaches and articulations on the issue of how beneficial declining levels of political trust could prove to be for a democratic regime. The rationale is that the more critical towards the political process modern citizens become, the more accountable government officials will become and the more quality control on the political procedure the citizens will obtain. This point of view on political trust concludes that declining political trust is ''good news'' since it represents the rise of a public that is sceptical towards many forms of power, not just the political one. Empirically speaking this conceptualization does have some justification, as we can see that political distrust has fuelled demands for democratic and effective reforms on political administrations globally (Marien & Hooghe, 2011).

Finally, political trust is deemed important as it affects the perceived importance of voting for citizens and their political preferences. Furthermore, it has been empirically proven that low levels of political trust are most likely to result into low levels of compliance with the law and an open de-legitimization of a given government, democratic or not. This means that in order for a group of politicians to govern effectively, political trust is a precondition (Gershtenson, Ladewig & Plane, 2006).

Generalized Social Trust:

The opening statement's depiction of trust doesn't extend only to political trust of course. An increasing number of literature argues on the concept that for an effective democratic government to be founded and be able to operate properly, a junction of social attitudes, behaviours and practices from the part of its citizens has to be apparent, all expressing generalised social trust as well. This allows for a cooperative-collective social climate to arise, that first of all facilitates civic participation by encouraging interest in public matters and furthermore creates the necessary conditions for a less risky and more rewarding endeavour in the creation of the necessary social institutions that foster a functioning democracy (Zmerli & Newton, 2008). In its turn, such a functioning democracy can reinforce the necessary conditions for both social and political trust to expand. We can therefore assume that social and political trust are closely related, a fact supported by a number of publications on the matter (Denters, Gabriel & Torcal, 2007, Jagodzinski & Manabe, 2004, Zmerli, Newton & Montero, 2007).

It is argued that the character of national welfare states and social trust is closely related for the following reasons. It is considered that social trust is mostly the result of two interrelated types of equality, economic and opportunity. This means that countries with a welfare system that is universal and not selective, that is based on equal treatment and that has managed to minimize its bureaucratic discretion, manage to foster social trust by enhancing economic equality and the factor of equal opportunity amongst their citizens, thus creating social solidarity and the perception of a common fate. Unfortunately social trust is also considered as the precondition for such a welfare system to arise and empirical evidence has shown that it is really difficult for such a system to be established without this specific nexus of civic attitudes and behaviours being apparent (Rothstein, Uslaner, 2005).

One of the most influential ''social conditions'' affecting social trust in a negative manner is corruption. From related literature we can see that in countries with high levels of political and civil corruption individuals tend to develop a group of negative feelings towards their fellow citizens; feelings of envy, mistrust, cynicism and pessimism. Instead of developing generalised social trust they develop what is referred to as ''personalised'' trust. That is, they show trust only to their very close circle of friends and family. This is the result of the inferences that individuals make when it comes to establishing their beliefs about social trust, inferences, as it is argued, from the behaviour of public officials who are already corrupted and therefore provide a negative ''role-model'' (Rothstein, Eek, 2009).

As far as the importance of expressed generalised social trust from the part of the citizens is concerned, many authors argue on the fact that citizens with high positive levels of the aforementioned social trait generally show high levels of trust towards others and have a more positive view towards minorities. They also behave in a more optimistic manner as far as their life is concerned and in general they show more content towards how their life is progressing. The same pattern is also evident at the more macro-societal level. Countries, regions or cities that are composed of trusting citizens are more likely, first of all, to have low crime rates. Also they are more likely to experience low civic and political corruption and greater economic growth (Rothstein, Uslaner, 2005).

Finally, a growing number of literature has brought to prominence the issue of how generalised social trust affects public health. It is argued that the results of high levels of social trust (participation, cohesion, tolerance) can have a direct and an indirect positive effect on the health levels of a given population. Direct positive effects can be expected through the provision of social support for the citizens, by the citizens (care-networks). Indirect positive effects can be expected through the egalitarian patterns of participation from the part of the citizens, that influence health

related state policies concerning education, wealth distribution, transportation etc. (Veenstra, 2003). This brings a whole new meaning to the aspect of what a healthy society can actually come to mean.

Political Disengagement:

   As I have stated earlier on the paper what I want to investigate is the issue of political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults. Therefore, what do we already know about this issue? We know that, first of all, political disengagement is the result of the failure of up to present political establishments to relate to the new aspirations by their citizens, as aforementioned. Aspirations that relate to socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects of their overall social reality and are affected by new social ''toxicities'' (Garbarino, 1995, Ginwright, 2010) and risks (Bonoli, 2005) and cultural cleavages present in modern societies. This has resulted into what is referred to as the ''dealignment'' procedure (Rydgren, 2010). This dealignment procedure involves first of all the disengagement from the mainstream political institutions (political participation), a move conceived by mainstream analysts as being the product of apathy (Delli Carpini, 2000, Henn, Weinstein & Wring, 2002, Thomson et al., 2004, Williamson, 2002, Youniss et al., 2002). However, recent studies are portraying this move to be the result of cynicism and outmost criticism towards the established political order prevalent in most western democratic regimes (Gordon, Taft, 2010).

   It has been argued in various publications that disengagement is the result of a number of attitudes and perceptions from the part of the citizens. It is considered strongly that extensive social connections beyond the family nexus, especially when developed in the early stages of one's life, result into a greater propensity towards political participation later on. This rationale is based on studies about civic engagement and especially voluntarism, arguing that citizens with a wide friends and family environment are more prone to get involved in actions of voluntarism and therefore show higher propensity to get involved into matters of political participation because of their involvement in organizational procedures (Snell, 2010).

   Furthermore, it is strongly considered that disengagement is the result of the failure of national governments to promote an educational system that is based on the reproduction of civic knowledge. We can see that, in general, western democracies and developing countries show higher levels of literacy; and formal education is better distributed in greater numbers of the population. Nevertheless, unfortunately, the content of this education is lacking as far as civic matters are concerned. This is considered very important because through civic education it is argued that national governments can achieve higher support for democratic values such as tolerance, solidarity, adaptation and co-operation. Furthermore, civic knowledge is considered to foster political participation and the understanding, from the part of the citizens, of their common and individual interests. Also, civic knowledge is regarded as instrumental in the effort of citizens to grasp social affairs and integrate new social phenomena in their personal conceptualization of society. Furthermore, it is considered that civic knowledge affects in a negative manner the feelings of mistrust and fear of public life and fosters trust, two necessary preconditions for the establishment of a healthy co-operative society. Finally, it is argued that a higher civic knowledge leads to a citizen with a more salient and stable public opinion about political affairs (Galston, 2003).

   Finally, a number of publications stress the fact that political disengagement is the result of how poorly political institutions manage their relations with their citizens. It is argued that mass-democratic representative systems and their respected institutions haven't yet managed to create the necessary conditions that will allow their citizens to incorporate in a better manner the whole political reality and its social extensions. It is argued that because of the historical circumstances that gave

birth to representative democracy as we know it today, it is impossible for institutions such as national parliaments to adopt more radical participatory mechanisms for their citizens. The rules, ethics and identity of these institutions are considered to repel modern citizens who require something much closer to direct democracy, which results into heavy criticism towards these institutions and the whole ''operating system'' of democracy, resulting in a population that is not actually disengaging from the political process, but actually not engaging at all (Kelso, 2007).

Empirical Discussion:

On Political Trust:

Due to the importance of the issues we discussed above; and also due to the unquestionable need of social scientists to come up with some answers on how to capture and measure these concepts as variables, it was inevitable that a great deal of literature would get involved in articulating the most coherent empirical approaches on how this could be achieved.

Starting with the concept of political trust, most authors agree on the fact that the best way to address the matter is to try and measure the level of trust individuals express towards specific institutions of political character. For example, (Marien & Hooghe, 2011) suggest the use of the Armed Forces, Justice System, Police and Parliament as items that could be used for this purpose. Other authors such as Martin (2010), indicate that the same objective could be met by measuring the direct trust of an individual to his/her respected government by asking them on whether they trust or not the people in cabinet for doing what is expected at the proper time.

On the other hand, (Gershtenson, Ladewig & Plane, 2006) suggest that political trust can be measured on a different basis. They suggest that trust in national governments should be complemented by the expressed partisanship of an individual related to his/her evaluation of the given political institutions apparent in his/her country under the scope of them being operated by a specific party. Furthermore, as Schumacher (2013) suggests, political trust could be measured (in a more abstract manner) by relating the levels of corruption and income of politicians in a given country.

