

Seizing Opportunities: The Sudden Rise of Golden Dawn in Greece



Lysette Meuleman
3488438
Utrecht University
September 3, 2012

A Thesis submitted to the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Conflict Studies & Human Rights

Supervisor: Dr. C. Van Der Borgh

Date of Submission: September 3, 2013

Program trajectory followed: Research & Thesis Writing (30 ECTS)

Word Count: 23,324

Cover Image: © AFP/Getty Images

Retrieved at August 19, 2013 from:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/01/greece-golden-dawn-violence-eu-crisis>

Abstract:

In the elections of May and June 2012 the extreme right party Golden Dawn entered the Greek parliament with 7% of the vote and 21 and 18 seats respectively. This was surprising since in the 30 years of the party's existence has it never gained more than half a percent. This research investigates the causes of this sudden popularity by exploring the interaction between structure and agency. Important elements are the economic crisis, the political system and the political crisis, immigration, perspectives and attitudes of the voters and the active mobilization and framing by Golden Dawn. Especially the ambiguity of the party's protective image yet violent activities seems to have been crucial.

Content:

Introduction	7
Introduction	7
Research Question	8
Chapter Overview	9
Chapter 1 – Theory	11
1.1. Introduction	11
1.2. Waves of far right in Europe	12
1.3. Definition	12
1.4. Research Overview	14
1.4.1. Attitudes and Demographics	14
1.4.2. Contextual Variables	15
1.4.3. Party Agency	17
1.5. Focus of Research	18
1.6. Theoretical Framework	18
1.6.1. Giddens’ Duality of Structure	18
1.6.2. Political Opportunity Structures	20
1.7. Methodology	22
1.7.1. Methodology	22
1.7.2. Limitations	23
Chapter 2 – Context and Perception	25
2.1. Introduction	25
2.2. Contextual Variables	25
2.2.1. Economic Crisis	25
2.2.2. Immigration	27
2.3. Attitudes and Demographics	30
2.3.1. Normal Pathology – Pathological Normalcy	30
2.3.2. Voter Demographics	31
2.4. Conclusion	35
Chapter 3 – Political System and Political Process	37
3.1. Introduction	37
3.2. Development of Political System	37
3.3. Political Crisis	39
3.3.1. Clientelism and Corruption	39
3.3.2. Reforms	41
3.3.3. Manifestations of the Political Crisis	42
3.4. Political Processes	43
3.4.1. Openness and convergence	43
3.4.2. Instability of Political Alignments	44
3.5. Reaction of Parties and Civil Society	47
3.6. Conclusion	49

Chapter 4 – Mobilization and Party Agency	51
4.1. Introduction	51
4.2. Far Right in Greece	52
4.3. Development of Golden Dawn	54
4.4. Ideology	55
4.5. First Success in Athens	57
4.5.1. Citizen Protection	57
4.5.2. Image	58
4.5.3. Violence	59
4.6. Expansion throughout Greece	60
4.7. Violence	62
4.7.1. Function of Violence	64
4.8. Media	65
4.9. Conclusion	66
Conclusion and Discussion	69
Bibliography	

Introduction

Introduction

The extreme right party Golden Dawn entered the parliament in Greece in May 2012. While previously unrepresented, the party suddenly won 7% of the vote amidst social, economical and political crises. Financial and economic crises bring, besides societal troubles, also political turmoil. In Greece both the recent economic crisis as well as the political developments were extensive. The austerity measures implemented to curb the budget deficit created instability for the government of premier Papandreou between 2009-2011, and the cabinet eventually fell. In the following elections in 2012 the extreme right party Golden Dawn came out of nothing into parliament with 21 seats. This previous marginal party, which had never gained more than half a percent in the national elections, suddenly won 7%. It was proved that it was not a one-day exception when 40 days later new elections were called and the party again won 7%, this time amounting to 18 seats. Most countries in Europe have had experiences with far right parties in parliament. These parties can be temporarily successful or have a lasting influence in politics. Greece for a long time stayed behind on this trend, and was hardly taken serious in far right research, even when a far right party arose. This has changed since these elections of 2012. The extreme right party in case, Golden Dawn, is not just any moderate far right party, but a pro Nazi party which is frequently associated with violence. For this reason the party has attracted much attention from the media and civil society organizations in both Greece and abroad. A large part of these reports are devoted to the violent character of this party, their brutal activities and their extreme ideology (SBS Dateline 2013; Kitsantonis 2009; Athens 2011; Patra 2012). A frequently asked question is how the party gained so many votes. The commonly heard explanation from the layman is that the economic crisis is the cause. Yet there are multiple examples of economic crises without the emergence of a far right party, or on the contrary, rises of the far right without economic depressions. Economic troubles an sich than are not enough to explain the popularity of Golden Dawn. Other factors have to be taken into account as well.

Research Question

The research question of this paper is: what factors and changes contributed to the sudden rise of Golden Dawn? Since before Golden Dawn another far right party already entered the Greek parliament, the crucial puzzle of this research is not only that a far right party emerged in Greece, but also that it gained many votes so suddenly. After all, the party gained suddenly 7% after decades of lingering on less than a half percent. It already existed 30 years as a movement and 20 years as a political party before it entered parliament. The quick rise may be more unexpected than the increasing popularity itself. The other part of the puzzle is that Golden Dawn is a party with Nazi ideas and is known for its violence. This leads to two subquestions: how is it possible that Golden Dawn gained popularity so quickly, after years of being on the fringe; and how can a party that is associated with violence and Nazism gain so many votes? These two elements make this case of emerging far right especially interesting.

To answer these questions, this research will look at several elements that contribute to the explanation of this phenomenon. Besides structural factors external to the far right, this research will also look at Golden Dawn itself. What constitutes the far right and what kind of party is Golden Dawn in particular? A fundamental aspect of the sudden rise of Golden Dawn is the agency of the party itself. A favorable environment is not yet a sufficient condition; a party must make use of the possibilities offered and must frame the conditions in a way that is beneficial for their specific party. In order to win votes a party must become a viable alternative for the mainstream parties. Therefore, a crucial element of this research is the activities of Golden Dawn with which the party mobilized support.

Academically this research will contribute to filling the gap of research on far right parties in Greece. Since not many far right parties have gained any representation in Greece, not much research has been done on this topic. Golden Dawn has incited the field to start research and make up for this lack. However, these studies mostly focus on the contextual circumstances and voter attitudes (Ellinas 2013; Georgiadou 2013). They do take into consideration the ideology of Golden Dawn, but often only devote little space to its specific strategy. Therefore, this research attempts to incorporate the different elements that contribute to

the explanation of the sudden rise of Golden Dawn, and pays special attention to this strategy, since it considers this as a crucial aspect. This research will show that Golden Dawn did not simply arise because an external environment created the possibility to do so, but that it made use of these opportunities and framed the conditions in their benefit. This is not only true for Golden Dawn, but for all (far right) parties. Therefore, this research aims to gain a better understanding of the political sphere and the rise of far right in particular.

In order to explain the rise of Golden Dawn, I have done both qualitative and quantitative research. I have interviewed (experience)-experts and corroborated their findings with other data, such as election analysis, quantitative data from the European Commission and articles written on the far right.

Chapter Overview

I have done research in four areas: the voters' attitudes and perspectives, the contextual variables that influenced the socio-economic situation in Greece, the political system, and the party's activity itself. I have chosen to study these areas because the research overview given in Chapter 1 indicated that these areas are important for explaining the far right in Europe. The first chapter will start with an overview of the research done on the far right in Europe. It will delineate the existing theories of why people vote for these parties, and what conditions favor their emergence. Moreover, it will explain the model based on Giddens 'Duality of Structure' and Tilly and Tarrow's 'Political Opportunity Structures' used in this thesis to explain the emergence of Golden Dawn. The second chapter will look into the voters' attitudes and perspectives as well as the contextual variables that have shaped Greek society and are at the basis of these attitudes. These variables are mainly the economy and the financial crisis, and the increase of immigrants in the last decade. Both these factors have created large problems in Greece and specifically in Athens. These problems are aggravated by the political crisis. The political crisis and the opportunities it created for the minor parties to increase their influence is investigated in chapter 3. That chapter is devoted to the political system, and how this system and the political processes of the last years have created possibilities for (far

right) parties to emerge. Key elements are party convergence, polarization on memorandum lines and instability of political alignments. The last research chapter, chapter 4, will look into the party itself. It will investigate what activities Golden Dawn employed to gain the trust of its voters and how they framed the external elements in their favor. The conclusion contains a discussion of the findings presented in the chapters. It will analyze the interaction between the factors and discuss the importance of each of them.

Chapter 1 - Theory

1.1. Introduction

This first chapter is devoted to the research on the far right, the theories that explain far right party's emergence and the specific theories that will be used to explain the sudden rise of Golden Dawn in Greece in this thesis. The first part of the chapter will explain the waves in which far right parties develop and the characteristics of the parties within the respective waves. Furthermore, it will pay attention to the defining and categorizing of far right parties. In every party family, parties vary and likewise far right parties differ from each other in some important aspects. In far right research many different definitions and labels are used thus some consideration to what the far right constitutes is required.

Following Cas Mudde's expertise in this field, I consider the far right as xenophobic, nationalist and authoritarian. After establishing the definition of far right parties, an overview of the research on this topic will be given. Extensive research has been done in this area, mostly focusing on the questions of why people vote for these parties and why far right parties emerge. There are several theories for this, ranging from theories focused on voter characteristics, globalization theory and grievance models to protest theories. Little research has been done on the far right parties themselves and their members. I will discuss the findings of previous research and argue that in order to fully explain the rise of Golden Dawn, it is important to investigate several elements. These are the socio-economic situation in Greece, the Greek political system, voter attitudes, and the agency of the party itself and their role in the mobilization of these voters. The second part of the chapter focuses on the methodology used for the research. As theoretical framework I will use Giddens' Duality of Structure and Tilly and Tarrow's Political Opportunity Structures. The former allows me to focus on both structure and agency, as well as their interaction, while the latter explicates important elements in the political system that may influence the possibility for a social movement or party to emerge. Finally, after explaining how these theories are used in this study, the chapter turns to the sources that are used and the limitations of the research.

1.2 Waves of far right in Europe

Since World War II there have been three so-called 'waves' of emerging far right parties (Savvopoulo 2011). Far right parties within each wave are influenced by the same circumstances and have similar features. Between waves the differences in party ideology become larger. The first wave, and to a lesser extent the second wave as well, were connected to the fascist and Nazi regimes of before and during the war, and their key features were biologically based racism and anti-Semitism (Rydgren 2005: 413; Minkenberg 2013: 17; Savvopoulo 2011). Yet when support for these regimes and ideologies decreased, third wave parties moved away from this ideological frame and a renewal of the far right took place. This took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the creation of a new master frame (Rydgren 2005: 414). A master frame has a large set of principles and beliefs. From this frame parties can borrow ideas and form their ideology. Because the master frame is accepted, the parties using this master frame derive legitimacy from it. Yet social developments can change the prevailing opinion of certain attitudes. When the elements of the master frame become stigmatized because of these shifts, the parties lose the support of the frame and their ideologies are also de-legitimized (Rydgren 2005: 413). In the 70s and 80s, society had largely rejected the old biological racism of the old frame and thus the far right parties were marginalized. A new master frame was essential for far right parties to regain popularity. In the 1980s this new frame was indeed developed (Rydgren 2005: 414). This new frame discarded the biological racism, and introduced a new sort of racism, based on cultural features (Minkenberg 2013: 20). The key features of the far right in the third wave are xenophobia and nationalism, which are primarily based on ethnicity and racism, but with a core of cultural features (Minkenberg 2013: 20).

1.3. Definition

Between waves are differences in ideology, yet just as within other party families, also between far right parties within a wave there are differences between ideologies and programs. This has led to a problem of definition and categorization. This problem has been present in far right studies for a long time, and only received more attention in the last 5 to 8 years. Researchers have used

many names to typify parties: radical, extreme, far, populist, nationalist, anti-immigration, etc. In most studies the same parties were used for analysis, while a few parties were under discussion. Yet the different names brought confusion as to what the differences exactly were and how the far right was defined. Cas Mudde (2007) has written extensively about this problem and how to go about delineating what is considered far right and what not, and thus I refer to him for an elaborate reading. He has made a rigorous attempt to disentangle all the different terms and to clarify their differences. Therefore on his analysis, I base my definition of the far right following below.

Mudde considers the far right to be based on several core features: firstly nationalism, or rather a certain form of nationalism known as: nativism, authoritarianism and often also populism. Nativism is an 'intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign connections' (Higham 1955:4 in Mudde 2007: 18). Nativism believes that states should exist exclusively of members of the same native group and all other elements are threatening (Mudde 2007: 19). The second feature is authoritarianism, which is the "belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely" (Mudde 2007: 23). Populism is a 'thin centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups "pure people" versus "the corrupt elite" and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonte generale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde 2007:23). Thus, far right parties' ideal is a homogenous society, which is not strictly racially homogenous, but which is based on ethnicity or cultural identity, in which law and order prevails. This is often accompanied by, features of, opposition to the elite. Since within the party family there are differences in to what extent these features are included, Mudde has organized the different categories in a ladder of abstraction based on ideology (Mudde 2007:24). In this ladder, parties with a radical right ideology embrace xenophobia and authoritarianism, while the extreme right also includes anti-democracy. Populism can be an additional feature to both these categories (Mudde 2007: 24). The far right would then be the umbrella term that overarches the different categories. Due to its xenophobic and authoritarian ideology with anti-democratic elements, Golden Dawn is part of the extreme right. By reviewing the

theories about the far right instead of the extreme right specifically, a larger body of research can be investigated. By using articles that have slightly different definitions or which do research on a specific part of the family I expect to gain greater insight than only using articles that deal with extreme right parties.

1.4. Research overview

Many studies have been done on the emergence and consolidation of far right parties. These studies focus mostly on individual characteristics of voters and/or contextual or socio-structural variables. Much less research has been done on the internal organization or the dynamics of a party itself. Some authors divide this research into three strands. These strands can be labeled as demand, supply and internal organization (e.g. Mudde 2007; Van der Brug & Fennema & Tillie 2005) or as micro, macro and meso (e.g. Eatwell 1998). These respective categories are slightly different, yet comparable.