Finally, we have the propositions of (Veenstra, 2003), who proposes that political trust can be measured by taking the different administrational levels of a government and asking individuals to rate them on the basis of whether they think they are meeting the expectations towards the problems at hand and whether they take the interest of the people into consideration.

It would be reasonable to follow the suggestions of the majority of authors, therefore for this paper I employ the conceptualization of (Giddens, 1990, Hardin, 2000, Luhmann, 1979, Offe, 1999 & Seligman, 1997) as far as political trust is concerned and therefore I conceive it as being expressed through the confidence in political institutions.

On Generalized Social Trust:

The second concept we discussed was generalized social trust. For most surveys revolving around this matter it is a common practice to employ the Generalized Trust Question as developed by Rosenberg (1956), in order to measure it (Sturgis, Smith, 2010). Nevertheless, surveys conducted in the UK have complemented this question with the so-called TiN item (Trust In Neighbours), which is designed on the basis of capturing trust as expressed in a more local, inter-personal environment.

Furthermore, following the propositions of (Veenstra, 2003), generalized social trust can be measured by asking individuals about their feelings of trust towards their neighbours, members of the ethnic and religious groups they might belong to and in general the whole population; and by asking them to respond on whether they perceive their community as being safe or not. Finally by asking respondents if they consider the help of experts as capable of solving the issues they come across in their communities.

Furthermore, as depicted by Rothstein & Eek (2009), another method capable of measuring generalized social trust is the instrument devised by (Yamagishi & Sato, 1986), which places questions on the perceived trustworthiness of fellow citizens. Also, as they argue, general scenarios placing individuals in dire conditions in unfamiliar social environments and the registering of their subsequent actions and re-actions on a basis of how they choose to ''escape'' from these situations (by bribing or acting as obedient citizens/by showing patience or acting aggressively towards other citizens with the same problem requesting help at the same time by the same officials) are also capable of showing their perceived levels of generalized social trust.

For this paper I shall also use the Generalized Trust Question as it has been recommended by a variety of authors and implemented in a variety of research.

On Political Disengagement:

The third and final concept we discussed is political disengagement. According to (Snell, 2010), political disengagement is a mixture of attitudes that can be measured with qualitative means (namely, phone interviews). These attitudes include trust, moral relativism and materialism. This specific research proposal also uncovered a strong relation between gender and political disengagement.

On the other hand, the proposals of (Finkel, 1987), indicate that political disengagement can be measured by addressing, in a qualitative manner again, the matters of attitudes towards voting, expressed campaign activity, expressed participation in protesting and aggressive behaviour.

For this paper, I shall employ the propositions of (Scott & Acock, 1979), who state that political disengagement can be measured by examining the following items. First of all perceived importance of voting, as voting is argued to be the most normative belief concerning political participation. Although it is considered to be inadequate by itself to produce individual self-development as far as political sophistication is concerned, it is nevertheless resulting in an increase in external efficacy, the belief that a given political establishment is responsive towards its citizen demands. Also it is thought to be a closely related concept with political legitimacy and support (Finkel, 1987). Furthermore, perceived political interest, also considered as one of the core behaviours concerning political participation. The deliberate acquisition of information with a political background is believed to express a higher perceived internal political efficacy (Scott & Acock, 1979). It is argued that such a trait is extremely important as it can promote both conventional and non-conventional means of participation; and it is considered also crucial, for it can foster the interaction on a civil basis (Carpara,

Vecchione & Mebane, 2009). Finally, perceived political activity, expressed through the commitment towards the outcome of an election. Such a commitment can take various forms from simply attending a party rally to actively engaging in an effort to expand the support towards a candidate (Scott & Acock, 1979). Alongside the aforementioned concepts of political interest and importance of voting, political activity is considered as the third core behaviour connected in such a normative manner with political participation.

Education & Age:

   Education has attracted much attention from a growing number of authors. Especially for issues concerning trust, political or generalized, it is considered as a core relating concept (Cole, 1973, Hooghe, Marien & DeVroome, 2012, Schoon, Cheng, Gale, Batty & Deary, 2010). It is almost a universal finding in a large number of research publications that there is a positive relation pattern between education and trust. It is argued first of all that a higher educational level facilitates the access and interpretation of political information. Furthermore, the associated higher occupational levels (result of higher education), facilitate the acquisition of those necessary political skills and acquaintances that foster political participation. It is also argued that the life experiences connected with a higher socioeconomic status resulted from higher educational attainment, result into stronger feelings of efficacy which also affect in a positive manner the matter of trust and participation (Scott & Acock, 1979). Finally, it is also mentioned that not only does education have a positive relation with trust and participation, but it also affects the quality of these two concepts, with higher education leading to their most liberal aspects (Schoon, Cheng, Gale, Batty, Deary, 2009).

   Concerning age, early adulthood and late adolescence are considered as the most important life spans during which an individual is thought to construct his/her basic political orientations, attitudes and behaviour (Pacheco & Plutzer, 2007, Plutzer, 2002, Watts, 1999). Critical in these formative periods are patterns that are considered as life-cycle effects. A great deal of research literature, especially from projects conducted in the United States, has concluded that age has an independent causal relationship with political trust, due to the characteristic of cynicism, which is mostly prevalent in the older age cohorts under examination in each case (Cole, 1973).

Theoretical Sum-Up:

   Summing up our discussion thus far, the objective of this paper is to uncover why Greek young adults are getting politically disengaged. We have seen that political disengagement is a subject that has received much attention from international research literature. Its importance lies in the fact that high levels of political disengagement express an overall problematic social reality for a given country, with its citizens showing low levels of trust towards their respected political establishments and mistrust amongst each other, high crime rates and low solidarity; a reality that unavoidably leads to a precarious governing effort of public life from the part of their representatives, but also creates an unbearable social reality for themselves as well.

   The variables that seem to affect it the most are political trust and generalised social trust as well as education and age. Nevertheless, there have been empirical studies that ''break'' this pattern and for example find no correlation between age and disengagement or age and political trust. I argue that this happens because of the very local characteristics that a national democratic regime might have.

Specific historical events that might have resulted into specific civic attitudes about public life, the way citizens respond to matters of solidarity and voluntarism as well as geopolitical events such as an economic crisis are all capable of creating the necessary conditions for these variables to relate in a different manner or not at all. I expect that this will be the case for Greek young adults as well (and Greece in general), as it is a social context that has experienced detrimental social phenomena and social weathering for the past 5 years now.

We have also discussed which empirical approaches I will follow in order to address my question. We have seen that for the case of political trust I shall employ the rationale that states that it can be measured through the perceived level of trust of an individual to specific political institutions. For the case of generalised social trust we have seen that I shall employ the rationale of the majority of authors and research publications, namely the instrument devised by (Rosenberg, 1956). Furthermore, for the case of political disengagement we have seen that it shall be measured by addressing and measuring three different variables. Namely, perceived importance of voting, perceived political interest and perceived political activity.

Finally, we have also discussed how age and education relate positively to the matter of political disengagement, as they are considered core relating subjects to political and generalized social trust which are considered the main variables affecting political disengagement.
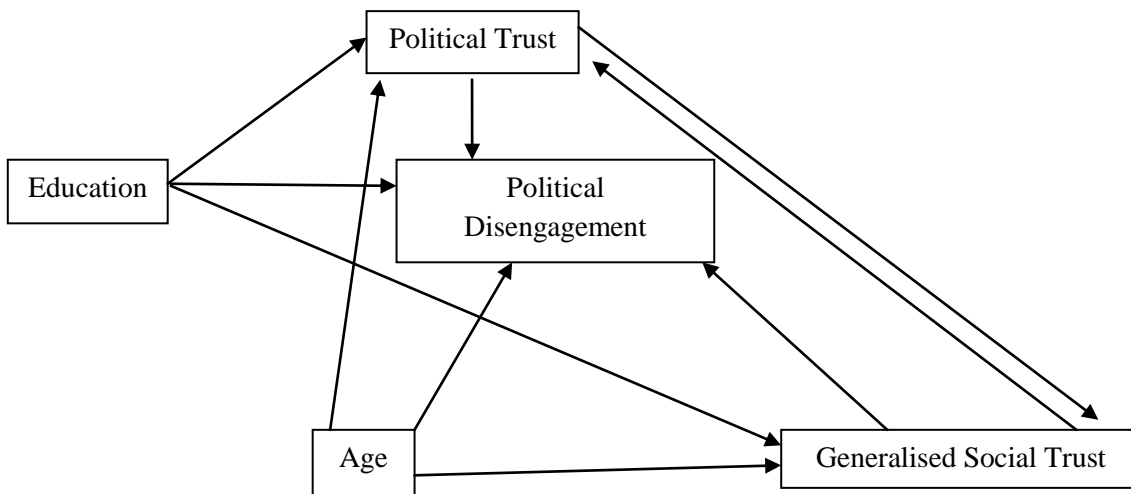
Hypotheses:

Taking into consideration the above, the following research hypotheses can be formulated:

1. There is a positive relation between the educational level of Greek young adults and their level of Political Trust.
2. There is a positive relation between the educational level of Greek young adults and their level of Generalised Social Trust.
3. There is a negative relation between the educational level of Greek young adults and their Political Disengagement.
4. There is a positive relation between the age of Greek young adults and their level of Political Trust.
5. There is a positive relation between the age of Greek young adults and their level of Generalised Social Trust.
6. There is a negative relation between the age of Greek young adults and their Political Disengagement.
7. There is a positive relation between the level of Political and Generalised Social Trust that Greek young adults express.
8. There is a negative relation between the level of Political Trust and the Political Disengagement of Greek young adults.
9. There is a negative relation between the level of Generalised Social Trust and the Political Disengagement of Greek young adults.

Representation:

In view of the above, I can say that the graphical representation of the theoretical conceptualization of this paper is the following.

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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │  Political Trust  │
                    └──────────────────┘
                              │
                              ▼
      ┌───────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
      │ Education │   │    Political      │
      └───────────┘   │  Disengagement   │
                      └──────────────────┘

         ┌───────┐              ┌────────────────────────┐
         │  Age  │              │ Generalised Social Trust │
         └───────┘              └────────────────────────┘
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Empirical Steps:

Having concluded the theoretical exploration of this paper I shall now move to its methodological issues. First of all I shall address the research question of the paper and its sub-questions.

Research question(s):

Core Research Question: What is the relation between political trust, generalized social trust, age, education and political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults?

Sub-Question1a: What is the relation between political trust and political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults?

Sub-Question1b: What is the relation between generalized social trust and political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults?

Sub-Question1c: What is the relation between educational level and political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults?

Sub-Question1d: What is the relation between age and political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults?

Sub-Question1e: What is the relation between political trust, social trust, educational level and age for the case of Greek young adults?

Research Design:

''There's no such thing as qualitative data. Everything is either 1 or 0"
Fred Kerlinger

Approach:

   As the opening quote suggests (in a quite normative nevertheless humoristic manner), I follow a quantitative approach for my research. The basic reason is that a qualitative approach would require me to be present in Greece (in order to operationalize at least some parts of it), which unfortunately was an option I couldn't take during this endeavour. It would also require substantially more time in order to analyse the required data for my research, which unfortunately (again) I didn't have at my disposal or felt that I wouldn't have by the time I would be required to present this paper.

Furthermore, the reason why I believe that a quantitative approach is best suited for this research is because I want to reveal the causal explanations of political disengagement for the case of Greek young adults, rather than gaining a deeper understanding in the perspective of my respondents about why they are getting politically disengaged (at least for this paper), something that could be achieved by a more qualitative approach on the matter. Also, the question of the paper itself I believe guides me into choosing a quantitative approach, since in order to answer it I believe that I need the maximum number of respondents possible, also being as representative of the targeted population as possible.

Finally, the decision for a quantitative approach was also taken due to the restrictions on what kind of tools I could use in order to approach my research (mostly, due to my inability to be present in Greece as stated above), but also due to the fact that I already have constructed hypotheses, which with quantitative data I will be able to test in a more efficient manner.

Tool:

Since I have chosen to follow the quantitative path to my research methodology, it would be reasonable to also choose a quantitative tool to accompany my choice. Therefore, in order to gather the necessary data and answer the research question(s) developed above in the paper, I deploy a questionnaire survey. The medium used in order for the questionnaire to be constructed, uploaded and forwarded (by myself, colleagues and friends) is provided by Google, via its ''Drive'' application. This medium provides a very good template for a user to construct his/her own questionnaire, which can then be uploaded to a Google link, which can be used as a promotion link. The medium also provides a very sophisticated collection method, with the resulting data from the respondents being able to be recorded on a single Excel sheet, something which makes its management increasingly easier. The distribution follows the ''snowball'' rationale of chain sampling. Initial receivers of the link to the questionnaire have been selected with a key difference being their geographical positioning inside Greece, so as to achieve as many responses as possible from as many different geographical areas as possible. They have also been selected due to their attribute of being able to forward the questionnaire to individuals that are included in our target group (partly because they belong to these groups themselves).

The reasons why I choose to employ an online questionnaire are as follows. At first, I choose to employ it because of its null ongoing costs, for both me and my respondents. Furthermore, because this type of questionnaire can be conducted swiftly, without delays resulted from a posted distribution and collection. Also, because survey participants can choose to remain anonymous. Another contributing factor is that this type of survey is not labour intensive for the participants. Finally, because this way questions can be more in detail, as opposed to the ones of paper or telephones. Of course there is no such thing as a perfect method; and a related caution for the use of an online questionnaire is that not all of the target population may be able to access the electronic form, and therefore results may not be as representative as one would desire.

Questionnaire:

The questionnaire involves questions of behavioural, preferential and attitudinal character. They are closed-ended and they include continuous (Likert 5 point rating scale) and dichotomous options as answers as well as multiple choice ones. It doesn't include a screening procedure as it is deemed

unnecessary since I want to see the full spectrum of responses. The questions are presented in Annex 1. Here, I shall provide the details about their relation to the concepts discussed thus far.

- **Question 1** relates to **Gender**, with the possible answers being male or female.
- **Question 2** relates to **Age**. The possible answers are 18-24 / 25-30 / 31-36 and the dummy variable 37…, which will be used in order to automatically exclude individuals that place themselves in that age group.
- **Question 3** relates to the **Educational level**. The possible answers are: no education / primary education / lower secondary / higher secondary / lower tertiary / higher tertiary.
- **Question 4 / 5 / 6** relate to **Generalized Social Trust**.
- **Questions 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11 /** relate to **Political Trust**.
- **Question 12** relates to **Perceived Importance of Voting**.
- **Questions 13 / 14 / 15** relate to **Perceived Political Interest**.
- **Question 16** relates to **Perceived Political Activity**.

Population:

The empirical part of the paper addresses the population aged 18-36 that resides in Greece. Greek nationality is a prerequisite. In order to secure the overall representativeness of our sample, I import a notification in the beginning of the empirical tool that signifies towards which population it's addressed and make an inclination towards the respect of the given age ''boundaries''. Furthermore, all collaborators that forward the survey have been given specific instructions as to which individuals should be selected. Finally, there is a ''dummy'' variable where individuals are asked to respond about their age, in order to exclude those that might not have been informed or didn't pay attention to the notification and be of different age than that required. The specific choice of age was made due to inclinations from international literature that during this life span individuals are characterised by their more ''fruitful'' traits towards political disengagement. During late adolescence-early adulthood, individuals are more impulsive, rebellious, prefer excitement and show general disobedience. However during the first phases of mature adulthood they also become competent in achieving goals, they show greater tendency to strive for their pursuits and are assertive (Giroux, H., 1986). The sampling of the population is not random, as stated above. It is targeted; and therefore, I employ the use of a network of friends and old colleagues in order to forward the survey in the best possible manner. The number of responses required in order for the survey to be representative is calculated as follows.

The population that belongs to the age cohort of 18-24 is approximately 500.000 individuals with males having a minor advantage in numbers (World Factbook-CIA, 2013 & Index Mundi, 2013). According to the same sources the population that belongs to the age cohort of 25-30 is approximately 700.000 individuals with females having an advantage in numbers. Finally, the population that belongs to the age cohort of 31-36 is approximately 1.000.000 individuals with females again having an advantage in numbers. The population under study therefore is approximately 2.200.000 individuals. Due to the fact that there are no detailed demographic surveys depicting in a more articulated manner the allocation inside the specific age cohorts concerning this paper, I believe that a margin of 200.000 more individuals in our population is reasonable. Fortunately this doesn't affect the number of responses I required which should be 400 according to SurveyMonkeyBlog. This would allow space for error of an approximate 5%. Therefore my respondents should be at least 250 women

and 150 men from Greece, as evenly distributed as possible among the three age cohorts and the groups of educational attainment; and with Greek nationality.