1.4.1. Attitudes and Demographics

Earlier research has focused largely on the demand or micro side of the explanation, namely why people vote for the far right and what kind of people does this (Mudde 2010: 1168; Van der Brug & Fennema & Tillie 2005: 539). Explanations were sought in the individual attitudes and values of supporters and in specific personality traits (Arzheimer 2009: 260). It appeared that voters are significantly more inclined to vote for the far right if they are young, do manual labor or are unemployed (Arzheimer 2009: 267). Furthermore, significantly more men than women vote for the far right (Arzheimer 2009: 267). On the opposite, people who are retired or have obtained a university degree are less likely to support it (Arzheimer 2009: 267). Attitudinal variables such as euroscepticism and political dissatisfaction increase the chance of voting for far right. The separation between the focus on individual characteristics and contextual variables is not always clear and studies and theories cannot always neatly be categorized in one box or another. This is seen when studies try to find an explanation for such attitudes, as these focus on individual attitudes as well as on how these attitudes are formed. There are several socio cultural theories that try to explain far right support. Firstly, it is considered that individual

characteristics values were shaped by the social breakdown and disintegration of society (Arzheimer 2009: 260). This is related to the modernization theory. This theory holds that because of modernization and globalization there are rapid changes in post-industrial societies (Van der Brug & Fennema & Tillie 2005: 540). These are cultural, economic, social and political changes that are believed to induce stress to people who cannot get by, resulting in frustration and disillusionment (Rydgren 2005: 419). The theory holds that the part of society that is disadvantaged by these changes and that therefore feels threatened, will vote for the far right (Van der Brug & Fennema & Tillie 2005: 541). The far right is seen as the opposition to this modernization, because it focuses on social homogeneity (Minkenberg 2013: 11).

Another theory that is often used is the protest vote model. It argues that people do not vote for the far right because of its ideology or program, but out of protest. Yet what this protest exactly entails may differ. It can be against the ideology of the mainstream parties, out of frustration or disillusion with the practices or an attempt to scare the elite or to protest against politics in general (Van der Brug & Fennema & Tillie 2005: 540-541; Arzheimer 2009: 263). There is much discussion about this theory, and momentarily it is mostly dismissed because it is not convincingly proven. Even though this has provided much information about the average far right supporter, research also demonstrated that these attitudes are similar across Europe, and therefore the theory cannot explain the differences in far right voting between European countries or for temporal differences in one specific country (Mudde 2010: 1168).

1.4.2. Contextual variables

Thus, research has shifted to include more contextual variables or so called supply factors. This large body of research has focused on socio structural models and 'macro' level contextual variables. These latter studies often aim to find a common cause of the support for the far right. This results mostly in quantitative comparative research in Europe in which researchers try to find common denominators and features, such as unemployment rates, number of asylum seekers, or the economic situation (Kitschelt 2007: 1199). Rydgren however, argues that the causes of emergence might differ in different countries

and that the conditions in which a party flourishes might be diverse. Yet he also argues that this does not mean that any explanation is possible, and stresses that they will be most likely be related to strain- or grievance based explanations (Rydgren 2005: 415). Being led by the relevant contextual variables named above, Ivarsflaten has formulated hypotheses on the basis of the grievance model. The first model is based on economic changes and supposes that people vote for far right because of their right wing policies, or because of dissatisfaction with the economy (Ivarsflaten 2007: 6). The problem with the first proposition is that economic issues rarely are at the core of the far right ideology and that not all far right parties have such a right wing economic policy. Many parties actually support the welfare state and protectionism, as long as it is nationalist (Mudde 2007: 25). A second grievance model is that of political disillusionment, driven by European integration and supported by allegations of corruption and elitism (Ivarsflaten 2007: 8). Thirdly, there are believed to be immigration grievances due to the immigration flows of the 1980s and 1990s (Ivarsflaten 2007: 8). Several authors have tested these models, but the results were not always clear or compelling. In his comparative European study on populist right wing parties, Ivarsflaten found that populist far right parties did not manage to mobilize more voters on economic and disillusionment issues than other right wing parties. Yet, he did find that far right parties were only successful if they were able to mobilize support on immigration better than other right wing parties. This leads to the conclusion that immigration is a key factor of the success of far right, while economic issues and political disillusionment can be useful, yet are not necessary conditions (Ivarsflaten 2007: 12-14). Minkenberg agrees with the conclusion that immigration is an important factor for the far right, yet he adds that it is not merely the number of immigration seekers, but that it also depends on the saliency of the issue in politics (Minkenberg 2013: 21-22).

Contextual research has also focused on the political system that would allow far right parties to emerge. Also in this case it depends on the study what exactly is considered as political system and what variables are used. Key features of this model are the convergence of the mainstream parties, often measured on economic issues, and the non-economic issues that are key to the

far right such as immigration and nationalism, the position of parties and the polarization of the party system (Spies & Franzmann 2011: 1046). Other studies also find the economy and immigration as relevant (Arzheimer 2009: 262). This depends on whether it is argued that the economy and immigration have an influence on politics and can be used to evaluate the government's policies, or whether they are seen as external factors unrelated to the political system. Furthermore, in some studies the positioning of political parties is researched under the name of spatial competition theory, such as in Alzheimer's study (Arzheimer 2009).

1.4.3. Party agency

Another part of far right research, on which few studies have focused, is the role of the far right party itself. The great majority of studies focus on the party's external environment, the conditions of society or the attitudes of the voters. Few investigate the dynamics within a party; the members of a far right party itself or the members' role is in the emergence of the party. One reason for this lack of research is the difficulty of carrying it out. Far right parties or social movements are closed groups to which it is difficult to gain access. Academics are rarely able to do in-depth interviews for example. An additional problem is that researchers usually do not adhere to the same ideology of the members of far right, and find it hard to 'fit in' and to establish the trust needed to do personal interviews (Blee 2007: 121). Yet this research is also important. Blee has done research on this topic, and she found that far right parties or movements are not only about politics and ideology; they are for a large part also about identity and belonging. Furthermore, the core members often see a different party than the people who only vote for it. Parties hide their most extremist ideas in order to attract more votes (Blee 2007: 124). This still leaves the question how the party mobilizes potential voters and what successful election strategies are for the far right. Not much is known about how voters are mobilized by the party itself either.

1.5. Focus of research

Research on the far right has demonstrated what kind of people are more likely to vote for the far right and what attitudes are at the basis of this decision. Furthermore, it has suggested some important contextual variables that are associated with the emergence of the far right and the political circumstances that favor the break through of a new party. It has been not sufficiently investigated how a far right party itself might use these circumstances to actively mobilize people to support their party in the elections. Exactly this aspect turned out to be crucial for the rise of Golden Dawn in Greece. My research aims at incorporating all three sides: the voter and his or her attitudes, the contextual variables and political system, with a special focus on the mobilization of the vote by Golden Dawn itself. I think that above all this last element is important in explaining not only why Golden Dawn got voted into the parliament in 2012, but also why it suddenly gained so many seats while the party had already existed for 20 years in the margins. Hardly any research has been done on the far right in Greece. Even in 2010 after Golden Dawn won a seat in the municipality council in Athens, two years before the elections of 2012, research applications were rejected because people did not believe Golden Dawn would become significant in any way (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). This makes research on this topic highly relevant.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

1.6.1. Giddens' Duality of Structure

This last part of the chapter focuses on the methodology used to conduct this research and on the theories that can explain the rise of Golden Dawn. This cannot be done easily by just applying one of the theories mentioned above. The case of Greece is complex and many factors and processes are important. Thus the research involves both external structures as well as the active positioning of the party. This reflects the theory of Giddens: the duality of structure. The structure can explain why there were possibilities and opportunities for the far right and how the space for a new party was created, but this space is not automatically filled. The structure cannot explain why exactly Golden Dawn gained popularity. This is due to the agency of Golden Dawn and the particular

way the party manifested and positioned itself. The interaction between the structure and party agency is crucial and framing is important in this context. The grievances of the public do not necessarily have to be on the topics that Golden Dawn 'owns', and neither do Golden Dawn's policies have to resolve them. However, if Golden Dawn frames them to be related they can mobilize the voters nonetheless. It is not always about what is, but also about what seems to be or how something is perceived or framed.

In my research I have distinguished people's attitudes, contextual variables, the political system and Golden Dawn's mobilization strategies as primary levels of analysis. I have chosen these four levels to express the complexity of the question. The emergence of a party cannot be explained by either one of these elements on its own. Only by investigating both the structure and agency and their interaction can a complete picture of the rise of Golden Dawn be obtained. Therefore, I have been looking for factors that could contribute to the explanation of the sudden and fast rise of Golden Dawn on either of these levels. I have been guided by the knowledge of previous research as shown above. The structure in this case involves both the socio-economical situation in Greece, as well as the political system. These are still somewhat vague and broad concepts. In order to use it in this research the concepts need to be limited and delineated. For this operationalization I will draw from previous research to focus the concept. The research suggests that especially immigration, economy and the political system are important for the emergence of far right parties. Therefore, I will investigate immigration and economy to see how these factors have influenced or shaped Greek society and created opportunities for the far right. Furthermore, I will look at the political system and the developments of mainly the last few years to see what changes have been of importance. The political system I will analyze using the Political Opportunity Structure (POS) theory of Tilly and Tarrow (2007). The other part of the research will focus on party agency and mobilization. Here I will focus on election and campaign strategies and party activities.

1.6.2. Political Opportunity Structures

The POS theory originally comes from social movement research. Tilly and Tarrow have done extensive research in this area using POS and define it as following: “*Political opportunity structure* refers to features of regimes and institutions (e.g., splits in the ruling class) that facilitate or inhibit a political actor’s collective action and to changes in those features. It emphatically includes not only opportunities but also threats” (Tilly & Tarrow 2007: 49). Tilly and Tarrow describe 6 properties of the regime that account for the POS.

“1: the multiplicity of independent centers of power within it

2: its openness to new actors

3: the instability of current political alignments

4: the availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers

5: the extent to which the regime represses or facilitates collective claim making

6: decisive changes in items 1 to 5” (Tilly & Tarrow 2007: 57).

Since these structures change and are different between countries and over time, POS can explain differences in emergence of far right parties between regimes (Tilly & Tarrow 2007: 57).

While Tilly and Tarrow focus on social movements and spend little attention to political parties, Mudde has applied their theory to the far right. Using Tarrow’s earlier definition of POS of 1994, he states that POS are: “consistent, but not necessarily formal or permanent, dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure” (Tarrow 1994: 85 in Mudde 2007: 232). Mudde distinguishes three sub categories of structures: the institutional, the political and the cultural (Mudde 2007: 233). In the institutional field he mainly highlights the political system, but also acknowledges that this is only interesting for comparing the emergence of the far right across different systems, or in relation to changes within a particular country (Mudde 2007: 236-237). In the political context he finds the interaction and positioning between political parties most important (Mudde 2007: 238). Mudde discusses some debates on convergence and polarization, and which one would favor the

emergence of the far right. Convergence would create 'space' on the right side of the spectrum for a new party to emerge, yet on the other hand there is also evidence that far right parties are able to ride along on the success of the right wing party in a polarized system. Furthermore, it is suggested that convergence would be profitable for the emergence of far right parties, while for its sustainability, it is not (Mudde 2007: 239). Polarization would be especially beneficial for a far right party if it is part of one of the main blocs. Furthermore, issue ownership plays in this case a large role (Mudde 2007:241). Mudde largely explains the cultural context as the role of civil society and intellectuals, who could either have a positive, but even more importantly, a negative influence on the emergence of far right parties (Mudde 2007: 244). Reactions of civil society might stigmatize a party and therefore deter support.

Mudde agrees with Tilly and Tarrow that POS are "facilitating rather than determining factors in the success and failure of populist radical right parties" (Mudde 2007: 253), since it does not explain why people vote for radical right, but why a party is able to breakthrough. Thus he also finds it is more important for the emergence than for the sustenance of radical parties (Mudde 2007: 253).

For this research on Golden Dawn in Greece, I take political opportunity structures as mainly involving political factors and not other contextual factors such as immigration and economy. These may be important in several ways, but I will only include them as indirect factors, for example that influence party positions, and not as factors that create political opportunities directly. I will look at the positioning of parties on the political spectrum on economical as well as non-economic issues. Furthermore, I believe convergence and polarization are also important to explain the far right in Greece. To understand the opportunities that were created I will do an analysis of the political field in the period of 2008 to 2012. I believe that during this period the most important changes have happened that enabled Golden Dawn to emerge. Evidently, there are also some longer-term processes to which I will pay attention.

1.7. Methodology

1.7.1 Methodology

Because of the significance of the rise of Golden Dawn for Greece and Greek society, other academics have done research on the same topic simultaneously with my research. I include their findings and ideas in this thesis as well. The preparatory research indicated that the period leading up to the elections of 2012 were essential for the support of Golden Dawn. Therefore I took this period of approximately 3 years as the main area of research. In order to gain insight in what has happened during this period I have done media research, consisting of Greek newspapers written in English. This is not a representative research, since there are not many Greek newspapers written in English. Yet it does give an indication of what has happened in the country, for example relating to the economy or politics. I used these newspapers as a background search. Indications were that political developments have been of significant importance. Therefore I have done research on the political situation in Greece in the years leading up to the 2012 elections. This I have done by interviewing experts from three fields: political parties, journalism and public organizations and academia. The members of the political parties gave me an insight in the elections, the election strategies of the political parties, including Golden Dawn, and the salient topics during the elections. Moreover they could inform me about the attitudes of the public during the election period. The journalists and the spokespersons of public organizations, such as the 'ombudsman', were specialized in the development of Golden Dawn itself, and the racist attitudes in Greece and violent attacks. Furthermore, professors specialized in political studies and the far right, were sources for gaining insight in the political situation in Greece, the ideology and actions of Golden Dawn, and the impact of Golden Dawn on politics. It was rather difficult to gain access, as I had no previous contacts in Greece. When my call or emails for an interview were answered, the response was often positive, however, receiving an answer was the main obstacle. This has had an influence on my research, since I mainly had to rely on the snowball effect of people referring me to contacts they had. However, I have been able to interview people from various parties and groups. Moreover, they revealed more or less similar information to me, which

strengthened its value. Furthermore, I have done documentary and statistical research on mainly contextual variables, such as immigration and the economy, and voters' attitudes. Useful sources were the Eurobarometer, Eurostat statistics and analysis of the polls and elections. The results cannot always be linked to far right voting directly, but can support previous research on the same topic.

1.7.2 Limitations

There are some limits to the extent in which I could do my research. The most prominent is my lack of knowledge of the Greek language. This has proven to put a large restraint on my research. I could not do research involving the Greek media, nor access sources written in Greek. Furthermore, even though some speeches or interviews done by Golden Dawn are in English, most of their manifestations, pamphlets or articles on their website are in Greek. Fortunately, while interviewing experts no significant language hindrance was encountered. A second difficulty was indeed the lack of access to Golden Dawn. They did not consent to an interview, and as a close political group, it was impossible to do direct research on their internal organization. However, through experts with better access and media reports, I have been able to gather valuable information. The largest gap of knowledge on the individual level of voters' motivation is the lack of information about widespread attitudes and beliefs regarding Golden Dawn specifically. Sources such as the European Value Study and European Social Survey were unavailable, because Golden Dawn was not yet included in the latest published survey. Only through the Eurobarometer attitudes regarding immigration and trust in political institutions could be investigated, but not linked to political preferences. The attitudes therefore can give an indication of the presence of certain attitudes and the salience of certain topics, but it cannot be directly linked to the support for a far right party.