Operationalization:

Variables:

- **Generalised Social Trust (F_1):** I avoid using the attitudinal questions of the General Social Survey (GSS) because of indications from a number of authors about the ''fuzziness'' and the somehow vague and hard to interpret character of the results (Glaeser, Laibson, Scheinkman & Soutter, 2000). On the contrary, I employ the methodology recommended by (Zmerli & Newton, 2008), which is based on results derived from the European Social Survey (EES), the Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy study (CID) and the CID as it was operationalized in the United States. The three questions used by these surveys in order to measure general social trust are the ones that I will use as well and are presented in Annex 1. The first question was devised by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1948 to which Rosenberg in 1956 and 1957 added the two other questions. Together all three are considered as a highly-reliable and valid measuring tool. These question-statements are: Would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful dealing with people? Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance or would they try to be fair? Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or are they mostly looking out for themselves?

- **Confidence in Political Institutions (F_2):** This is the variable measuring **Political trust** that I employ, suggested by a number of authors due to its relation with stable attitudinal results (Giddens, 1990, Hardin, 2000, Luhman, 1979, Offe, 1999 & Seligman, 1997). It is also employed by the aforementioned ESS and US CID surveys and I as well shall use the set of six items that are used in those surveys in order to measure it. These items are **Politicians / Parliament / Legal System / Police / European Parliament / United Nations**. Respondents are asked to state their trust towards every item in a 5-point scale Likert format.

- **Perceived Importance of Voting / Perceived Political Interest / Political Activity (F_3, F_4, F_5):** The questions employed in order to measure these three variables are taken from the related study of (Scott & Acock, 1979) and their responses are of a continuous nature (5-point Likert Scale). All three compose the variable of **Political Disengagement**. Perceived importance of voting is measured by a single item-question: ''So many people vote in national elections that it doesn't matter much to me whether I vote or not''. Perceived political interest is measured by three items-questions that respondents will have to answer on a 5-point scale Likert format with answers ranging from ''not at all'' to ''a lot''. The three questions are: ''How much time do you spend listening to political programmes on the radio?'' – ''How much time do you spend watching political programmes on the television?'' – ''How much time did you spend on watching the political debates of the last national elections on television?''. Political activity is measured by a series of six items-responses that the respondents will have to pick in relation with their former activity during the last national elections. The general question asked is ''During the last national elections, I''. The possible responses are ''Stayed home / Simply Voted / Wore a campaign button / Attended the

political meeting of a party / Attempted to persuade others about whom to vote for / Worked for a candidate ''

- **Age & Education (F_6, F_7):** In order to measure age, respondents will be requested to place themselves in one of three different age groups (18-24 / 25-30 / 31-36). There is also the dummy variable of 37… which is designed in order to exclude respondents who do not meet the age criteria. In order to measure the educational level, respondents will have to place themselves on a 6-point rating scale ranging from no education, to primary, to lower secondary, to higher secondary, to lower tertiary to finally higher tertiary. Examples will be given to the respondents in order to facilitate their choices.

Coding:

This is the coding I provided in order for our variables to be operated by our data analysis programme (Greek sounded and looked Greek to SPSS unfortunately). Therefore; and in order to better understand what the tables of this paper are depicting:

- **Question 1:**
  Male was coded as 0 and Female was coded as 1.

- **Question 2:**
  Age group 18-23 was coded as 0, age group 24-29 was coded as 1 and age group 30-36 was coded as 3. Responses that included the dummy variable were excluded.

- **Question 3:**
  There were no responses with ''No official degree of certification'' therefore the coding started from primary education which was given the code 1. Lower secondary education was coded as 2, higher secondary education as 3, post-secondary education as 4, tertiary education as 5 and post-tertiary education as 6.

- **Question 4:**
  ''Most people are worth trusting'' was coded as 0 and ''You have to be careful when dealing with people'' was coded as 1.

- **Question 5:**
  ''Most people would try to take advantage of me if they got a chance'' was coded as 0 and ''Most people would try to be fair with me if they got a chance'' was coded as 1.

- **Question 6:**
  ''Most of the time people try to be helpful'' was coded as 0 and ''Most of the time people are looking out for themselves'' was coded as 1.

- **Questions 7-11:**
  No specific coding was required since the responses are already given on a scale.

- **Question 12:**

Yes was coded as 0 and No was coded as 1. The Ναί in figure 4a means Yes and it was a mistake from the programme in the coding. Nevertheless the percentage was calculated normally alongside the percentage of ''Yes'', therefore no harm done.

- **Questions 13-15:**

No specific coding was required since the responses are, again, already given on a scale.

- **Question 16:**

''I stayed home'' was coded as 0, ''I simply voted'' was coded as 1, ''I participated lightly in the support of a person or political formation'' was coded as 2, ''I participated in the political meeting of a party'' was coded as 3, ''I attempted to persuade others about whom to vote for'' was coded as 4 and finally ''I worked for/engaged heavily in the campaign of a candidate'' was coded as 5.

Furthermore, this is the coding for the names of the variables so as to facilitate the reading of the upcoming tables in the results section:

- **ST1:** Refers to the results from question 4 relating to Generalized Social Trust.
- **ST2:** Refers to the results from question 5 relating to Generalized Social Trust.
- **ST3:** Refers to the results from question 6 relating to Generalized Social Trust.
- **PT1:** Refers to the results from question 7 relating to Political Trust.
- **PT2:** Refers to the results from question 8 relating to Political Trust.
- **PT3:** Refers to the results from question 9 relating to Political Trust.
- **PT4:** Refers to the results from question 10 relating to Political Trust.
- **PT5:** Refers to the results from question 11 relating to Political Trust but due to a mistake during the import of the data (not the data itself) **PT5** from here on is referred to as **PT6.**
- **CDVot:** Refers to the results from question 12 relating to Perceived importance of voting.
- **CDPi1:** Refers to the results from question 13 relating to Perceived political interest.
- **CDPi2:** Refers to the results from question 14 relating to Perceived political interest.
- **CDPi3:** Refers to the results from question 15 relating to Perceived political interest.
- **CDPa:** Refers to the results from question 16 relating to Perceived political activity.

Furthermore, this is the coding I provided in order for the Binary Logistic Regression model to be operational:

- **Gender:** 0 was coded as male and 1 was coded as female
- **Age Groups:** 0 was coded as 18-23 / 1 was coded as 24-29 / 2 was coded as 30-36 and 3 (which was excluded as it was our dummy variable) was coded as 37…
- **Education Level:** 0 was coded as No Education (no responses therefore excluded) / 1 was coded as Primary Education / 2 was coded as Lower Secondary Education / 3 was coded as Higher Secondary Education / 4 was coded as Post-Secondary Education / 5 was coded as Tertiary Education and 6 was coded as Post-Tertiary Education
- **ST1 / ST2 / ST3:** 0 was coded as Trusting and 1 was coded as Untrusting
- **Political Trust Scale:** After the scale was constructed (further details in the following parts of the paper) all values up to 1 were coded as Untrusting, further values up to 3.5 were coded as Mildly Trusting and further values up to 5 were coded as Trustful).

- **Political Disengagement scale:** After the scale was constructed (further details in the following parts of the paper) all values up to 2.5 were coded as Disengaged and all further values up to 5 were coded as Engaged.

Analytical Strategy:

As mentioned earlier on the paper, the medium that is used in order for the questionnaire to be constructed is provided by Google. Also, I mentioned that the responses upon collection are inputted in an Excel spreadsheet. This brings us to the following part of the paper which is the strategy that I use in order to produce and analyse the data from the responses of the questionnaire. For this step I will use the SPSS statistical tool by IBM.

After having appropriately coded the responses in the Excel spreadsheet (see above), I import them into the SPSS so as to receive statistical numerical responses from my sample. The very first step that I take is to run a Descriptive model so as to get the frequencies of the answers concerning each of the variables under consideration. In other words, so as to see how many respondents answered each question.