Chapter 2 - Context and Perception

2.1. Introduction

As explained in the previous chapter, the rise of the Golden Dawn will be explained by looking at both the structure of society and the agency of the party. This chapter will focus on part of the structure. It will describe the context in Greece and the conditions in which the elections of 2012 took place. It is important to understand the situation in Greece because it determines what Golden Dawn could work with in the pre-election period. There are many processes that structure society, yet not all are relevant for the rise of the far right. Therefore this chapter will focus on two factors that are deemed relevant by research, namely immigration and economy (Kitschelt 2007: 1199; Ivarsflaten 2007: 6; Minkenberg 2013: 21-22; Arzheimer 2009). Furthermore, it will focus on the attitudes and perceptions of the Greek people. These attitudes and perceptions are influenced by factors such as immigration and the economy, even though the reality is interpreted differently by different persons. Because in the end a party gains seats because people vote for it, it is interesting to see who these people are and what they believe. The first part of the chapter will show that the economic and financial crisis has had a large impact in Greece and severely affected the welfare of the population. Furthermore, increasing immigration flows and a lack of adequate policy have resulted in large problems in places where many immigrants reside. These topics became salient before the elections and were the main topics on which people based their vote. The second part of the chapter will look at the voter demographics of Golden Dawn and at the motives of its supporters to vote as they did.

2.2. Contextual Variables

2.2.1. Economic Crisis

Just as the rest of Europe, Greece has for the past 6 years been dealing with a financial and economic crisis. Yet in Greece, the results of the problems in the financial world have been particularly devastating. This chapter will not deal

with the reasons of why Greece has been hit hard, but merely with its impact. The financial crisis started in 2008, but the most important period for Greece is from October 2009 to April 2012. A few weeks earlier Pasok had been elected into government with the promise not to cut the budget in order to solve the crisis, but rather to stimulate the economy with investments (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). However, three weeks after his inauguration, Prime Minister Papandreou had to admit that the budget deficit and debt of Greece were much higher than calculated before. Instead of investing, Papandreou called in help from the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB), together called the 'troika' (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). Greece was on the brink of bankruptcy and could only be saved by being allocated large sums of money in the form of a rescue package. The first package of April 2010 amounted to 110 billion euros, in exchange for large reforms and strict austerity measures (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). Yet this was not enough. The Greek economy soured and in June 2011 credit-rating agencies downgraded Greece's rating, which brought more financial problems (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). In October 2011, half of Greece's bond debt was cut, in order to prevent a bankruptcy and give Greece a chance to recover (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). A few days after Papandreou's initiative to hold a referendum over the agreement with the troika was eliminated by the European partners, a new government was formed of Pasok, New Democracy and Laos, with as Prime Minister former bank president Lucas Papademos (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 4). This government approved a new bailout package of another 130 billion euros, again with as return stricter austerity measures. Despite the announced and taken measures, the budget deficit remains high. From a budget deficit of 6.5% of the GDP in 2007, 9.8% in 2008 and its peak in 2009 of 15.6%, it has gone down to 10.7% in 2010 and 10.0% in 2012. However, it is still high in comparison to the average EU country with a 4% budget deficit in 2011 (European Commission Government). Moreover, the economy is still in decline (Ziel 2013: 13).

The failing economy and the strict austerity measures have had a large impact. One large issue is that the unemployment has been rising. While the unemployment rate was fairly stable from 1998 to 2005 around the 12% and

10%, and even went down to 7.5% in late 2008, from that point it has been increasing steeply (European Commission Unemployment). In late 2009 the rate was 9.9%, in 2010 13.8%, 2011 already 19.5% and in 2012 26.1%. Youth unemployment, defined as people younger than 25, is double that figure in 2012 (European Commission Unemployment). This can have large consequences for those people who lose their job. This can be shown by looking at the situation per household, for example by looking whether people are able to fulfill their obligations. Also here an increase is seen. While in 2003 17.7% of the households had great difficulty making ends meet, in 2009 this has increased to 22.3% and in 2012 to 25.6% (European Commission Inability). This means that a quarter of all the households in Greece have great problems paying the bills and providing for its household members. Another measure of the gravity of the economic situation is how people perceive their own situation. The Eurobarometer shows that in 2012 77% of the people regarded their financial situation as bad, and 55% was concerned about their job (Eurobarometer 78, 2012).

2.2.2 Immigration

The second issue that is relevant for the context in which the emergence of Golden Dawn is explained is immigration. Until the late 1990's, Greece has been an emigration country. This changed in the late nineties and during the 2000s, when immigration from the Balkan, Asia, and the Middle East increased (Aitima; Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005: 302). To get some indication of the size of the immigration and refugee flows into Greece we can look at the incoming immigrants per year. In 2004 3,865 decisions on asylum applications have been taken, in 2005 this increased to 10,420, in 2006 to 11,180 and in 2007 to 20,990 (European Commission Decisions). After 2007 there is no information on decisions on asylum application specifically. In 2010 new information is available about the number of long-term immigrants. In 2010 119,070 long-term immigrants entered Greece and in 2011 110,823 (European Commission Immigration). Overall it is estimated that there are almost 1 million migrants and refugees on a Greek population of 11 million (Ashati n.d.: 3). It is not certain the data on incoming migrants and refugees is reliable, because the asylum system is not functioning properly.

Part of these immigrants only wanted to use Greece as a transit country and an entry point into other European Union countries (Aitima; V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013; Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005: 302). Therefore many did not try to integrate into Greek society, but move on to other countries (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). However, since 2003 the Dublin II Regulation is effective. This regulation stipulates that asylum seekers must lodge their application in the country of entry in the EU zone. When they move on to another country and file an application there, they are being send back to the first country of entry. This Regulation has trapped many immigrants in Greece. As a result all immigrants who entered Greece needed to file their application there, which resulted in long waiting lists (Aitima; V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). Greece failed to adapt its asylum situation to the new reality with the consequence that the responsible institutions did not have the capacity to process all the applications in time (Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005: 302). The institutions were not adequately equipped, were understaffed, and were generally not able to deal with such large numbers of people. Furthermore, a rejected application in the first round may be appealed to the second. Since very few applications receive an immediate positive decision, almost all applications are reviewed twice (Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005: 304). Moreover, after an amendment is made to the law, the rejected applicant may reapply and since 1998 there were more than 64 amendments (Ashati n.d.: 11). This has put an enormous strain on the system. For a long time it was practice to only admit 20 applications a week, for which hundreds of immigrants stood in line for days for the chance to be picked (Smallman & Mara 2013). Adding to the chaos is the Greek practice to delay applications. The date of the interviews required for filing an application are changed frequently, with as result that refugees and immigrants are not able to file an asylum application for more than a year after entrance (Papadimitriou & Papageorgiou 2005: 304). When refugees do manage to obtain a residence permit, it is hard to remain legal, since their status is related to employment. Only when a legal migrant has a permanent job, the resident permit is extended (Ashati n.d.: 11). The result is that 35% – 50% of the immigrants in Greece is illegal (Ashanti n.d.: 11). At the same time people are stuck: because they have no

papers, they cannot leave, even if they want to go back to their country of origin (Smallman & Mara 20113).

These large migration flows and the Greek application system have resulted in severe humanitarian problems. According to Greek law, the state is obliged to provide accommodation etc., however it has not been able or willing to do so (Ashati n.d.: 19). The detention centers and reception centers in which migrants are held are of degrading conditions and in some centers the UNHCR even speaks of a humanitarian crisis (Ashati n.d.: 13) Immigrants had to rely on themselves to provide for food and shelter. The result is that many immigrants live either crammed with many people in small apartments or are forced to sleep in parks and on the streets (I-red 2012: 4; Ashati n.d.: 19). This created problems in some specific neighborhoods of Athens (Omonoia and Agios Panteleimonas e.g.), and in some cities with many immigrants such as Patras and Igoumenitsa (Aitima). In Athens the city center has been degrading, with immigrants sleeping in the street, drugs dealing and the accompanying general violence (I-red 2012: 4). Due to the economic crisis it became harder to find a job and with no other means of subsistence, crime rates went up (Aitima; V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). This only added to the tension already present in the neighborhoods that rapidly changed in demographics and where the original population felt increasingly threatened (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, May 31, 2013). In this time the discourse around immigration became harsher, and included terms and frases such as: “immigration bomb, sanitary bombs, reclaiming of the cities and blaming the immigrants” etc. (Aitima). Clearly the immigrants had become scapegoats for all that was wrong in the city (I-red 2012: 4). Far right groups spoke of cleaning the city (Ashati n.d.: 19). Intolerance towards foreigners has always been present in Greece, because Greeks regard the nation state as homogenous. Yet in the last years, it has been rising (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). At the end of 2010, racist violence began, according to Greek NGO Aitima (Aitima), although the I-red network already sees an increase in violence since 2006/2007 (I-red 2012: 4). This violence was mainly aimed at immigrants and refugees and is often in the form of beatings (Ashati n.d.: 2). After a Greek man died during a robbery by a foreigner, the violence increased. The peak was in 2012 at the time of the

elections (Aitima). Perpetrators of this racist violence usually go unpunished (Ired 2012: 4).

The result of the crisis is that the economy and the unemployment rate are seen as the most important issues facing Greece (Eurobarometer 78, 2012), and were the main topics during the elections of 2012. As can be expected, also immigration has been an important issue in the period before the elections. From 7% saliency in November 2010, it increases in May 2011 to 15% after which it drops again to 7% in May 2012 (Special Eurobarometer 393). Also the saliency of crime has gone up in the same period (Special Eurobarometer 393). In later chapters it is shown how these structural circumstances have influenced the rise of Golden Dawn.

2.3. Attitudes and Demographics

This last part of the chapter will be devoted to the voter demographics and people's motives of voting Golden Dawn. This can give an insight whether there are certain groups of society that are especially drawn to Golden Dawn. This might shed light on the question why people vote for Golden Dawn and thus how their sudden rise can be explained.

2.3.1. Normal Pathology – Pathological Normalcy

For a long time voting for far right and supporting their values of racism and authoritarianism was seen as something abnormal, something the normal average citizen would not do. It was thought that only a small percentage of society, of about 10 to 15% would be susceptible for voting for the far right and then only triggered by extreme conditions such as a crisis (Mudde 2010: 1171). This theory was based on the idea that the values of the far right are not compatible with the values in western democracies, and therefore people would not support parties with such an ideology. It effectively placed far right parties out of the normal political system. The key question became why people vote for such a party, which would then be explained by the protest vote and support in abnormal circumstances, and related to the modernization theory (Mudde 2010: 1172). Supply side and internal organization were almost completely ignored (Mudde 2010: 1172). This theory became known as the normal pathology

theory. Yet empirical evidence has not been corresponding to this hypothesis, and slowly research moved away from it (Mudde 2010: 1167). Alternatively, Mudde argued that the far right was instead of a normal pathology, a pathological normalcy. He explains in his article that the core values of the far right are not only compatible with western values, but even are all-present. Nationalism is expressed in many forms, for example when countries are named in the names of companies or public services, usage of the flag, etc. Further, conservative right parties have a strong focus on law and order, which is a moderate form of authoritarianism. Thus the ideology of the far right is not uncommon in society, it is only expressed in a less radical form (Mudde 2010: 1173-1178). This has implications for the way the far right is investigated. Now models used for other political research could be employed on the far right. Acknowledging that demand is not so abnormal made the question of demand less stringent, and research shifted to the question of supply, even though to fully understand the emergence the interaction with demand and internal organization is crucial. Understanding who votes for a far right party can give insight in why they vote for it and how the party emerged.

2.3.2. Voter Demographics

Concerning the voter demographics, there are several data; some data pertain to the elections in May 2012, and some in June 2012. Sometimes this is very similar information, and in some cases it may differ. In these elections Golden Dawn received 6.92% and 6.97% of the vote respectively. The voter demographics explaining the characteristics of the average Golden Dawn voter below pertain to the election in June 2012.

As is usual for far right parties, more men than women voted for the Golden Dawn: 10% of all men against 4% of all women (Public Issue 2012). This is in accordance with the demographics of other far right parties in Europe. Golden Dawn was particularly popular with the younger generations: of the voters between 18-24 years 13% choose for Golden Dawn and 16% of the voters between 25-34 did the same (Public issue 2012). This is in contrast to the 65+ voters, of which only 2% voted for Golden Dawn. Interestingly, both among the young voters as well as the elderly, only the left wing Syriza got a higher

percentage of the vote (Public issue 2012). This indicates that especially the young voters choose for the extremes of the political spectrum. At the same time, the low percentage of votes from the older people indicates that the vote for the Golden Dawn is not historically inspired. Previous supporters for the military dictatorship in the 60's and 70's belong to the older cohorts now, but exactly there support is low. So even though the leadership of the Golden Dawn is formed by the dictatorship, it seems that the support among the population is not linked to this period.

The polling company Public Issue has also looked at the employment situation of the June voters of Golden Dawn. They found that people who are self-employed or who own a business, the private sector employees, and the unemployed are slightly more inclined to vote for Golden Dawn, with 11%, 11%, and 12% respectively. Also in these categories most people voted for Syriza or the mainstream right wing party New Democracy (ND) (Public Issue 2012). Even though the immigration issue and the related problems were centered on specific regions, geography was a less determining factor for the far right vote. There is a minimal difference between the rural, urban and semi-urban districts, with slightly less voters in urban areas and slightly more voters in semi-urban areas (Public issue 2012). The vote is nearly evenly distributed over the election districts, with the exception of a few regions that either have a much lower or higher percentage (I-Graphics n.d.). Thus except from some districts, Golden Dawn is popular across the country. Even though it is still a small organization, it has grown fast in the last few years. In the chapter on mobilization more attention will be paid to this phenomenon.

Drawing from previous research the economy would also play a role in the emergence of the far right. In the June election is seen that only 8% of the people who were facing financial difficulty voted for Golden Dawn. This places the party in the fifth place in this category, behind Syriza 31%, ND 26%, Pasok 10% and the Independent Greeks with 9% (Public issue 2012). This is interesting, because it suggests that the financial crisis is not a major factor why people voted for Golden Dawn. The number of votes among people who are in financial difficulty is only slightly more than the average percentage of votes for Golden Dawn while Syriza got 5% above their total percentage from the people

in financial difficult situation (Public issue 2012). If Golden Dawn appealed to people because of their economic program, it would be expected that this percentage would be higher.

In these elections there was a high volatility and many people who voted unexpectedly. Not only Golden Dawn gained seats, also on the left side of the spectrum parties gained in popularity. This brings up the question where the voters come from and to what party they were previously aligned. Of course here is a large distinction between the May and the June elections, since in the former Golden Dawn won for the first time many votes, while in June many voters remained with the party. Most voters in May came from the two mainstream parties: 33.9% of the Golden Dawn voters came from New Democracy and 23.3% from the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok). Thus 50% of the party came from the major mainstream parties. As could be expected the former far right party Popular Orthodox Rally (Laos), which has been moving to the center in the last years and even participated in government, had to pay for these actions and lost many votes. 12.3% of the Golden Dawn voters came from this party (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 92). That former voters of these three parties make up the most substantial part of the Golden Dawn electorate is not surprising. New Democracy and Pasok were the two biggest parties and both lost a large percentage of their vote, especially Pasok. Furthermore, a substantial part of the vote for Golden Dawn is explained by the vote from new voters, more than 1 in 5 new voters voted for Golden Dawn (20.9%) (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 92).

In June it turned out that Golden Dawn received almost a similar share of votes, also almost 7%. Yet, large shifts in the electorate have happened. 64% of the voters in June had also voted Golden Dawn in May, yet Golden Dawn lost one third of its votes, while at the same time was able to regain the same amount by appealing to other people (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 92). These 30% of new votes came divided over all parties. 5% came from ND, 6% were new voters, 5% from Syriza, 3% from Laos, 2% from Pasok, 6% from other parties and previous non-voters, and 7% from the Independent Greeks, a party placed on the right wing with nationalist discourse, but with an unclear program (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 92).

This analysis shows that most voters came from the right side of the spectrum, which is logical since voters are more likely to shift to another party close to their ideology than to switch parties radically. Yet some people did. A much smaller, but still significant percentage of the voters for Golden Dawn came from the far left such as Syriza, which shares the stance on the memorandum, but is a quite different party. In this light, an interesting figure is that 2% of the people who claim to belong to the left wing side of the political spectrum, voted in June 2012 for Golden Dawn (Public issue 2012), while Golden Dawn is clearly right wing on many issues. This could be explained by the economic policy and the anti memorandum stance of Golden Dawn. However, there were also parties on the left wing of the spectrum who had similar economic policies and were opposing the memorandum. So for some reason Golden Dawn even appealed to some voters who do not have the same ideology. In the political barometer of Public Issue of September-November 2012, a few months after the elections, 6% of the Greeks referred to themselves as nationalists (Public issue 2012). Most likely not all have voted for Golden Dawn, since also the Independent Greeks have nationalist rhetoric. Therefore also people who do not regard themselves nationalist have voted for Golden Dawn. This is confirmed by the May election in which 44% of the Golden Dawn voters claimed that they are very close to the ideology of Golden Dawn, while 37% if neither close, nor far away from. 15% does admit that they feel far from the ideology of Golden Dawn, yet still have voted for the party (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 97).

Metron Analysis also investigated the political motives for voting Golden Dawn and the voters' wishes for composition of the future government. They found that a large part of the Golden Dawn voters (40%) desired to punish the mainstream parties, while only 14% of the entire electorate had the same wish. This might be an indication that Golden Dawn is regarded as a protest party, but it does not give an indication what the voters would protest against. As mentioned in the theory chapter, the protest theory is not very explanatory. Since the economy was the main topic during the elections, and Golden Dawn has an anti-memorandum and anti-austerity measures program, it is not surprising that 70% of its voters were against the memorandum. It might be more

surprising that 30% is not. Lastly, there is some information on what Golden Dawn voters wish for their government. Metron Analysis found that 38% wished a strong opposition, 14% a coalition government and 8% a one-party government, but Metron Analysis did not investigate which party this should (Metron Analysis in Georgiadou 2013: 93).

2.4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the economy and immigration have created a harsh environment for people to live in and many problems for society. Many people have trouble to get by, while at the same time they see their neighborhoods degrading. The chapter furthermore shows that voters for Golden Dawn come from all layers of society, but that the party especially appeals to young voters, who are unemployed or have a large chance to lose their job. Even though Golden Dawn voters come from across the political spectrum, the largest part is right wing oriented. Furthermore, the party has been able to capture a large part of the new votes. Interestingly for a party with such a strong ideology, more than half of its voters admitted to not be close to it.

Chapter 3 - Political System and Political Process

3.1. Introduction

The direct working field of a political party is influenced by two elements. Firstly the political system as formed over time, and secondly the processes within politics of the moment. This chapter will investigate both elements and how these have had an influence on the rise of the Golden Dawn. It will look at the political system as it is formed since the end of the civil war in 1949, and will investigate in more detail the processes in politics in the period 2008 to 2012, the period leading up to the rise of GD. It will do so through the lens of political opportunity structures. This theory of Tilly and Tarrow explained in chapter 1 will function as a guide to what is important. First I will look at the historical development of the democracy. What sort of political system has developed in Greece and what are the main characteristics of it? What are important rules or habits and what are the tendencies in elections? Which parties have been powerful over the years and which institutions have influence? This sets the playing field. Then I will look at what has happened over the last years, and especially what has changed or what processes have been set in motion. Did power blocks shift or new actors come up? Did the rules change? Were old systems interrupted? Here I will see if and how these processes have created possibilities in the system for GD to arise.

3.2. Development of Political System

After the civil war ended in 1949 a democracy was established in Greece. The political system became a proportional representation, with one chamber with 300 representatives. The premier is the leader of the government, while the president is head of state. The first government was formed by the right wing party 'Greek Rally'. This party was founded by Field Marshal Alexandros Papagos and was a conservative right wing party with a strong anti-communist program (Pappas 2003: 93). When Papagos died in 1955 and Konstantinos Karamanlis was chosen as the new leader, the name of the party was changed into National

Radical Union. In this capacity the party won another three elections in which it governed alone (Pappas 2003: 93). The fourth election in the late 60s it lost to the center party. This center party did not govern long, since in 1969 a dictatorship was established which lasted until 1974. After the fall of the dictatorship, Karamanlis returned in politics as the leader of the newly founded conservative right wing party New Democracy. Just as before the dictatorship the right wing party won the elections with a large majority (Pappas 2003: 93). When in 1981 Karamanlis became president of Greece, the hegemony of the right wing was broken by a left wing party. Pasok, a socialist party established by Andreas Papandreou after the dictatorship had been able to catch most voters of the then divided communist left (Pappas 2003: 98). Just as New Democracy in the 70s, also Pasok won the elections with a large majority so it could form a one party government (Pappas 2003: 98). After 8 years of socialist rule, in 1989 ND won the elections again, but had not gotten a majority and therefore they formed a coalition government with Synaspismos. This, though, was of short duration because ND left the coalition. After elections a new coalition was made between Pasok and Synaspismos and ND, but this one also only lasted several months (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 2). Finally, in 1990 ND won the elections with a majority and enough seats to form a government on its own again, while in the following elections Pasok regained a large majority (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3).

The strengths of initially ND and later also Pasok created functionally a two party system, in which minor parties were present, but had almost no influence. From 1977 to 2009 Pasok and ND had a minimum of 251 out of 300 votes and 85% of the votes together (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 2). In just about all elections one of the parties had a majority and thus no coalitions or compromises had to be made (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013 3). The two coalitions in 1989 were short lived. The two party system created a political culture of polarization (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3; Lyrinzis 2011: 2). This is strengthened by the political rules. Greece's electoral system is a proportional representation, with a 3% threshold and in the last elections a bonus of 40 and later 50 seats are allocated for the winner (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3). This is meant to create a stable majority government.

Yet it also created a system of confrontation, polarization and opposition with ND at the right side of the spectrum, and Pasok on the left (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3).

After two decades of strong opposition and polarization the two major parties began to move across the political spectrum. Where Pasok had been a radical social left party, it changed its ideology to become a more moderate center-left party and even to what Pappas calls a 'functionally conservative party' (Pappas 2003: 98). This transformation took place in the 1990s, while Pasok governed the country (Pappas 2003: 98). Both the main parties adopted similar (neo) liberal policies and while Pasok lost its radicalities, ND became more popular (Vernardakis 2008). Over time the programmes of ND and Pasok became more and more similar and centrist, with as consequence that also their members and cadre became more akin (Vernardakis 2008). Together they became to be seen as the political elite and as substitutes for each other rather than alternatives. Logically, being seen as one, the decline of the one also means the decline of the other party and other parties are able to profit (Vernardakis 2008). Thus, a polarizing system transformed into a converging system.

During the three decades some other elements had formed that influenced the practice of politics. These elements and processes eventually caused a political crisis that began in 2007. The key to this crisis is that the Greek population no longer trusted politics and had no confidence in the ability of the two mainstream parties to solve Greece's problems. The Greek people formed apathy towards politics. It is important to understand the political situation that came about, because it has highly influenced the possibilities for Golden Dawn to rise quickly. In the next part of the chapter the long-term processes and causes of the political crisis are highlighted.

3.3. Political Crisis

3.3.1. Clientelism and Corruption

The political crisis began around 2007. It already begun before the financial and economic crisis hit Greece, but this crisis has aggravated the political unrest. The first element of the political system leading to the political crisis is clientelism. This had been a feature of the Greek political system before

the dictatorship and even though ND and Pasok were founded after this period, its founders and members were connected to the political period before the 1970s. In this way, both parties inherited clientelism and the patronage networks (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3; Lyrintzis 2011: 3). The clientelist system in Greece is more concerned with the party than individual politicians, with the party handing out rewards for its supporters. The system is largely the same as the traditional clientelist system, with as difference that not individual politicians reward their supporters and appoint them for offices, but the party organization does (Lyrintzis 2011: 3; Pappas & Assimakopoulou 2012; Mavrogordatos 1997). This institutionalization within the parties sustains its existence and ensures party loyalty rather than loyalty to individual politicians. Clientelism is accompanied with corruption and a large bureaucracy. The Greek state has been increasing its presence in all areas of public life and thus created a huge state apparatus and bureaucracy (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3; Lyrintzis 2011: 5). Furthermore, the corruption and scandals in which politicians are engaged are accompanied by a lack of accountability (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 3). Not only the corruption itself led to the political crisis, but also the way corruption is dealt with makes people lose trust in the system. If these scandals come to light they are investigated by parliamentary commissions to establish who is responsible (Lyrintzis 2011:15; Zoakos 2010: 18). Yet often these investigations lead to nothing or the lower ranking bureaucrat is found responsible instead of the involved high placed politician or minister. Even if a minister or high placed politician is found responsible and the case is handed over to the court, the court is most likely to acquit the case because of a law that protects ministers in office from prosecution (Lyrintzis 2011: 15; Zoakos 2010: 18). Even when found guilty, parliament can and has effected a pardon (Zoakos 2010:18). This sets both these commissions in a bad light, as well as politics in general. People lose their trust in fair politicians because of both the corruption and the lack of accountability for it (Lyrintzis 2011: 15). The parliamentary commissions furthermore add to the instability of politics, because it undermines political alliances and increases polarization and may lead to personal antagonisms and discussions about morality. After all, the people in the

commissions who investigate the corruption are colleagues of the perpetrators (Lyrintzis 2011: 15).

3.3.2. Reforms

A second element of the political system that has contributed to the political crisis is that the governments lead by both ND and Pasok were not able to push through reforms, such as in the labor market and retirements. Both parties have intended to do so and promised it in election statements, but were met with demonstrations of strong unions and interest groups who managed to block any change (Lyrintzis 2011: 8). As a result there has been no change in areas such as education, transport, health, the labor market and the social security system for decades. These areas have not adapted to the changing world, which eventually makes them costly and inefficient. People who recognize the problems of the old policies and the need for change, blame the state for failing to implement reforms (Lyrintzis 2011: 9). In this way, necessary changes to areas such as the labor market and the social security system are not made, while the people blame the state for not solving the resulting (budgetary) problems.

Furthermore, in the past decade, the major parties had neglected to touch some issues such as immigration. Even though this became a growing problem and an important issue for many people, the main parties made no policy and did not pay much attention to it (Ellinas 2013: 15). Far right wing party Laos had a strong anti-immigrant program, but tuned it down in comparison with earlier years (Ellinas 2013: 16), possibly in connection with their government participation of 2011. This left the opportunity for other parties, such as Golden Dawn, to catch up on the feelings of discomfort in society and to politicize the issue. When Pasok finally tried to regain the defected voters by anti immigrant rhetoric and policy (Dinas & Rori 2013: 277), the initiative was already in Golden Dawn hands, and Pasok came to late. In 2010 Golden Dawn won a seat in the Athens municipality council because of its focus on immigration problems in the center of the capital. How the party did this is investigated in chapter four.

Thus, the Greek political system was a two party system with some minor parties that did not have much influence. Plagued by corruption and clientelism,

the state was weak and inefficient (Georgiadou 2013: 76). Government spending was high while there was little productivity and no transparency (Georgiadou 2013: 76). Because of corruption, the scandals, and the lack of reforms, the Greek population had become distrustful of politics and had little confidence in politicians (Lyrantzis 2011: 10). At the same time, the people were apathic and did not initiate any change (Lyrantzis 2011: 10).

3.3.3. Manifestations of the Political Crisis

Around 2007/2008 all these features came together resulting in a political crisis and protests against the state. The first signs of a political crisis were the public protests to events in 2008. In the summer of that year, as well as in 2007, there had been public outrages over the large wildfires in the Peloponnese and the bad way the government handled the situation. They had great difficulty getting the fires under control and as a result large parts of nature were destroyed (Tsiridis 2011; New spates 2008; Varvaressou 2008). In December of the same year a policeman shot and killed a 15 year-old-boy (Malkoutzis 2008). In the following weeks large protests and violent clashes of predominantly young demonstrators with the police ensued (Malkoutzis 2008). The state and the police had trouble to get the situation back in control, which is seen as an example of the de-legitimation of the political system (Ellinas 2013:14; Tsiridis 2011). This has been confirmed by other protests such as 'the disruption of highly symbolic public events [such as] the 28 October national day parade in 2012' (Ellinas 2013: 14) and aggravated by the presence of left political parties in the protests (Tsiridis 2011).

The crisis is also seen in the movements of the electorate. Since early 2007 the electorate has been moving away from the two major parties ND and Pasok towards the parties on the edges (Vernardakis 2008). Already in 2007, the two major parties lost 6% of their support, while at the same time an increase of 3.5% was seen in voter abstention (Vernardakis 2008). Pasok was seen as falling into an identity crisis resulting from their swift to the center and neo liberal ideology. In the meantime, the left wing party Syriza was tapping into the former voters of Pasok and was able to reach these groups in the issues that are important for them (Vernardakis 2008). Syriza was able to activate the higher

educated who are interested in politics and more activist than Pasok (Vernardakis 2008).

3.4. Political Processes

In the next part I will investigate the political processes in the years 2008-2012. To see how these processes have had an influence on the possibility of a far right party to emerge, I will use the theory of POS by Tilly and Tarrow and incorporate the adaptations to the far right parties by Cas Mudde, as explained in the theory chapter. Of the 6 factors identified by Tilly and Tarrow, I deem two particularly important in case of the Golden Dawn. The other factors I have not encountered or seen as influential. Therefore I will look at the openness of the political system to new actors and the instability of current political alignments and changes in these two factors. As Mudde suggested in his adaptation of POS to the far right, I will pay attention to political and cultural structures, thus convergence and polarization processes, and the role of civil society.