After this step, I run a Cronbach's reliability test for all my scale groups. The purpose of this test is to examine whether there is consistency inside the items that compose the questionnaire. In other words, to check whether the questions, as grouped, manage to measure what they are supposed to, namely political trust, generalized social trust and political disengagement. This step is very necessary and important, because if the α's (reliability measure) that are produced are not significant enough it means that the scales employed for this research are not able to provide results for my hypothesis and therefore halt me from answering in an articulated manner my research question. The required value in order for reliability to be present is widely regarded to have to be from 0.70 and above (Nunnally, 1978), although it is considered that for a few items test we can accept values close to 0.60 (Hair et al., 2006).

After this step and in case everything is in order, I run the Pearson Chi-Square Test model, as it is considered the most reliable of Chi-Square Tests. With this, I uncover whether the relations between my variables are independent or not. This is deemed important because It will facilitate my next step which is to find the exact relation between those variables (whether positive or negative) by eliminating those relations that are deemed independent. The required value in order for the relations to show that they are not independent is 0.05 and lower (Field, 2009).

After this step and having uncovered which of our variables are related or not, I run the Pearson Correlation Coefficient model. With this model I will be able to test the exact nature of the relationship between my variables, that is whether they are negative or positive and to what extent (Field, 2009). With the conclusion of this step I will be able to check whether and which of my hypothesis stand.

My final step is to run a Binary Logistic Regression analysis model, with the independent variable being Political Disengagement (since the research question of this paper is to uncover what causes Greek young adults to get politically disengaged) and uncover what exactly is the dynamic between Political Disengagement and the variables that seem to affect it. I choose Binary and not some other type of Logistic Regression since I have already coded my results in 0 / 1 format and therefore it is easier to perform this model. I also chose to employ Logistic Regression and not the Linear one because of the categorical nature of our response data, which could create problems in the analysis,

since for a Linear Regression model to be accurately operated there has to be a linear relationship between the observed data which is not true in our case (Field, 2009).

Validity:

   Having also concluded my analytical strategy I will now address the issue of validity for my research.

Internal: An experiment is considered internally valid, when conclusions about the causal relationships between its independent and dependent variables can be made (e.g. cause and effect), based on the measures used, the research setting, and the whole research design. It is also considered internally valid when the effect on the dependent variable is only due to variations in the independent variable(s). In simple words, my research can be considered internally valid only if the items I use for my measurements do indeed measure what they are supposed to and only if the changes I find in my dependent variable are caused by changes in my independent ones (causal relationship). One way to foster the internal validity of a research is to ''protect'' it from a number of confounding variables that could interfere in a negative manner. Namely these variables are, History, Maturation, Testing, Instrumentation, Statistical regression, Selection, Experimental mortality and Selection-Maturation interaction. For this paper, due to the fact that all instruments are considered validated since they have been used in multiple research endeavours, I believe that internal validity is to be expected. Nevertheless, as described in my analytical strategy, after using the Cronbach's, Pearson's Chi Square, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and the Binary Logistic models we will have a definite depiction of the internal validity of this research paper and its instruments as we will be able to both test the causal relationship between our variables and see if our instruments are measuring what they are supposed to.

External: An experiment is considered externally valid when its (internally valid) results can be held to be true for other cases, different people, places or times. In other words, external validity secures that the results of a research can be validly generalized, the same research study can be conducted in other cases and produce the same results. Furthermore, one major contributing factor to whether external validity can be achieved or not is the representativeness of the sample used, towards the whole population. This can be achieved by applying randomness in the sample of the survey. As I stated earlier on the paper my sampling was not random, it was targeted, mostly in order to avoid interferences from participants that don't meet the participation criteria. Nevertheless, and after considering the sampling results, I can say that the sample is indeed quite representative and therefore I can say that external validity is secured for this paper.

General: As far as the general validity of this research and its related instruments is concerned, I can say that having being employed on a European level (ESS / CID) and inside the context of the United States (USCID), it has been quite tested and rearticulated thoroughly so as to manage to measure the concepts we are interested in as well, with the outmost efficiency.

Descriptive Results:

Table 1 – This table depicts the total number of valid responses from our sample (by frequency and percent), as far as sex, age and education are concerned:

	Sex			Age Groups				Educational Level
N **Valid** **Missing**	504 0			504 0				504 0
	Frequency	**Percentage**		**Frequency**	**Percentage**		**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Valid **0** **1** **Total**	201 303 504	39.9 60.1 100	**Valid** **0** **1** **2** **Total**	260 168 76 504	51.6 33.3 15.1 100	**Valid** **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **Total**	2 3 161 37 211 90 504	0.4 0.6 31.9 7.3 41.9 17.9 100

Population:

As Table 1 indicates, our sample is composed of 504 Greek young adults, 303 of them being females (60.1%) and 201 of them being males (39.9%). We expected such a slight overrepresentation from the part of the female population, a fact also stated earlier on the paper. The division amongst the age groups is as follows. For the age group of 18-23 we have 260 individuals (51.6%), for the age group of 24-29 we have 168 individuals (33.3%) and for the age group of 30-36 we have 76 individuals (15.1%). Here we can see a slight overrepresentation of the youngest age group on the ''expense'' of the older one. Although this leaves some space for statistical mistakes, I don't consider that a more even distribution amongst the age groups would make a significant difference as far as our results are concerned. The division as far as the educational level is concerned is as follows. There were no individuals found with no degree of certification. There were 2 individuals (0.2%) with primary degree of certification, 3 individuals (0.6%) with lower secondary degree of certification, 161 individuals (31.9%) with higher secondary degree of certification, 37 individuals (7.3%) with post secondary degree of certification, 211 individuals (41.9%) with tertiary degree of certification and 90 individuals (17.9%) with post-tertiary degree of certification. In view of the above I argue that our sample is quite representative; and the fact that it exceeded by 104 responses the number required in order for it to be valid is also quite positive. Therefore we can say that as far as external representativeness is concerned our research has done pretty well. Also, the first objective of the

survey towards its validation which was to amass a sufficient enough number of respondents was also met.

Table 2 – This table depicts the total number of valid responses for our questions independently:

N	ST1	ST2	ST3	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	CDVot	CDPi1	CDPi2	CDPi3	CDPa
Valid	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3 – This table represents the frequencies and percents of valid responses towards the three questions about Generalised Social Trust and the five ones about Political Trust:

N	ST1		ST2		ST3			PT1		PT2		PT3		PT4		PT5	
Valid	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	**Valid**	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.
0	70	13.9	297	58.9	63	12.5	**1**	344	68.3	280	55.6	113	22.4	179	35.5	166	32.9
1	434	86.1	207	41.1	441	87.5	**2**	119	23.6	158	31.3	184	36.5	145	28.8	140	27.8
Total	504	100	504	100	504	100	**3**	36	7.1	55	10.9	164	32.5	119	23.6	133	26.4
							4	4	0.8	10	2.0	41	8.1	54	10.7	54	10.7
							5	1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.4	7	1.4	11	2.2
							Total	504	100	504	100	504	100	504	100	504	100

Table 4: This table represents the frequencies and percents of valid responses towards the five questions regarding Political Disengagement:

N	CDVot			CDPi1		CDPi2		CDPi3			CDPa	
Valid	Fr.	Per.	**Valid**	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	Fr.	Per.	**Valid**	Fr.	Per.
0	24	4.8	**1**	140	27.8	114	22.6	133	26.4	**0**	62	12.3
1	480	95.2	**2**	132	26.2	133	26.4	112	22.2	**1**	290	57.5
Total	504	100	**3**	112	22.2	112	22.2	112	22.2	**2**	57	11.3
			4	83	16.5	104	20.6	108	21.4	**3**	25	5.0
			5	37	7.3	41	8.1	39	7.7	**4**	57	11.3
			Total	504	100	504	100	504	100	**5**	13	2.6
										Total	504	100

Frequencies:

   As Table 2 indicates, all of our respondents answered every question of our survey. From Tables 3 and 4, we can get all the necessary information as to what those answers where. We can see that the vast majority of our sample (86.1%) believes that they should be careful when dealing with other people. We can also see that they believe that most people would try to take advantage of them if they were given the chance (58.9%) and that most of the time people tend to look out for themselves and not be helpful towards others (87.5%). This means that Greek young adults scored pretty poorly in every item designed to measure their expressed generalized social trust. By the looks of it, Greek young adults are rather entrenched in their close interpersonal environments, not showing a propensity towards collaborating with their fellow citizens in order to find solutions to their problems. Rather than that, they are showing marks of what could be the result of extensive personalized social trust (as discussed in the paper earlier on), which could be the result of the extensive levels of corruption evident in the public-administrational political level for the case of the Greek state.