3.4.1. Openness and Convergence

To start with the first factor, in the first decades of the democracy Pasok and ND were two party blocks with different ideologies and programs. The Kommounistiko Komma Elladas, the communist party, had a minority role, but was a stable factor in the political spectrum as well. In the last decade however, this changed. ND and Pasok both moved towards the center and in doing so became more similar and dependent of each other. People did not see the difference between them as clearly as before. Especially during the crisis, Pasok was adopting the neo liberal economic policy of cutting expenditures. Except for blurring ideologies, this converging had other effects on the political system. As Mudde (2007) predicts that could happen, in a converging system where a right wing party shifts to the middle, the far right wing is exposed and space is left open. This is also what happened in Greece. This is even more so because ND had always been a strong party on the right flank. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, ND was very strong during the first decades after the reestablishment of democracy. Consequently, it blocked the emergence of minor right wing parties. Since ND always won with a large majority coalition partners were not needed

and thus a vote for smaller right wing parties was a wasted vote. In this way ND prevented the success of minor parties by absorbing all votes on the right side (Pappas 2003: 98; Georgiadou 2013: 82). Even though some parties tried, none were really successful or lasting and thus disappeared (Pappas 2003: 98). Furthermore, instead of fighting the parties on its right side and starting a dialogue in which ND had to clearly position itself against another right wing party, ND incorporated all right wing elements (Georgiadou 2013: 80). To not to disengage their moderate conservative supporters ND made sure that not the ideology or program were copied, but that it neutralized a far right threat by incorporating its politicians (Georgiadou 2013: 80). In 1981 for example, they placed the number two of the list of the far right National Alignment on the third place of the ND list, and added some more members and activists at lower places (Georgiadou 2013: 80). In this way they could control the far right elements and members of parliament (MP) and were preventing a rival at their right flank. This strategy was successful since as long as ND followed it, no party on its right had any influence. This changed when in the last decade ND moved more to the center, and stopped absorbing all far right politicians. In contrast, in 2000 they expelled Georgios Karatzeferis from ND for failing to adopt the more centrist orientation (Georgiadou 2013: 82). As reaction Karatzeferis founded the populist far right party Laos (Georgiadou 2013: 82), which in 2004 won a seat in the European elections (Ellinas 2013: 5) and in 2007 won with 3.8% 10 seats in the Greek parliament (Georgiadou 2013: 83). In 2009 it grew even more to 5.6% and 15 seats in parliament (Georgiadou 2013: 83).

3.4.2. Instability of Political Alignments

The second factor of POS applicable to the Greek case is the instability of current political alignments. The financial crisis has influenced the political processes in this regard. When looking closely at the period leading up to the elections of 2012, we will see that Pasok and ND lost much support and that there was place created for defecting MP's to join smaller parties or even to found new ones.

In autumn 2009 Pasok won the elections from ND with a large majority (160 to 90 seats). It did so with the promise to invest to get through the crisis.

However, after a few weeks it turned out that the budget deficit and the Greek debt were much higher than expected. Thus instead of investing, Pasok decided to ask the EU, IMF and ECB for help. However, it still took several months until May 2010 for the memorandum to be voted in parliament. The plan was supported by Pasok, the far right Laos and one vote from Dora Bakoyanni, a member of ND (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). Bakoyanni voted against party orders and therefore was removed from the party (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). ND allegedly voted against the memorandum because the deal could have negotiated better (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). The lack of confidence in politics of the public, the burden of the austerity measures and the protests within his own party prompted Pasok's leader Papandreou to a reshuffle of the government on September 7th 2010. The cabinet was enlarged from 37 to 48 members (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). The local elections of 2010 were all about the memorandum and the crisis, and Pasok intended to link results in the local elections to support for the government (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). Pasok won and interpreted it as a fresh mandate to continue the reforms (Dinas & Rori 2013: 272). Yet as the crisis went on and the necessary reforms were not completed, but instead direct cuts were ordered, public discontent rose and so did the opposition against the government (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). Instead of the left – right cleavage that had been dominant for decades, a new cleavage appeared, namely the pro- anti memorandum cleavage (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). Pasok came into more problems when party members in parliament broke with the party line and with the party itself (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). In the summer of 2011 protest and demonstrations increased, supported by the other political parties, including ND, who was still against the memorandum (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). Papandreou called a second reshuffle of the parliament and a mid term program was voted on in favor in June 2011 (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). On the 27th of October the second memorandum was made between the government and the European partners (Dinas & Rori 2013: 273). Papandreou tried to make a referendum about it, but the European partners warned that a referendum would only be held about whether Greece would leave the Eurozone. This fed speculations about the subject (Dinas & Rori 2013: 274). Now protests against the government were even starker and Pasok lost all support. To continue the austerity measures and

reforms, Pasok, ND and Laos, under Lukas Papademos, formed a new government. ND supported the government, but had no members in the cabinet (Dinas & Rori 2013: 274). ND did negotiate that new elections would be held in May, which undermined the effectiveness of the government, since the politicians were preparing for the elections (Dinas & Rori 2013: 274). Before the second bailout package was actually voted on in parliament, ND had radically changed its stance towards the bailout package and was supporting it now (Dinas & Rori 2013: 276). Furthermore, Laos withdrew from the government (Dinas & Rori 2013: 276).

During the period above, Dora Bakoyanni was the first, but not the only MP that was ousted from her party. Three Pasok members were forced to leave as well. Both camps founded new parties: Demokratiki Symmachia (Democratic Alliance, Disy) and Panellinio Arma Politon (Panhellenic Citizens Chariot) respectively (Dinas & Rori 2013: 275). Also other parties had to deal with defectors. Some members of Syriza with a more moderate view founded the Demokratiki Aristera (Democratic Left, Dimar) (Dinas & Rori 2013: 275). Furthermore, in Februari 2012 when the second memorandum was voted upon, 45 members of parliament of Pasok and ND were removed from their parties for dissenting with the party line (Dinas & Rori 2013: 276). Some of these members also founded new parties. The Anexartitou Ellines (Independent Greeks, ANEL) was formed by former members of ND. This party moved to a further right position, and was populist, nationalist but also catch all (Dinas & Rori 2013: 276). Members of Pasok joined Syriza or Dimar (Dinas & Rori 2013: 276).

In order to push through the austerity measures and to prevent disorder in the party, parties ousted all MPs who did not vote according to party line. This created instability for the parties itself, and chaos for the political system in general because new parties were created, of which not all lasted long. The ousting of politicians created the possibility for them to found new parties, of which some even gathered a substantial number of votes. The decreasing power of the mainstream parties and the decreasing confidence of the voters in them made that the newer parties gained influence. The fact that no party had a majority large enough to carry the burden of the crisis added to the negotiation power of smaller parties. This meant that a vote for a smaller party was not

necessarily a wasted vote, which created more possibilities for smaller parties to rise.

In conclusion, the economic crisis increased the instability of the political system in which new alliances, divisions, and cleavages were created. Politics became unstable and chaotic, with many MP's defecting and founding new parties, and sometimes returning to their original place. As a result, people lost all their trust in the mainstream parties to solve the crisis and either did not vote at all, or voted for other, smaller parties.

3.5. Reaction of Parties and Civil Society

Apart from the factors identified by Tilly and Tarrow other processes have been important and account for changes in politics that influence the possibilities for Golden Dawn to arise. Mudde argues in his book (2007) that the reaction of other political parties or civil society organizations can have a positive effect but even more strongly have a negative effect on the emergence of far right parties. In Greece, the political parties reacted negatively on the emergence of Golden Dawn. When ND realized what the effect was of their shift to the center they tried to regain the voters who were now drawn to Golden Dawn and the Independent Greeks, another new party on the right side of the spectrum. ND tried to reverse its course to the center and adopted a stronger law and order rhetoric (Dinas & Rori 2013: 277). It tried to copy Golden Dawn's nationalist discourse, while leaving out any references to Nazism (D. Christopoulos, personal communication, June 11, 2013). ND had to show that they do also adhere to nationalist ideas and that at the same time they are powerful, and thus a vote for them would be worth more (D. Christopoulos, personal communication, June 11, 2013). Whether these kinds of shifts in order to regain votes are successful is doubtful. Even though it might prevent some people to move to Golden Dawn, others would regard it as copying, and prefer the 'original' (D. Christopoulos, personal communication, June 11, 2013). Furthermore, ND went back to their previous strategy of capturing MPs from the right side, to minimize right side rivals. In some cases this has been successful, for example Dora Bakoyanni returned and some Laos members were incorporated, but the party Independent Greeks in which many former ND's

participated persisted (Vasilopoulou & Halikiopoulou 2013: 8). Also civil society organizations such as human rights NGO's as Aitima, have reacted negatively on the emergence of Golden Dawn. In addition, the media have been critical. This however did not seem to have much effect or even an opposite effect. The role of the media is further investigated in the next chapter on mobilization.

Another important feature is that Golden Dawn was not the first successful far right party. Laos already gained seats in parliament in 2007 and increased in size in 2009. Laos was more moderate than Golden Dawn, and did not have any connections to Nazism. As the first successful far right party, Laos has incorporated many different sections of the far right, including right wing people who are not so extreme (Georgiadou 2013: 84). What was beneficial for Golden Dawn is that Laos overplayed their hand by participating in the coalition government in 2011. This government negotiated the second bail out package, and even though Laos withdrew from the coalition, its supporters lost trust in that Laos served their interests best. Because of this participation Laos lost all support in the elections of 2012 and did not make the threshold any more.

The crisis had also an influence on politics in another manner. Because the parties and government had less to spend, the clientelist system was affected and could not be exploited as before (Ellinas 2013: 15). This increased the shift of voters to other parties (Ellinas 2013: 15). The elections of May 2012 starkly reflected the shattered political spectrum, seven parties gained enough votes to pass the threshold, while 20% of the voters voted for a party that did not make it (Dinas & Rori 2013: 278).

Finally, the financial and economic crisis had hit unexpectedly and much harder than imagined. That now such harsh measures had to be taken came as such a shock that it eventually would mobilize large parts of the country to protest the new policy (Lyrintzis 2011: 11). In the summer of 2011, the countries largest protests took place. Tens of thousands Greeks gathered at squares to protests the government. Important about these protests is the lack of violence often known in Greek protests, which made that not just the radical part of the population participated, but also the average Greek. This manner of protest was copied from the Spanish indignados (Tsiridis 2011; A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). Even though people from all over the political

spectrum protested and often did this together for the same goal, there were also clear divisions. Where on Syntagma Square the various left parties were involved in the protest, the communist KKE was absent. The right wing parties choose a different place to protest, namely Amalia street (Tsiridis 2011). Especially the minor parties could take advantage of these protests. They were free to participate in these demonstrations and put forward any policies and make promises about how they would solve the crisis. In the meantime, Pasok, and later also ND, were bound to the agreements with the troika and had no space to maneuver. Even if they disagreed with the policies they could not change them. The troika dictates the course of action with large consequences for every deviation. Therefore it was hard for the mainstream parties to compete with minor parties. This has also to be taken into account when examining the political instability and the defecting MPs. The parties were bound to the troika and thus the MPs of ND and Pasok had to defend and carry out a policy they might not have agreed with. Moreover, it seemed that the whole country was against these policies. For these MPs personally it might be more beneficial to join a party that was not part of the agreement, and could follow its own course and possibly attract more voters. ND and Pasok had little to defend their policy, except the long-term promise that austerity measures are necessary to get out of the crisis. In the short term however, the measures only seemed to make matters worse.

3.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, long-term elements of the Greek political system culminated around 2007 in a political crisis that lasts until now. The financial crisis has aggravated its effects, but did not cause them. The convergence of the two main parties, the clientelist system, the lack of tackling issues such as immigration and reforms all added to the political chaos and to the distrust and lack of confidence of people in politics. This crisis has opened the two-party system to smaller parties and new parties that have gained influence because of the need for coalitions. The move of the electorate away from the mainstream parties to both sides of the spectrum increased this tendency.

Chapter 4 Mobilization and Party Agency

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters first the supporters who voted for Golden Dawn, their attitudes and their affiliations were investigated and secondly, the structures, the environment and the processes that created possibilities for a far right party to emerge were explored. These chapters illustrate that there was room for a far right party in Greece and that the political and socio-economical situation favored the rise of a new far right party. However, even if the conditions are optimal, this does not mean that a particular party indeed gains popularity. A number of new parties emerged in the years before the elections of 2012, and not all of them made it over the 3% threshold and gained representation. There is a third element that contributed to the sudden and swift rise of Golden Dawn. For this to happen a party must exert its agency. It has to make use of the possibilities that are offered. This chapter delves into the actions of Golden Dawn, their campaign strategy and other manners in which they tried to capture their voters. It will show that the presence of Golden Dawn in the neighborhoods with a large immigrant population and associated problems was key to their popularity. The local citizens approved their presence and their actions to drive away the immigrants. This gained Golden Dawn enough voters to win a seat in the municipality council of Athens in 2010. It was a key point towards the general elections because this seat gained them both publicity as well as legitimacy. The party was now seen as a political party instead of a small, radical, social movement. From 2010 onwards they expanded their activities throughout the country, intensified their efforts in the capital city, while at the same time presenting themselves as a party with a full political agenda, instead of only an anti-immigrant party. To place Golden Dawn in its proper historical context, this chapter starts with a short overview of development and successes of the far right in Greece. Then it dives into the history of Golden Dawn as a movement and political party to what they have become at the present. Afterwards the success in the local elections in Athens will be explained by looking at how they presented themselves to the locals and how they used violence to 'secure' the

neighborhood. In the last part the expansion to the entire country is investigated. This is done by looking at the image Golden Dawn created of itself through food distribution events, the intensification of the violence against immigrants and their image in opposition to other political parties as anti-systemic and anti-establishment.

4.2. Far Right in Greece

Even though the far right is a trending topic in international research in Europe and much research indeed has been done, Greece is often left out. Not much case studies are done on Greece specifically nor is Greece often incorporated in cross-national studies. This is due to the lack of success of far right parties in Greece. Few parties made it into parliament. Yet there always have been movements in this area. In the following part an overview of the development of the far right in Greece since the dictatorship is given.

From the late 1960s to 1974 Greece was ruled by a right wing military dictatorship. After the dictatorship ended, many of the people involved were able to return to politics. The far right parties that have emerged since then are often related to this dictatorship. The parties that emerged in the first two decades after the establishment of democracy were mainly conservative, anti-left and 'nationally minded', but not as nationalist and concerned with the Greek identity as contemporary far right parties are (Ellinas 2013: 3). There have been several far right parties in that period. They were not able to garner many votes although some have made it to either national or European parliament. The most successful far right party was National Alignment. It was founded in 1974 after the referendum established democracy and discarded the monarchy. In 1977 it won 5 seats in the national parliament with 6.8% of the vote, but its members disbanded the party before the next elections (Ellinas 2013: 3; Georgiadou 2013: 78). New Democracy incorporated some of its MP's while others joined the Party of the Progressives (Ellinas 2013: 3; Georgiadou 2013: 78; Pappas 2003: 98). The Progressive Party was only successful in the European elections in 1981, in which they won 2% of the votes, which resulted in one seat (Georgiadou 2013: 80). In the national elections where people vote more strategically they won only 1.7% (Ellinas 2013:4). Another splinter group from National Alignment formed

the National Political Union (EPEN) that won in 1984 one seat in the European Parliament, but never one in the national elections (Ellinas 2013: 4; Georgiadou 2013: 81). Even though the party itself was not successful in the elections, they did have a large political and ideological influence on the far right parties that were founded after them. EPEN realized in the 1990s that the far right had to be renewed in order to gain more substantial representation (Georgiadou 2013: 81; Ellinas 2013: 4). Making use of the new European master frame, they changed their ideology and became more nationalist and more focused on the state as a nation (Ellinas 2013: 4). As explained in the previous chapter, one of the reasons why the far right was so weak in these decades is that New Democracy absorbed a large part of the far right vote and assimilated many of the far right candidates. In the new millennium it stopped this practice and thus far right parties had more chance to be successful. The first far right party that was successful in continuous elections was LAOS, which was founded in 2000 by former ND member George Karatzaferis (Ellinas 2013: 5). Laos belonged to the new wave of far right parties that gained in popularity across Europe (Ellinas 2013: 5; Georgiadou 2013: 82). The party's ideology was nationalistic, xenophobic and anti-immigrant (Ellinas 2013: 5). It accepted the neo liberal free market principles, but at the same time was anti-globalization and against the unlimited power of the financial market (Georgiadou 2013: 83). In the first years, Laos did especially well on the local level in Athens and Piraeus with 13.6%. In 2004 the party won representation in the European parliamentary and grew in 2007 to 3.8% and 10 seats in Europe and in 2009 5.6% and 15 seats in national elections (Ellinas 2013:5). During the same period its rhetoric became less anti-immigrant and the party even admitted the importance of minority rights (Georgiadou 2013: 83). Even though over the years Laos was the representative for many different groups of the far right (Georgiadou 2013: 84), in 2012 the party was diminished and won only 2.9 and 1.6% respectively in May and June (Ellinas 2013:5). This was mainly due to their softer rhetoric and their participation in a government with Pasok and ND, two parties that they before had opposed.

4.3. Development of Golden Dawn

While the part above explains the development of the far right in Greece, in this part we will look at Golden Dawn specifically. Much of the information known about Golden Dawn's history comes from Dimitris Psarras, a Greek journalist who has been following and writing about Golden Dawn since the beginning of its existence. Golden Dawn did not start as a political organization, but as a group of people who published a magazine with the name Golden Dawn. In December 1980 the first issue was published (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The magazine featured classic National Socialism and texts and ideologies inspired by Hitler and Goebbels (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The leader of the group was Nikos Michaloliakos. After the dictatorship had ended Michaloliakos had been involved in violent attacks and bombings in Athens against leftist activists where he provided explosives (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). He was convicted to a year in prison. While in prison he met with some leaders from the colonels' regime. In 1984, the former dictator Papadopoulos appointed Michaloliakos as the leader of the youth division of his party EPEN. Yet he left after a short period. Psarras blames this to the lack of ideology in the party. EPEN was aimed at gaining in influence, while for Michaloliakos the ideology behind the party was essential. Thus he started publishing again with the same group of people as a few years before (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). In 1984 the magazine turned into a political party called the *Peoples Coordination of Golden Dawn*. The organization was very small at the time and remained marginal. In the first years the party was still searching for the exact ideology they would adhere to. In the beginning they borrowed from the French GRECE (Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation Européenne) as well as the national socialist ideology (Georgiadou 2013: 85). In these years there was much debate and conflict among the right side in Greece over ideology and activism (Georgiadou 2013: 85). When the first party congress took place in 1990 their ideology conflicts had settled (Ellinas 2013: 6; Georgiadou 2013:85). At this time the Macedonian conflict was salient. Golden Dawn used this topic to show their presence and their nationalist stance. Many Greeks felt that the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) could not use the name

Macedonia in itself. New Democracy was also against this, since many people believed that FYROM could threaten the existence of the Greek part of Macedonia and that border conflicts would ensue (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Since many parties agreed on this subject, the nationalist stance of GD was not considered extreme. What did set GD from the other parties became clear in 1992, when GD used violence against internationalist and leftist elements. This continued over the next decade in Athens and also in the rest of Greece. The targets were usually young people who belonged to the left organizations (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Not much attention was paid to these violent incidents, until in June 1998 the attacks were almost fatal. Three students with left ideas were attacked, after which one of them almost died. This incident did generate a lot of media attention and politics was concerned who instigated this violence. Yet the attention faded over time (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Golden Dawn was not only active in Greece; they also expanded their activities to the international arena. Members of Golden Dawn have volunteered in the Balkan war and offered their services to Slobodan Milosevic. Some are said to have been active during the massacre of Srebrenica (Georgiadou 2013: 87).

4.4. Ideology

It is important to understand that Golden Dawn is a party with two faces, one for the members of the party and one for the public society (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The members are familiar with the ideology and adhere fully to it. Even though they do not use this word Nazi or Nazism, they do favorable comment Nazi ideas and leaders. The core of their ideology is the nation and the race, their ideal is a nation-state without other ethnicities. The state must exist only out of original Greek nationals, while nationality is only inherited through bloodlines (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Golden Dawn states that they do not neglect the differences and diversity in nature, but that they honor the inequality on intellectual, national and racial basis (Ellinas 2013: 8; Human Rights Watch 2012: 37). In an interview with Human Rights Watch, Michaloliakos compared the Greeks with the Native Americans three centuries ago in which he saw the

Greeks as the Apache and the immigrants as the cowboys. He said that Golden Dawn wants to save Greek identity and history (Human Rights Watch 2012: 37). The party is thus clearly xenophobic.

As mentioned in chapter 2 on theory, extreme right parties are nationalist or nativist, authoritarian and anti-democratic. Golden Dawn clearly has the first two characteristics, but whether they are anti-democratic is harder to define. The party positions itself outside of the political system, and denies the rules of democracy, yet in practice is very much part of it (D. Christopoulos, personal communication, June 11, 2013). The leaders had connections with the dictatorship in the early 70s and have a military internal organization. On their website in their manifesto Golden Dawn declares that they are against the plutocracy and prefer rulers who are worthy of ruling (Golden Dawn 2012). At the same time, democracy is a concept with has multiple forms and definitions. The party symbol is the Greek meander, a symbol that is used in Greece since early Greek history and the party slogan is: Blood, Honor, Golden Dawn.

The image towards the public is that GD is nationalist, but not fascist or nazi (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Golden Dawn presents itself as protectors of the Greek identity and Greek citizens and as understanding the people's hardship in these times. Also the supporters of Golden Dawn in the elections are different from the members of the party, since the former are much less radical. They are certainly not all Nazis (D. Christopoulos, personal communication, June 11, 2008).

Even though the party grew in popularity in the last years it is unlikely that large groups of people also join the party through membership. Golden Dawn has relatively few members, even in October 2012 Michaloliakos estimated it at 3000 (Ellinas 2013: 11). This can be explained by the difference between the party members and its voters. The party is a close group that does not accept just any one that is slightly interested. Becoming a member of Golden Dawn is a selective process. One must be referred to the party by at least two people who are already member (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The aspiring member is granted a one-year membership, in which he has to prove himself by being active for the party and showing his support for the ideology. One of the ways in which an aspiring member shows his or her loyalty

and determination is by attacking someone in the street, often an immigrant (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). This requires a determination and radical political view that few GD voters have.

4.5. First Success in Athens

Attention in Greece returned to Golden Dawn when they managed to win a seat in the municipality council of Athens in 2010. They won 5.29% of the vote (Ellinas 2013: 6). This is a turning point for the success of Golden Dawn and an important step for their success country wide (Ellinas 2013: 7; V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). Therefore, the next part will investigate how Golden Dawn managed to gain this seat. Michaloliakos won one seat in the council in that election. From that point onwards the party not only received more publicity, it also put Golden Dawn on the map as a real political party instead of a small organization or movement. It legitimized the party and caused it to be seen as an alternative to other parties. It was now officially in a representative body (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). The party won that seat because of their presence and their actions in some neighborhoods in the center of Athens where there were many problems with immigrants. As already mentioned before in the previous chapter, the increasing immigrant flow into Greece and the lack of policy and institutional adaptation created problems in the center of Athens where many immigrants clustered together. Golden Dawn presented itself in these neighborhoods as protectors of the Greek citizens, and as the only party who cared about the inhabitants. By chasing the immigrants away and taking over the role of the police, they gained popularity. This was the basis of their victory in Athens. The next part will examine this period in detail.

4.5.1. Citizen Protection

As explained more extensively in the previous chapter, the large number of non-registered immigrants that settled in the center of Athens created large social problems. Because of the clustering of immigrants, neighborhoods such as Aghios Panteleimonas, Attiki, and the area around Omonoia Square quickly changed in demographics. At the same time the area was degrading. It was an

area with very poor people, many people slept on the streets, and there were drugs users and dealers. The result was that the crime rate went up as well. For the original inhabitants of these neighborhoods this was very threatening. They felt unsafe in their neighborhood and homes. Moreover, there was no response from the mainstream political parties. They either did not recognize the problem, or did not develop a policy to deal with it. Golden Dawn saw their chance here. The party established its presence in these neighborhoods and thus won the sympathy of the inhabitants. It did this in several ways.

Since 2007/2008 Golden Dawn was present in these neighborhoods with about 300 activists (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). One of the ways they gained in popularity was by gaining influence in, or creating civil protection groups. These groups consist of inhabitants of the area that aim to make the area safer. At its peak there were about 20 of these grassroots movements in action. It is estimated that GD had influence in half of these (Georgiadou 2013: 89). These protection groups would patrol the area and keep it safe. If someone needed help, for example because he or she felt threatened, or if someone was being mugged, they could call the Golden Dawn instead of, or after calling the police (A. Pollatos, personal communication, April 26, 2013; SBS Dateline 2013). The protection groups of GD would then solve the problem, often using violence. People in these areas stated that GD was often faster at the scene than the police (SBS Dateline 2013). In addition to helping when an incident has happened, GD also acted preventative. An often-heard example is helping elderly citizens to go the bank safely, without being mugged (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013; A. Al Salech, personal communication May 14, 2013; SBS Dateline 2013). Thus, Golden Dawn presented itself as a very approachable, protecting party that helped people, while other parties were seen as the opposite and negatively.

4.5.2. Image

It is questionable to what extent this image corresponds to reality, while at the same time one can wonder if this is important. Even though the previous examples of Golden Dawn's visibility might be true, the extent to which this actually happened is not known. The attention the media has given these actions

might not be an accurate representation of the actual phenomenon. As Psarras found out, it might have been staged to some extent. When the newspaper Protothema featured the story of local Golden Dawn members providing protection to an elderly woman to go to the bank, Psarras discovered that the woman was the mother of the local Golden Dawn leader (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). At the same time, for the popularity of Golden Dawn it is not important whether these actions were frequent or not. The fact that people thought that Golden Dawn cared and that they understood the problem, and that Golden Dawn was willing to do something about it, already made that Golden Dawn gained the confidence of the local citizens. Image is more important than reality.

4.5.3. Violence

During these years Golden Dawn also showed their violent side. To solve the problems with the immigrants and to make the neighborhood safer, they 'cleaned' the streets (Ellinas 2013: 8). Patrolling during the day or night, they chased the immigrants away from the squares and parks, usually with violence. These parks are often the only place immigrants can go. The best-known example of such action is the cleaning of a playground square in Aghios Pantelomeinas in 2009 in which Golden Dawn attacked the immigrants, mainly Afghans, who resided there (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013 ; Human Rights Watch 2012: 10). Now painted on the ground, it says that only Greeks are allowed on the square (Human Rights Watch 2012: 37). As violent as it is, the inhabitants of these neighborhoods do seem to applaud this initiative. Human Rights Watch has investigated these practices and they found that people often felt insecure in their fast changing and degrading neighborhoods and flats (Human Rights Watch 2012: 34). Now that the immigrants have left they feel the area is safe and clean again (Human Rights Watch 2012: 34). In other instances, Golden Dawn is reported to invade the hospitals and demand both people working in the hospital as well as patients to show their residence or working permits. People who are not able to show these because they do not have them are thrown out (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013; SBS

Dateline 2013). Since Golden Dawn always operates in groups there is little the hospital personnel can do about this practice, even though they do not support it.

The strength of Golden Dawn in these neighborhoods is explained because they build on real existing problems. Both the state and the social sector had been absent in these areas (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). While it might be more logical that people would have discarded the violence of Golden Dawn, the people in these neighborhoods applauded the fact that someone took the law into own hands, because finally something happened (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). These neighborhoods became Golden Dawns stronghold from which they expanded their influence further in the rest of the country. In the literature on the far right these strongholds are, in addition to grassroots movements seen as important catalysts of the support for the far right (Mudde 2007; Georgiadou 2013: 89). In the center of Athens Golden Dawn established both catalysts.

4.6. Expansion throughout Greece

After the election of Michaloliakos in the council of Athens, Golden Dawn received more attention of the media, including the local media. They had established their stronghold, and were now slowly expanding to the whole country. New local offices were opened across the country (Ellinas 2013: 11). One of their activities with which they gained much attention and much sympathy of their prospective voters was by food drives. In these events the party distributed food to poor people. They had started this as small social distribution markets in the neighborhoods in the center of Athens (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). At that time they did not connect their name to these distribution events, so it was not generally known Golden Dawn was behind them (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). Later however, they expanded this activity and did promote it using their name. The distributions were often on a small scale, but every once in a while they did a large distribution, preferably in a public space such as Syntagma Square, to gain as much attention as possible. However, there is one catch to these distributions: only Greeks could profit. Everyone had to show their ID as proof of their citizenship (SBS Dateline 2013). Because of this discriminatory nature the

distributions are also controversial. Some mayors have indeed forbidden these kinds of actions because of the discrimination involved (SBS Dateline 2013; A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013).

A similar kind of action by Golden Dawn was providing blood to the hospitals. Here too the condition for the hospitals was that the blood could only be used for Greeks, not for foreigners (SBS Dateline, 2013). These actions were an important image building tool and a counterweight to the violent side of Golden Dawn. With these events the party demonstrated that it was involved with the people and that it had practical solutions or at least means to alleviate the people's hardship. They put this in contrast to the mainstream parties who are said to not care and just implement austerity measures without regard for the consequences for a lot of people.

In this period after 2010, Golden Dawn started to broaden their political program. They did not focus solely on the immigration problem with which they had so much success in Athens, they also began to manifest themselves in the area of economics. In the four weeks before the election of May, only an estimated 1% of all the articles on the website of Golden Dawn were related to immigration, while the rest concerned other topics (Georgiadou 2013: 88). The issue of economics revolved around the memorandum cleavage and Golden Dawn is strongly anti-memorandum. Thus they also participated in the demonstrations in the summer of 2011 around the parliament and Syntagma Square (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). According to Al Salech, after this summer and the protests in which parties of the whole political spectrum protested together, Golden Dawn was seen as a party as one of the others (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). And thus it was a legitimate party to vote for, without being ashamed to do so.

An advantage compared to the two major parties Pasok and ND was that Golden Dawn had an easy message for their voters. Without the baggage of previous government participation, and especially without having signed an agreement with the troika, GD could propose an economic program beneficial for their voters on the short term. Pasok and ND had to defend a policy that was

negotiated by the troika and over which they had little to say. This was a much harder and more difficult message to explain to the people. The government parties were under close examination of the European parties if they carried out the agreement and thus had little space to maneuver.