   Furthermore, a staggering 91.9% of our sample expresses no to very little trust to Greek politicians. In close relation, an 86.9 %, which is again a very high percentage, shows little to no trust to the Greek Parliament. As far as the Greek legal system is concerned we can see that the percentages are somewhat more balanced with a 58.9% of our sample showing little to no trust. Taking the European Parliament into consideration, we can see that a 64.3% of our sample shows again no to very little trust. Finally, as far as the United Nations are concerned, we can see that 60.7 % of our sample shows no to very little trust to this institution. These results tell us that for the case of the items measuring political trust, Greek young adults again score pretty low. I argue that this can be explained by the extremely negative social conditions prevalent in Greece for that past 5 years, towards which the political elites are considered to react in a very poor manner. In general they are considered unresponsive towards the sentiments and needs of the Greek population, who also expresses clearly its negative sentiments towards the European Union and in general towards international institutions, due to their (perceived) poor management of the issue of the economic crisis and the negative results this brings to the social realities of Greeks.

   Furthermore, we can see that Greek young adults have a pretty positive stance towards voting, with the vast majority (95.2%) expressing the will to vote in general and not refrain from the procedure. Furthermore, for the three questions concerning perceived political interest, we can see that the responses followed a very similar pattern, which was expected (they are supposed to measure the same thing after all). The pattern was also substantially balanced, with a percentage, varying from 48.6% at its lowest (Pi3) to 54% at its highest (Pi1), of our sample showing no to little political interest. These results I believe express the overall phenomenon of Greeks being very poorly engaged as citizens in the political arena of decision making and influencing. Being dependent on an extended clientilistic political system for almost 4 decades now, I argue has allowed their perception of civic and political engagement to wither. Finally, we can see that as far as political activity is concerned, a substantial percentage of our sample (69.8%) expressed a very negative stance towards the matter, with a 12.3% declaring total detachment from the procedure. This was expected since it reflects the overall abortive sentiments that Greeks have for their political system, viewing it as something that is generating more problems than benefits for the population.

Test Results:

Following, we shall examine how our sample and our variables responded in the statistical tests I have discussed earlier on the paper. The very first test I run is the Cronbach's reliability test in order to see whether my variables when grouped manage to measure what they are supposed to measure as scales. Namely, whether ST1, ST2 and ST3 manage to provide a reliable scale that measures generalised social trust, whether PT1 – PT6 (PT5 is replaced by PT6) manage to provide a reliable scale that measures political trust and finally whether CDVot, CDPi1, CDPi2, CDPi3 and CDPa manage to provide a reliable scale that measures political disengagement. I first of all provide the necessary tables:

Table 5 – This table depicts the produced reliability value for the five questions concerning Political Trust:

PT1 * PT2 * PT3 * PT4 * PT6			
Cases **Valid** **Excluded** **Total**	504 0 504	**Cronbach's Reliability (α)** .790 .796 (Standardized)	**Cronbach's Reliability if item deleted:** **PT1 -** .785 **PT2 -** .738 **PT3 -** .752 **PT4 -** .722 **PT6 -** .746

Table 6(a) – This table depicts the produced reliability value for the five questions concerning Political Disengagement:

CDVot * CDPi1 * CDPi2 * CDPi3 * CDPa			
Cases **Valid** **Excluded** **Total**	504 0 504	**Cronbach's Reliability (α)** .716 .699 (Standardized)	**Cronbach's Reliability if item deleted:** **CDVot -** .754 **CDPi1 -** .613 **CDPi2 -** .577 **CDPi3 -** .630 **CDPa -** .703

Table 6(b) – This table depicts the produced reliability value for the four remaining questions concerning Political Disengagement, after we took out the item (CDVot), which our previous table showed that its removal would result in a greater value:

CDPi1 * CDPi2 * CDPi3 * CDPa			
Cases **Valid** **Excluded** **Total**	504 0 504	**Cronbach's Reliability (α)** .754 .754 (Standardized)	**Cronbach's Reliability if item deleted:** **CDPi1 -** .671 **CDPi2 -** .628 **CDPi3 -** .692 **CDPa -** .779

Table 6(c) – This table depicts the produced reliability value for the three remaining questions concerning Political Disengagement, after we also took out the item (CDPa), which our previous table showed that its removal would result in a greater value:

CDPi1 * CDPi2 * CDPi3			
Cases **Valid** **Excluded** **Total**	504 0 504	**Cronbach's Reliability (α)** .779 .780 (Standardized)	**Cronbach's Reliability if item deleted:** **CDPi1 -** .713 **CDPi2 -** .625 **CDPi3 -** .762

Table 7 – This table depicts the produced reliability value for the three questions concerning Generalised Social Trust:

Note: If ST3 is deleted the resulted α is: .455 (standardized).

ST1 * ST2 * ST3			
Cases **Valid** **Excluded** **Total**	504 0 504	**Cronbach's Reliability (α)** .368 .372 (Standardized)	**Cronbach's Reliability if item deleted:** **ST1 -** .129 **ST2 -** .223 **ST3 -** .434

Discussion on scales' reliability:

We can see from table 5, that our 5 questions measuring political trust do indeed manage to form a reliable scale, as they manage to produce a reliability measure (α) greater than .7, which is considered as the threshold for a scale to be considered reliable (Hair, Jr. Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006) – (Nunnaly, 1978); and therefore for the rest of the tests we can employ this scale for our measurements. From tables 6(a) – 6(c) we can see that our five questions measuring political disengagement do manage to create, as well, a reliable scale, after the items CDVot and CDPa have been excluded. Therefore I have excluded them and have constructed a scale measuring political disengagement that will be employed for the rest of the tests. From table 7 we can see that, unfortunately, for the case of generalized social trust, the items employed didn't manage to provide a reliable scale, even when the item ST3 was excluded. Therefore, for the rest of the tests I shall employ these items individually and see how they manage to correlate with the two scales aforementioned and the rest of my ''solo'' variables, namely age, education and gender.

Following, (as promised), we proceed to the Pearson Chi-Square Test model results, in order to uncover which of the variables employed in this research have inter-relations and which stand independent. First of all I provide the necessary tables:

Table 8 – This table depicts the produced chi-square value (significance) between our Political Trust scale and the rest of our variables (that is whether or not one affects the other in some way):

Political Trust Scale			
Cases			**Significance**
Valid	504	**ST1**	.027
Missing	0	**ST2**	.506
Total	504	**ST3**	.708
		Gender	.655
		Age Group	.196
		Education	.000
		Political Disengagement Scale	.011

Table 9 – This table depicts the produced chi-square value (significance) between our Political Disengagement scale and the rest of our variables:

Political Disengagement Scale			
Cases			**Significance**
Valid	504	**ST1**	.090
Missing	0	**ST2**	.061
Total	504	**ST3**	.739
		Gender	.353
		Age Group	.756
		Education	.028

Table 10 – This table depicts the produced chi-square value (significance) between our three questions measuring Generalised Social Trust and the rest of the variables:

ST1 * ST2 * ST3			
Cases			**Significance**
Valid	504	**ST1 - Gender**	.181
Missing	0	**ST1- Age Group**	.000
Total	504	**ST1 - Education**	.034
		ST2 - Gender	.034
		ST2 - Age Group	.075
		ST2 – Education	.065
		ST3- Gender	.973
		ST3 – Age Group	.921
		ST3 - Education	.610

Discussion on Pearson Chi-Square Tests:

From table 8 we can see that as far as the scale of Political Trust is concerned, the variables that relate are ST1, Education and the scale of Political Disengagement. From table 9 we can see that as

far as the scale of Political Disengagement is concerned, the variable that relates is Education (and the scale of Political Trust as we saw in the previous table). From table 10, we can see that the variables that relate with ST1 are Age and Education; with ST2 it's Gender and with ST3 it's none of our variables. The significance we used in order to decipher whether a variable has relation or not is .05 as indicated by our literature (Field, 2009). Now that we know which of our variables and scales relate with which, we can proceed to our third test, (again as promised), which is the Pearson Correlation Coefficient model. With this test we shall uncover the exact nature between these variables (whether positive or negative), a result that will allow us to check, first of all, which of our hypothesis are standing (with the help of the previous test as well); and furthermore facilitate our approach towards the answer of our research question. First of all I provide the necessary table. The variables that are of interest for this test, are the ones that managed to ''pass'' our previous model and depict inter-relation with each other, namely ST1, Age, Education, the scale of Political Trust and the scale of Political Disengagement.

Table 11 – This table depicts the produced correlation value between our variables. The top number is representing the significance between the variables measured and the second one the value of correlation (how ''much'' positively or negatively one variable affects the other):

Correlation Coefficients For: Political Disengagement Scale * Political Trust Scale * Age Group * Education * ST1							
Cases	504			**Political Disengagement Scale**	**Political Trust Scale**	**Age Group**	**Education**	**ST1**
Valid	504	**Political Disengagement Scale**	**1**	.087 .025	.052 .121	.206 .000	-.119 .001
Missing	0	**Political Trust Scale**	.087 .025	**1**	.044 .164	.023 .307	-.076 .045
Total	504	**Age Group**	.052 .121	.044 .164	**1**	.424 .000	-.193 .000
		Education	.206 .000	.023 .307	.424 .000	**1**	-.078 .039
		ST1	-.119 .004	-.076 .045	-.193 .000	-.078 .039	**1**

Discussion on Correlation Coefficients:

From table 11 we can deduct our results on the specifics concerning the relationship between our variables. Starting with Political Disengagement, we can see that as the value of Political Trust expressed by our population increases, the more politically engaged they tend to be (pay caution to how the responses were coded so as to better understand what exactly expresses an increase and a decrease in the values concerning our variables). This also means that our 8th hypothesis is standing. We can also see that as the value of the Educational level increases, so does the one about political engagement. This verifies our 3rd hypothesis. We also deduct from the table that as the value of our question about Generalized Social Trust (ST1) increases, (because of the coding this means that the character of the value is negative), the more disengaged our population tends to be. This means that our 9th hypothesis is partly standing, due to the inability to construct a scale about generalized social trust, which would allow either to fully support or discard the hypothesis. Furthermore, we can see that there is no correlation between age and political disengagement, something evident from the previous test as well, which tells us that our 6th hypothesis is not standing.

As far as Political Trust is concerned, we can see that as the value of the question concerning Generalized Social Trust increases, the value concerning Political Trust decreases. This means that our 7th hypothesis is partly standing, due to the reasons aforementioned. We can also see that there is no correlation coefficient concerning Education and Political trust (even though the Chi-Square test provided with another result stating that there is a relation between the two variables, I take the results of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient model as standing due to this model being considered as more accurate and consistent by a great deal of authors on the subject), which means that our 1st hypothesis is not standing. Furthermore, we can see that there is also no relation between Age or Gender and Political Trust, which means that our 4th hypothesis (concerning Age since we don't have specific hypothesis concerning the Gender of our respondents) is also not standing.

Furthermore, we can see that as far as the question concerning Generalized Social Trust is concerned, the lower the value of our Age variable (the younger the respondent) the higher the value of our Generalized Social Trust variable (the more negative its character). This verifies our 5th hypothesis. Finally, we can deduct from our table that the higher the value of our question concerning Generalized Social Trust (again this means that the character is negative) the lower the value of our variable concerning Education. In other words, the more educated a respondent the more Generalised Social Trust he/she expresses. This also means that our 2nd hypothesis is also standing. Therefore; and in view of the above, the resulted graphical representation of the relation between our variables is the following:
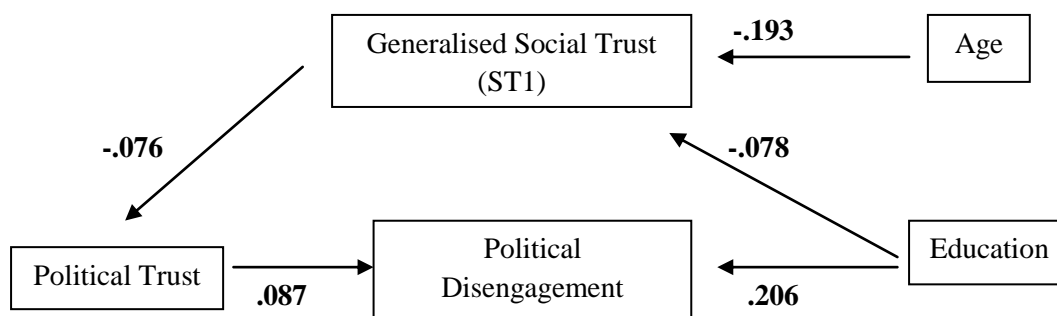
Now that we know which of our variables are interrelated and in what kind of manner, it is time to approach the answering of our research question even more. It is time therefore to address the employment of the Binary Logistic Regression model for this paper. The reason why I employ this technique is because I want to take ''advantage'' of its predictive capabilities. This model allows us to place as our dependent variable the one of Political Disengagement; and check whether the remaining variables that were found as correlating manage to ''weave'' a story around it that can facilitate our understanding of why and how this phenomenon of disengagement comes to be. This happens by providing a positive or negative result on the matter of whether the independent variables (in our case ST1, Education, Age and the scale of Political Trust) manage to predict the outcome towards disengagement. First of all I provide the necessary tables:

Table 12(a) – This table depicts the coding of our variables necessary towards the operationalization of the Binary Logistic Model and the frequency of the answers concerning our Political Trust scale and the first question concerning Generalised Social Trust:

Dependent Variable Encoding			Categorical Variables Coding		
					Frequencies
Original Value	**Internal Value**		**Political Trust Scale**	Untrusting	316
				Mildly Trusting	160
				Trustful	28
Disengaged	0		**ST1**	Trusting	70
Engaged	1			Not Trusting	434

Table 12(b) – This table depicts the first step of the Binary Logistic Regression procedure, when estimating the predictive powers of the model by only using our dependent variable which is Political Disengagement:

Iteration History	Classification Table				
-2Log Likelihood	Observed		Predicted		Percentage Correct
			Disengaged	Engaged	
Step 0 1 623.846	Political Disengagement Scale	Disengaged	348	0	100
2 623.669		Engaged	156	0	0
3 623.669		Overall Percentage			69

Table 12(c) – This table depicts the significance of the variables (and their combinations), that weren't inputted in the previous step of the model, so as to inform us on whether they will add up to the predictive capability of the model:

Variables not in the Equation	
Age Groups * Education Level * ST1 * Political Trust Scale	**Overall Statistics:**
Age Groups by Education Level by ST1(1) by Political Trust Scale(1)	
Age Groups by Education Level by ST1(1) by Political Trust Scale(2)	**Significance:** .005

Table 12(d) – This table depicts the first indication towards the success of the model after introducing the independent variables. It is evident in both the significance value as well as the smaller -2Log Likelihood which show a model that fits our data in a better manner than before.

Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients			
	Chi-Square	**Significance**	**-2 Log Likelihood**
Step	9.804	.007	613.865
Block	9.804	.007	
Model	9.804	.007	

Table 12(e) – This table depicts the second indication towards the success of our model, after the introduction of the independent variables, which is evident in the percentages provided. Note that if the model could measure more accurately the factor of engagement as well, we would have a really strong and productive predictive tool towards disengagement.

Classification Table				
Observed		**Predicted**		**Percentage Correct**
		Disengagement	Engagement	
Political Disengagement Scale	Disengagement	344	4	98.9
	Engagement	147	9	5.8
		Overall Percentage		70

Discussion on Binary Logistic Regression model:

   Table 12(a) shows us how the variables for this model were coded and what the response frequencies were. From table 12(b) we have to pay attention to the -2 Log Likelihood value, as this table shows us how the model operates when the only variable taken into consideration is the constant one of political disengagement. By comparing later on this value with the one produced when the independent variables are inducted into the model, we will have our first indication as to whether this model is successful or not. From this table we also have to pay attention to the overall percentage of prediction (69%), which states for this case that the model at the moment manages to correctly predict politically disengaged individuals (not the engaged ones - the model chooses to take this variation, disengagement, into consideration, since the highest number of responses towards this aspect creates a ''safety net'' towards prediction) from our sample at this percentage. Table 12(c) is our second indication towards the success of the model, since it depicts that the introduction of the independent variables into the model will ''boost-up'' its predictive capabilities, since we can see that the significance produced is .005, which means that the introduction of these variables will affect the model. If the value is >.05, this means that the model would remain unaffected by such a move. Table 12(d) is our third and conclusive indication as to the success of the model. By comparing the -2 Log Likelihood value produced in this table with the one depicted in table 12(a), we can see that there is a decrease in the value, which means that the new model with the independent variables introduced fits our data in a better manner. We can also see that the significance produced for both the step (we have only one research step for this research) and the model is very positive. Finally, from table 12(e), we can see that when introducing our independent variables our model manages to correctly classify 70 percent of our cases in total (both engaged and disengaged).