Another issue that helped Golden Dawn in gaining popularity is that the party made an image of itself as an anti-systemic party. They were never part of politics, let alone had been in government, and thus it was easy to pose that they were not responsible for the crisis and the bad situation Greece was in. They posited that if they would have been in government, all of this would never have happened (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The party emphasized that they are anti-establishment and not corrupt as all the other parties who do have power are (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). For their image they do disrupt the normal affairs by being rowdy and inappropriate (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). Also in the municipality council of Athens Golden Dawn made a name for themselves by being aggressive and making gestures and bringing many party members and such. But after a while, when his image was established, Michaloliakos changed his tactics and voted similar like the majority in the council and avoided provocation (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). The same seems also to happen in parliament (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013).

4.7. Violence

Even though the official party statements shifted their focus to the crisis, the members and citizen protection groups were still attacking immigrants. Even more, the level of violence and the number of attacks increased. The peak in violence came in the period after an immigrant killed a Greek man. Early 2011 a Greek man was attacked and killed in a robbery of his video camera while he was preparing to bring his wife to hospital for giving birth (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). This brought about such an anger that it was easy for Golden Dawn to play into this, and the following nights many immigrants were attacked. The incident was used as a legitimization of the

violence because the foreigners were shown to be violent. If the state would not handle it, then people should take the law into their own hands. Golden Dawn used these sentiments by becoming more openly violent.

A report of SBS Dateline Australia show Golden Dawn members destroying market stalls because its owners do not have the proper papers or a residence license (SBS Dateline 2013). Furthermore, Golden Dawn is seen to give history classes to young children to educate them properly in Greek history (Georgousis 2013; SBS Dateline 2013). That Golden Dawn will not draw a line at violence against immigrants became clear in a television debate. In an escalating discussion Golden Dawn MP Kasidiaris first threw water at a female MP from the left wing Syriza, after which he actually slapped a female MP from the communist KKE (SBS Dateline 2013).

There is no official record of how many people are attacked with racist motives. Even though NGO's have recently joined their separate figures to gain a complete picture, it is still an estimate. To have some idea: Doctors of the World director in Athens Nikitas Kanakis states that in the first half of 2011 about 300 people have sought treatment at the facilities of his organization after a racist attack (Human Rights Watch 2012: 10). Over the same period the head of the NGO Praksis, Tzanetos Antipas, states that they treated about 200 victims of hate crimes (Human Rights Watch 2012: 10). The Racist Violence Recording Network, that was set up to record the incidents of racist violence, documented in the period from January to September 2012 87 incidents against refugees and migrants. 73 of them happened in Athens (Racist Violence Recording Network 2012: 1). The top of the party officially denies the involvement of Golden Dawn in these attacks. However, involved NGO's and the network recorded that some victims recognized the perpetrators to be Golden Dawn because they wore the insignias with Golden Dawns symbol, the meander, or because they were seen participating in events organized by Golden Dawn (Racist Violence Recording Network 2012: 2).

Golden Dawn was not only physically violent; the discourse they used about immigrants was also hostile and degrading. Documentary maker Konstantinos Georgousis followed one of the candidates for the parliament for Golden Dawn during the general elections. In his documentary called "The

Cleaners”, instances of hostilities and degrading language are seen. The candidate and his supporters talk about the immigrants as parasites, as primitive and as subhuman. The references to cleaning them, cleaning the streets and turning foreigners into soap are frequent (Georgousis 2013). The success of Golden Dawn in stigmatizing immigrants is seen in the changing discourse of ND that copies the language of Golden Dawn and also begins to talk about cleaning the streets (Smallman & Mara 2013).

4.7.1. Function of Violence

The violence Golden Dawn used was both functional and symbolic. It was functional in the sense that it chased the immigrants away and made the immigrants so scared of the attacks that at a certain point Golden Dawn only had to show up somewhere for immigrants to leave. This gained Golden Dawn support from the neighborhoods because it made it safe, but of course did not solve the problem of the immigration flows. But except for functional, it was also symbolic. By demonstrating that they can solve the problems the state cannot, and by posing that they can protect the Greek people while the police cannot, they are illustrating their strength. They are saying to the people: you can trust us, where you cannot trust the state. We are more reliable than the police. Where democracy fails we will take it over and protect you (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). The message is that GD is efficient and effective, and will get things done, where or when the state cannot.

This message is strengthened by the impunity of Golden Dawns members and actions. At the same time, the relation with the state, especially in the form of the police, is a difficult one. Even though it is known who are responsible for the attacks on the immigrants, the perpetrators are almost never arrested, and if they are, they are often not convicted for the crime. There have been some arrests on charges of violence, but often people are released. Even though some high-ranking politicians and MP's are implicated Golden Dawn denies any involvement (Human Rights Watch 2012: 39). Until 2013 no one was sentenced for the attacks (Racist Violence Recording Network 2012: 3). This has multiple reasons. One is that immigrants often do not report the crime, because they do not have residence papers and are afraid that the police will arrest them and put

them in detention instead. This has indeed happened (Racist Violence Recording Network 2012: 2). However, the police are also reluctant to file complaints. Sometimes they argue that it is mandatory to pay 100 euro before filing a complaint. Sometimes they just ignore the people, sent them to other stations, or in other ways delay or deny the right to file a complaint (Human Rights Watch 2012: 78-81). An interesting notion is here that in some police districts up to 50% of the policemen have voted for Golden Dawn (Lambropoulos 2012). Furthermore, there are indications that Golden Dawn is helping the police. It has been suggested that during riots Golden Dawn members were fighting on the side of the police. Moreover, there are rumors that Golden Dawn is providing the police with equipment (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013). Indeed, the Minister of Citizen Protection in 2012 and 2009 to 2010 Chrysochoidis has admitted that Golden Dawn has ties with the police. In 2009 he has fired officers who clearly did Golden Dawn's bidding. However, he could not ensure that all ties were cut after this action (Human Rights Watch 2012: 41).

The Golden Dawn has not only relations with the police, they have connections with the deep state of Greece. This includes the church, the army and the justice department (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). This is due to the way Greece transitioned from the dictatorship to democracy (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013). The accomplices of the dictator in these various parts of the state have not been removed or investigated. This makes Golden Dawn more powerful and influential, with supporters at important places. Golden Dawn receives large sums of money in order to sustain their campaign, the food distributions, etc. Yet it is not clear where this money comes from (A. Al Salech, personal communication, May 14, 2013; V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013).

4.8. Media

As always in politics, the media are important for the election campaign of a political party. However it is hard to investigate its effects. Furthermore, in this specific case it is hard to investigate properly how Golden Dawn was presented in the media, or how they have used the media even for their message. Due to my

lack of knowledge of the Greek language, I could not do research in this area. Yet some others have said something about this topic. Ellinas states that the major news channels have ignored Golden Dawn, however smaller local stations and online sites as well as the written press have spent time on them (Ellinas 2013: 17). The use of violence is often a major issue in these coverings, while others highlight the “social work” (Ellinas 2013: 17). Whether the negative press covering has had a positive or negative influence is hard to say. The reader might not agree with the tone of the article and even then, a negative article is still publicity. Georgiadou mentions on this topic that because the far right is often ignored in the regular media, internet sources and social media are very important to them (Savvopoulou 2011). The refusal of the mainstream media to publish about Golden Dawn might also have reinforced Golden Dawn's image of anti-systemic party. The media are not looked favorably upon by everyone, and are said to belong to the establishment. The neglect of the party by these media might turn out positive for Golden Dawn (M. Zanni, personal communication, April 17, 2013). Because of the twofaced image of Golden Dawn and the mixed representation in the media, it might have been possible for people, who did not pay a lot of attention to it, to not have been informed about the Golden Dawn's close relation to Nazi ideology. However argues Psarras, after the first election in May, much more attention was paid to this side and it certainly became clear to everyone (D. Psarras, personal communication, April 26, 2013).

4.9. Conclusion

This chapter shows how Golden Dawn made use of the opportunities the situation in Greece presented. Immigration and the bad economy shaped the conditions, but Golden Dawn actively used them. They framed their actions in such a way that the party was seen as solving the problems and as an alternative to the mainstream parties. The lack of action from other parties gave them the possibility to show that their party was different. It was hard for the mainstream parties to effectively compete with GD since they were bound by government responsibility and were pressured by the European partners to carry out harsh austerity measures. With their food drives and protection of citizens Golden Dawn was able to show that the party was close to the people, that it listened to

them and support them in these hard times. The violence the party members used was accepted because immigrants were seen as a problem, as a burden and as lesser humans. Generally the far right fares well on political protest. More than mainstream parties the far right is able to relate to this protest and the attitudes of anger and dissatisfaction (Savvopoulo 2011). These attitudes are often against the mainstream parties and thus by positioning the party outside of the mainstream, the far right can be an outlet for these attitudes. It needs to become the main protester around which the others organize themselves. In this way it is not necessary to propose policy that will solve the problems, it just needs to justify the protests (Savvopoulo 2011). By doing this, the protests and the attitudes of the people are seen as legitimate. Golden Dawn managed to do exactly this.

Yet Golden Dawn also gained in popularity in neighborhoods where immigrants were not a real presence or creating problems, nor where the neighborhood was degraded. This has two reasons. Firstly, it is not necessary to be threatened to feel threatened. After 2010 immigration was a salient topic throughout Greece and the discourse had spread all over the country. Therefore people did not need to experience the insecurity, to have the same attitudes towards immigrants as people who did (V. Georgiadou, personal communication, June 1, 2013). Secondly, according to Karydis the support for Golden Dawn across the country shows that the party was able to appeal to different groups of people at the same time. Many groups of society who are angry at the state or distrust the government feel represented by Golden Dawn or see in Golden Dawn a party that represents their interests best (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013). These are all marginalized groups who regard Golden Dawn as their way out of this marginalization; because of Golden Dawn they are no longer stigmatized as much (V. Karydis, personal communication, May 23, 2013).

Conclusion and Discussion

This research has investigated the mechanisms behind the sudden rise of Golden Dawn in Greece. It has focused on the voters of Golden Dawn, the contextual variables and the political system as well as the agency of Golden Dawn itself. It has shown that the main elements were the lack of confidence of the Greek population in the mainstream parties, the political crisis aggravated by the economic crisis, social problems caused by immigration, and the active positioning and framing of these issues by Golden Dawn. The first three elements formed the background and the opportunities that Golden Dawn could make use of in their positioning of the party as an alternative to the mainstream parties. All these elements are complementary and interdependent. Golden Dawn adapts its strategy to the 'objective' context and the voter attitude, while at the same time influencing the perception of this reality and influencing voters' attitudes.

In 2007 and 2008 the first signs of a political crisis start to show. People lose confidence in the political parties, due to clientelism, corruption and changes in the political system. In the last decade the two major mainstream parties have shifted on the political spectrum so that the system is now converging, instead of polarizing. Even though in elections they are still the main adversaries, in government their policies have become very similar. The functioning of the government aggravates this effect. The Greek state is weak and inefficient which makes the promised reforms difficult to implement. This adds to the political unrest. The political crisis is further aggravated by the financial and economic crisis. The huge debt and the budget deficit of Greece bring the country on the edge of a bankruptcy. By involving the EU, ECB and IMF a plan of harsh austerity measures and reforms is composed, to save the country. Yet it also brings about large protests and demonstrations of the Greek population, and continued political unrest. Members of Parliament that defect from the party line are ousted, especially from the two major parties ND and Pasok. New parties are formed, coalitions needed and new elections announced. Confidence in politics and in the two major parties in particular decreases even more. In the meantime, Golden Dawn has become popular in Athens. In the last decade immigration flows have increased dramatically while the institutions responsible for processing asylum applications and administering residence papers have not increased their capacity. This resulted in long waiting lists and chaos. Many immigrants were forced to sleep with many people in small

apartments, or even on the streets. They clustered together in the same neighborhoods in the center of Athens. Because of this, these neighborhoods changed in demographics quickly and became degraded areas. The residents felt threatened by these changes and saw a political field that ignored the issue. Golden Dawn however, was present in these neighborhoods. They set up or joined citizen protection groups that protected the citizens of these areas by for instance providing a safe guard when someone needed to go to the bank. They also came into action when someone called when they were robbed. Moreover, they went out and cleaned the streets of immigrants. They chased them away, often with violence. This made Golden Dawn popular enough to gain a seat in the Athens municipality council in 2010. In the following period, Golden Dawn expanded throughout the country. Many local offices were opened and the party gained attention with food distribution events and blood drives, to benefit the Greek only. The intensity of the violent attacks on immigrants increased while at the same time the party shifted its focus to other issues, such as the economy. The party participated in the demonstrations against the government and the austerity measures and managed to become a cluster of protest. They created an image of an anti-establishment party that emphasized that they were never in parliament before and thus were not part of the corruption scheme. This image made that not only people who favored their extreme right ideology were supporting the party, but also people who were for any reason against the mainstream and the current parties in power. This is corroborated by the analysis of where Golden Dawn's voters come from, which is from across the spectrum, even on the left side. Eventually the rise of Golden Dawn is the result of many factors coming together. The political system opened up for the far right because New Democracy no longer coopted members of the far right party, the political crisis created possibilities for new parties to emerge and for smaller parties to gain influence since no party had an absolute majority any more. The economic crisis aggravated the problems already present in the Greek system and distorted the clientelist system, which increased the electoral volatility. Golden Dawn made use of these opportunities and jumped into the gap that the immigration created because parties paid little attention to its problems. This last part is indeed important. For a far right party to emerge and certainly for Golden Dawn, which already existed for 30 years, it is not only enough that the contextual variables are creating possibilities. Indeed, in 2000 another far right party, Laos, was created. This was the first far right party in Greece that gained

representation in parliament for two consecutive elections. Thus, in these years there was indeed a possibility for a far right party, albeit a more moderate one, to emerge. But Golden Dawn, even though it existed and took part in the elections, did not gain many votes. Being on the ballot is not enough to be chosen. The electorate needs to regard a party as a viable political party and as the best option to vote for considering their personal interests, beliefs and attitudes. For Golden Dawn to make this happen was by becoming visible in the first place. Even though the party existed for a long time, and had been in the news in some circumstances, it was not an established political party, and had never before gained representation in any political body. This was a first important step. In a time of economic prosperity with a well functioning government and effective policies, this would have been much harder, if not impossible to do for an extreme right party with Nazi ideas. But this is not to say that in any economic crisis a far right party immediately comes up as the third largest party in the polls, as Golden Dawn is at the moment.

In research on the far right and even on Golden Dawn the particular interaction between the structure and the agency of the party is underexposed. Research on Golden Dawn specifically focuses on the background of the party and its violent tactics and also mention the activity of the party in the center of Athens, however, this is often not taken as an important element. It is mentioned, but the interaction with the other elements lack despite this interaction being so important. The party was able to become popular in the center of Athens, because the problems immigration caused and because the political elite did not solve these problems. Golden Dawn was able to 'own' the immigration issue, by actively constructing a discourse and making it their priority and an important issue in the municipality campaign. In comparison, the other far right party, Laos, had been an anti-immigrant party, but while Golden Dawn politicized the immigration issue, Laos tuned down on their rhetoric and became more mainstream.