Chapter 4:

Conclusions:

On Research Question:

This paper's research question was asking about the relation between Political Trust, Generalized Social Trust, Age, Education and Political Disengagement for the case of Greek young adults. Taking Political Disengagement as our dependent variable, we uncovered that the story ''woven'' around this issue for the case of Greek young adults is the following. Greek young adults' expression of Political Disengagement is first of all affected by their Educational level. In simple words, we have uncovered that the more educated a Greek young adult the less he/she will express a tendency towards Political Disengagement. We also uncovered that Political Trust has its part in this story. The more Political Trust Greek young adults express the less likely they are to get politically disengaged (quite logical I presume). Furthermore, we uncovered that Generalized Social Trust (at least the amount expressed by question ST1), plays a central role in our story, as it affects and is affected by the variables of Age (the younger a Greek young adult the less Generalized Social Trust he/she expresses), Education level (the more educated a Greek young adult the more Generalized Social Trust he/she expresses) and Political Trust (the more Generalized Social Trust a Greek young adults expresses the more Political Trust he/she expresses as well).

Limitations:

Even though this current research provided some good results to ponder on, it is obvious that some limitations and drawbacks were apparent. The first one is about the scale of Generalized Social Trust. It is obvious that some reconsideration is required towards the literature (so as to find some extra sources that could unveil further items that could provide a better and more articulated scale). The second one is about the scale of Political Trust. The exclusion of the items CDVot (perceived importance of voting) and CDPa (perceived political activity) was rather unfortunate; and means that either the items themselves need a reconstruction that would fit the characteristics of Greek young adults in a better manner, or new supplementary items should be found by a further literature research that would complement the scale and make it more robust. The third one I believe lies in the depiction of the completely opposite objective than the one we had for this paper. I speculate that a relevant research, measuring this time concepts and relations that lead to engagement and not disengagement, will uncover a load of variables that could be used in order for our model, concerning disengagement, to be more effective. The final limitation I believe has to do with the scarcity of research papers concerning the issues we got involved in, as far as Greece is concerned. This unfortunately didn't allow me to base this paper in a more concrete approach, but I consider it as a good start for relevant endeavours of the future.

Future Steps:

I consider this paper as merely part 1 of the whole endeavour to uncover the character of political radicalization for the case of Greek young adults. This research will first of all undergo substantial reconsideration, at least as far as its methodology and design are concerned. Then it will be actualized again of course, during the following year, but this time I will allow responses to gather for a much more substantial amount of time in order to diminish as much as possible the given area for statistical mistakes.

The second part of this endeavour will introduce the second issue of the dealignment process, the ongoing support towards radical left and extreme right populist parties in compromised polities like the Greek one. It will also introduce the matter of conservatism as a variable and discuss in general how a population that is not liberal gets enchanted by the more peripheral and radical aspects of its political reality. I hope that I can introduce it as a subject in the second master's project I intend to participate in, following the completion of the one here in Utrecht University.

The third and most complex part in this journey towards the truth, (laughing), is the depiction of the radical imaginary of Greek young adults. That means to capture the specific choices and realities they want to reproduce though their engagement into radical political formations. I hope to be able to cover this part with my PhD studies (feeling a little bit stressed towards this matter after witnessing how a thesis could evolve from promising to at least troubling), which I would like to direct towards the research and acquisition of the necessary knowledge that will allow me to articulate my very own radical imaginary, concerning a more ''barefoot'' approach to sociology and a more human scale development approach to political economy, that could be translated in an effort to articulate a different social reality for my country.

General Conclusion:

I consider it really problematic that Greek young adults show that poor of a response to questions relating to their generalized social trust. Besides the fact that this indicates a compromised social web with fragmented social relations, it also indicates an even more problematic reality; that of a population trapped inside a social reality under crisis, and not even being able to come to some sort of understanding (or even feel the need to do it) on how to escape it. I believe that this is the result of the extended familialistic character of the basic care-networks and relations that Greeks are brought up to as part of their culture. Furthermore, I think that it also reflects the results of a population managing its inter-social relations for the past 4 decades under the ''umbrella'' of a smothering (yet conceived as liberating) clientilistic political system.

Furthermore, the low values of trust towards Greek national and international political institutions and Greek politicians were something that was expected. The change in the electorate dynamics, with the major political protagonist for the past 3 decades (PASOK) experiencing its most disappointing defeat ever and the Greek parliament for the first time in its history witnessing the participation of so many political parties, is surely indicative towards the matter. Greeks have lost their confidence in the old party system and its members; and due to the fact that the economic crisis is ongoing and without a looming probability of it receding somehow, this has escalated into a general abortive feeling towards politics in general.

As far as the perceived importance of voting and political interest is concerned we can see that in general Greek young adults have a pretty positive view towards these issues. They consider voting as

being important and they show a mediocre but nevertheless not negative attitude towards their interest in politics. Nevertheless, when it comes to political activity (erst war der tat), we can see that they still keep themselves detached from the more substantial choices that could allow them to manipulate for the better their socio-political environment.

Acknowledgements:

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Web Links:

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-Greek Ministry of Interior - http://ekloges.ypes.gr

-OECD – http://www.oecd.org

-SurveyMonkeyBlog – blog.surveymonkey.com

-TheWorldFactbook/CIA-https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook//population/populationtemplate_GR.html

-IndexMundi – http://www.indexmundi.com/greece/age_structure.html

Annex 1:

The current questionnaire is addressing young adults with Greek citizenship between the ages of 18-36. It is the empirical part of a Masters programme research which addresses the issue of political radicalization as far as the aforementioned group of people is concerned. Please fill in the questions with honesty and respect towards the two preconditions of participation, the age boundary and the citizenship character. This questionnaire respects the issue of anonymity and the results will be accessible strictly for the purpose of this research. Thank you very much for your participation.

1) Please state your gender:

-Male

-Female

2) Please state the age group you belong:

-18-23

-24-39

-30-36

-37-….

3) Please state the level of education for which you have your highest degree of certification:

-No official degree of certification

-Primary education

-Lower secondary education

-Higher secondary education

-Post-secondary education

-Tertiary education

-Post-tertiary education

4) Choose the statement that best suits you:

-Most people are worth trusting.

-You have to be careful when dealing with people.

5) Choose the statement that best suits you:

-Most people would try to take advantage of me if they got a chance.

-Most people would try to be fair with me if they got a chance.

6) Choose the statement that best suits you:

-Most of the time people try to be helpful.

-Most of the time people are looking out for themselves.

7) Please state the level of trust you have for the following item:

Politicians

Not at all ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Totally

8) Please state the level of trust you have for the following item:

Parliament

Not at all ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Totally

9) Please state the level of trust you have for the following item:

Legal system

Not at all ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Totally

10) Please state the level of trust you have for the following item:

European Parliament

Not at all ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Totally

11) Please state the level of trust you have for the following item:

United Nations

Not at all ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Totally

12) Please state whether you agree with this statement or not:

So many people vote in national elections that it doesn't matter much to me whether I vote or not.

-Yes

-No

13) Please state the time you spend in order to:

Listen to political programmes on the radio or other broadcasting means.

Not at all ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ A lot

14) Please state the time you spend in order to:

Watch political programmes on the television or other broadcasting means.

Not at all ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ A lot

15) Please state the time you spend in order to:

Watch the political debates of the last national elections on television.

Not at all ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ A lot

16) Please pick the choice that better describes you:

During the last national elections

-I stayed home.

-I simply voted.

-I participated lightly in the support of a person or political formation.

-I participated in the political meeting of a party.

-I attempted to persuade others about whom to vote for.

-I worked for/engaged heavily in the campaign of a candidate.