The POS theory of Tilly and Tarrow introduced in chapter 1 was only partly applicable to the emergence of Golden Dawn. Only some of the properties described by them were found to be of essence in Greece. The instability of political alignments and the openness of the regime to new actors had a large influence on the rise of Golden Dawn, while the other factors were not present or did not have an impact. This might be the case because the theory is primarily explaining social movements and not political parties. Muddes adaptation of Tilly and Tarrow's theory proved to be more suitable and

a good complementation to the POS theory. Especially his political and cultural structures gave good indications of what elements in politics were important for the emergence of a far right party. Convergence and polarization in Greek politics were of major importance in creating opportunities for Golden Dawn.

At the beginning of this paper two sub questions were posed. Firstly the puzzle was put forward how a party could gain popularity so quickly after years of no electoral success. This is due to the unique composition of factors and the falling together of all pieces of the puzzle. Because of the structural, political and economic elements there was space for new parties while because of the immigration problems Golden Dawn was in a position to make use of these opportunities. If any of these factors had not been present, Golden Dawn might not have entered parliament. At the same time one cannot wonder, with so many factors involved, how these compare to each other and which ones were crucial for the suddenness of the rise. A decisive element was the immigration problem. It was possible for Golden Dawn to connect to the voter and position themselves in the neighborhoods, because the issues their campaign was based on were real problems. Golden Dawn might have exaggerated the problems, and gave direction to the feelings of unrest by providing a certain discourse that blamed a certain part of society for these issues. However, there were problems in these areas. People really felt threatened and uncomfortable. Golden Dawn did not create these feelings and attitudes, but they were able to make these issues a salient topic of the election, while receiving ownership of the topic. Because they were the first party that paid attention on such a scale and so overtly, people saw Golden Dawn as a party that prioritized migration, in contrast to the other parties. It is unlikely that Golden Dawn would have been able to catch the attention of the population on other issues. The economic crisis was the main issue of the elections, but Golden Dawn did not have a divergent view from many other parties, and thus no means to distinguish itself. The party would probably have gained little publicity campaigning only on economical issues.

Also the political system and processes have been of great importance for the creation of opportunities for the rise of Golden Dawn. Due to the political crisis the two major parties lost much support. This was aggravated and increased by the economic crisis. Yet the economic crisis has not been directly of influence for the far right. The link between economic hardship and the rise of far right parties is too weak. In Greece this is

illustrated by the fact that not only Golden Dawn gained in popularity, also other parties across the political spectrum increased their votes. The economic crisis decreased confidence in the major parties that had been in government, in favor of multiple minor parties. Yet not all parties were able to increase their vote, and new parties arose, but not all have made the threshold. This supports the importance of the party agency and its success in mobilization.

The second subquestion of this paper is how a party that is associated with violence and Nazism is able to gain so many votes. This question is hard to answer and difficult to prove. The theory chapter explained that after the 1980s far right parties could become accepted again because they had changed their master frame. Ideologically speaking Golden Dawn is more related to the old master frame than the new one, because it does consider Greekness to be inherited through biology and blood, rather than upbringing and culture. Yet despite this, it was able to become popular. Does this mean that this old master frame is accepted again? Or is Golden Dawn an exception in exceptional circumstances? Or is Greece a special case in which the biological racism has not been discarded completely yet? This question is difficult to answer with the information obtained in this research. An explanation can be that Golden Dawn did not propagate their biological racism ideas, so that people did not think of it. Another explanation is that immigrants in Greece would be discriminated against in either master frame. The majority of the immigrants is not adapted to the Greek culture, thus is neither by blood nor by culture considered to be Greek. The last explanation is that people ignored that Golden Dawn had Nazi ideas because of the severity of the situation. Immigration was a real problem for the people in certain areas, and many people also outside these areas felt this way, even though they personally were not affected directly. The amount of immigrants entering Greece is very high. The economic crisis brought many people in severe financial difficulties without much hope for quick improvement. This hopelessness might have prompted people to ignore the Nazi side of Golden Dawn and to downplay its existence. People might have wanted a radical change or rather a party that seems to listen to their wishes and interests, instead of Europe's.

It will be interesting to see what will happen to Golden Dawn now that they are in parliament and it remains to be seen if they are able to hold on to their seats in the

next election. The party is at the moment posing that they are anti-systemic, that they are different than the other parties, because they have never been in government and because they do not adhere to the political order and the political morals. They exploit this image so people vote for them to give the other parties a kick in the back, to wake them up. This is also illustrated in their behavior in parliament and the council. They are considered rude, take guns with them to the parliament, loudly protest against the other parties and make scenes. Yet, after a little while, the party starts to calm down, they might still shout for the audience, however in parliament itself they are looking for partnerships, they are voting along with the majority and they are not as half as 'anti' as they pose to be. They behave like a normal party and not as radical as before. On the other hand, because of their rhetoric, they do have a large influence on the political scene. Many voters do not notice how parties actually vote in parliament, but only see what is happening outside of that arena.

Golden Dawn was able to gain seats because of the crises in Greece. Yet what happens when these are over is unknown. Will voters just as easily return to their previous parties or to a new two party system that may arise with New Democracy and Syriza? Or will Golden Dawn retain their voters' share and continue to have influence? Knowing what will happen in the long term might also shed new light on the emergence of Golden Dawn in the first place. If the voters turn down on Golden Dawn in the upcoming elections, it seems that their attraction was more their anti-establishment and the ability to shake things up than their ideology and policies. After all, the voters who voted for Golden Dawn do not all adhere to the ideology of GD. 44% is close to it, 37% is neither close nor far away from it and 15% admits to feel far away from its ideology, yet still voted for the party. This means that despite their ideology, Golden Dawn had other features that made this party attractive for voters. At the same time, the emergence of a far right party is something different than its sustenance, as is regarded in the research on the subject and can also be seen in the history of Greece. Many far right parties have come up, but few have existed for more than four years. Other elements play a role for the popularity of a party over time. It might be that Golden Dawn disappears as suddenly as it came.

Bibliography

Aitima. (n.d.). *Fighting Racism*. Athens.

Arzheimer, K. (2009). Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980-2002. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53:2, 259-275.

Athens mayor raps fascist bullying. (2011, January 18). Ekathimerini. Retrieved from:

http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite1_1_18/01/2011_373932

Blee, K.M. (2007). Ethnographies of the Far Right. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36:2, 119-128.

Dinas, E & Rori, L. (2013). The 2012 Greek Parliamentary Elections: Fear and Loathing in the Polls. *West European Politics*, 36:1, 270-282.

Eatwell, R. (1998). The dynamics of right-wing electoral breakthrough. *Patterns of Prejudice* 32:3, 3-31.

Ellinas, A.A. (2013). The Rise of Golden Dawn: The New Face of the Far Right in Greece, *South European Society and Politics*.

European Commission, Eurostat (n.d.). *Decisions on asylum applications by citizenship till 2007 Annual data (rounded)*. Retrieved July 1, 2013 from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.

European Commission, Eurostat (n.d.). *Government deficit/surplus, debt and associated data [gov_dd_edpt1]*. Retrieved July 1, 2013 from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.

European Commission, Eurostat (n.d.). *Immigration by sex, age group and citizenship [migr_imm1ctz]*. Retrieved July 1, 2013 from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.

European Commission, Eurostat (n.d.). *Inability to make ends meet (source: SILC) [ilc_mdes09]*. Retrieved July 1, 2013 from

- http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.
- European Commission, Eurostat (n.d.). *Unemployment rate by sex and age groups - monthly average, % [une_rt_m]*. Retrieved July 1, 2013 from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.
- Georgiadou, V. (2013). Right-Wing Populism and Extremism: The Rapid Rise of “Golden Dawn” in Crisis-Ridden Greece. In R. Melzer & S. Serafin (Eds.), *Right-wing extremism in Europe: Country analyses, counter-strategies and labor-market oriented exit strategies* (pp. 74-101). Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Georgousis, K. (2013, March 6). The cleaners: the true face of Golden Dawn [Video file]. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltSved6UH48>
- Human Rights Watch. (2012). Hate on the Streets: Xenophobic Violence in Greece. United States of America: Human Rights Watch.
- I-Graphics.gr. (n.d.). Greek Legislative Election 2012. Retrieved July 19, 2013 from <http://www.igraphics.gr/en/multimedia/2012/06/elections2012b>.
- I-RED: Institute for Rights, Equality & Diversity European Network. (March 2012). *Annual Report 2011: Combating racism, xenophobia, intolerance*. Retrieved from <http://www.i-red.eu/?i=institute.en.publications.285>.
- Ivarsflaten E. (2007). What unites right-wing populists in western Europe? :Re-Examining Grievance Mobilization Models in Seven Successful Cases. *Comparative political Studies* 41:1, 3-23.
- Kitsantonis, N. (2009, May 15). Athens squat becomes focus of migration row. *Kathimerini: Athens Plus*, p. 4.
- Kitschelt, H. (2007): Growth and Persistence of the Radical Right in Postindustrial Democracies: Advances and Challenges in Comparative Research. *West European Politics*, 30:5, 1176-1206.
- Lambropoulos, V.G. (2012, May 11). Ένας στους δύο αστυνομικούς ψήφισαν «Χρυσή Αυγή». *To Vima*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tovima.gr/afieromata/elections2012/article/?aid=457088>

- Lyrintzis, C. (2011). Greek Politics in the Era of Economic Crisis: Reassessing Causes and Effects. *Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe*.
- Malkoutzis, N. (2008, December 12). Teenager's death sparks devastating riots across Greece. *Kathimerini: Athens Plus*, p. 4.
- Mavrogordatos, G.T. (1997). From Traditional Clientelism to Machine Politics: the Impact of PASOK Populism in Greece. *South European Society and Politics*, 2:3, 1-26.
- Minkenbergh, M. (2013). The European radical right and xenophobia in west and east: trends, patterns and challenges. In R. Melzer & S. Serafin (Eds.), *Right-wing extremism in Europe: Country analyses, counter-strategies and labor-market oriented exit strategies* (pp. 9-33). Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Books Online.
- Mudde, C. (2010): The Populist Radical Right: A Pathological Normalcy. *West European Politics*, 33:6, 1167-1186.
- New spate of fires burning parts of Greece. (2008, July 25). *Kathimerini: Athens Plus*. Retrieved from:
<http://wwk.kathimerini.gr/kath/entheta/extra/AthensPlus/25-07-2008.pdf>
- Pappas, T.S. (2003). The transformation of the Greek party system since 1951. *West European Politics*, 26:2, 90-114.
- Pappas, T. S. & Assimakopoulou, Z. (2012). Party Patronage in Greece: Political Entrepreneurship in a Party Patronage Democracy. In P. Konecky, P. Mair & M. Spirova (Eds.), *Party Patronage and Party Government: Public Appointments and Political Control in European Democracies* (pp. 144-162). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Patra ponders solutions after clashes at factory housing migrants. (2012, May 23). *Ekathimerini*. Retrieved from:
http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite1_1_23/05/2012_443527

- Public Issue. (June, 2012). *Greek elections June 2012: Voter Demographics*. Retrieved from <http://www.publicissue.gr/en/1689/greek-elections-6-2012-voter-demographics/>.
- Racist Violence Recording Network. (2012). Findings 1.1.2012-30.9.2012. UNHCR: Athens
- Rydgren, J.(2005). Is extreme right-wing populism contagious? Explaining the emergence of a new party family. *European Journal of Political Research* 44, 413-437.
- Savvopoulo, Z. (2011). Vassiliki Georgiadou – The formation of the European far-right [interview with Vassiliki Georgiadou]. *Re-public*. Retrieved 28 April 2013. <http://www.re-public.gr/en/?p=5028#more-5028>.
- SBS Dateline (2013, May 21). Thug Politics [Video file]. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUcB4BQ5oLI>
- Shashati, A. (n.d.). Enar Shadow Report 2010-2011: Racism and related discriminatory practices in Greece. European Network Against Racism.
- Smallman, G. & Mara, K. (2013, April 21). Into the Fire: The Hidden Victims of Austerity in Greece [Video file]. Retrieved from: <http://intothefire.org>
- Special Eurobarometer 393: Discrimination in the EU in 2012. (2012). European Commission. http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_393_en.pdf.
- Spies, D & Franzmann, S.T. (2011). A Two-Dimensional Approach to the Political Opportunity Structure of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, 34:5, 1044-1069.
- Standard Eurobarometer 78. (2012). European Commission.
- Tilly, C. & Tarrow, S. (2007). *Contentious Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tsiridis, G. (September 2011). The Peculiarities of the Greek Crisis: Democracy, Protest and Contention in Syntagma Square. *Transform! European network for alternative thinking and political dialogue*. Retrieved from: <http://transform-network.net/journal/issue-092011/news/detail/Journal/the-peculiarities-of-the-greek-crisis-democracy-protest-and-contention-in-syntagma-square.html>

- Van der Brug, W. & Fennema, M. & Tillie, J. (2005). Why some anti immigrant parties fail and others succeed: a two step model of aggregate electoral support. *Comparative Political Studies* 38:5, 537-573.
- Varvaressou, Y. (2008, June 13). Forest policy under fire. *Kathimerini: Athens plus*. Retrieved from: <http://wwk.kathimerini.gr/kath/entheta/extra/AthensPlus/13-06-2008.pdf>
- Vasilopoulou, S. & Halikiopoulou, D. (2013): In the Shadow of Grexit: The Greek Election of 17 June 2012. *South European Society and Politics*.
- Vernardakis, C. (February 2008). From a two-party to a multi-party system. *Transform! European network for alternative thinking and political dialogue*. Retrieved from: <http://transform-network.net/journal/issue-022008/news/detail/Journal/from-a-two-party-to-a-multi-party-system.html>
- Vasilopoulou, S. & Halikiopoulou, D. (2013). In the Shadow of Grexit: The Greek Election of 17 June 2012. *South European Society and Politics*, 1-20.
- Ziel, van der, A. (2013, July 16). Grieken staken tegen ontslagplan. *De Volkskrant*, p. 13.
- Zoakos, C.M. (2012). Eye-Popping Greek Corruption: And the collusion between Athens officials and EU interests. *The International Economy*, p. 18-20.

Interviews:

- Afrodite Al Salech, May 14, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Pasok far right and Golden Dawn specialist.
- Aris-Galinos Pollatos, April 26, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Member of political party Dimar.
- Dimitris Christopoulos, June 11, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Assistant Professor Political Science and History at Panteion University in Greece and Vice President of the Hellenic League of Human Rights.

Dimitris Psarras, April 26, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Journalist specialized in Golden Dawn.

May Zanni, April 17, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Member of New Democracy, deputy international relations secretary.

Vasileios Karydis, May 23, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Ombudsman deputy in charge of Human Rights.

Vassiliki Georgiadou, June 1, 2013, in Athens, Greece. Professor Political Science at Panteion University in Greece. Specialization Far Right.