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***The Greek Crisis and Its Cultural Origins: A Study in the Theory of Multiple Modernities* by Manussos Marangudakis (with Theodore Chadjipadelis), Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, Cham, Switzerland, 2019. ISBN 978-3-030-13588-1, 460pp, hardback: 83,19 €.**

Over the last few years, academic debates have sparked in the social sciences concerning the ways the global recession of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century affected democracies around the world. Their emphasis on political, economic or cultural effects and causes matters for sociologists interested in cultural and political ontology or the interrogation of the epistemic basis of such ontological processes (i.e. how crises develop and take catastrophic hold over particular institutions and polities). *The Greek Crisis and Its Cultural Origins* interrogates why, unlike other European states, Greece did not recover from its post-2008 economic slide, on the contrary, its civic spheres experienced a collapse. Drawing mainly on a combination of Jeffrey Alexander's inflection of the Yale 'strong programme' of cultural sociology, with Shmuel Eisenstadt's 'multiple modernities' thesis, Manussos Marangudakis and Theodoros Chadjipadelis review previous scholarly explanatory frameworks of Greek delayed modernisation. Standing between these explanations that favour external structural factors in the deepening of the crisis (i.e. the interests of European debtors in deepening it) and internal ones (i.e. entrenched cultural patterns informing the organisation of

Greek political life), they ask: to what extent did collective habits and moral worldviews rooted in Greece's historical experiences halter its progress and harmonisation with modernity?

Part I presents Greek cultural orientations from the institution of the Modern Greek state (1830) to the date, whereas Parts II and III examine them quantitatively through Chadjipadelis' 'Geometric Data Analysis', which visualises relations between these orientations. The epistemological rationale is based on Eisenstadt's (2003) genealogical reading of pathways to modernity. With an emphasis on the ways dominant cultural patterns are crystallised into plausible civilizational configurations, the study concludes that Greece's cultural worldviews did not predetermine its civilizational development, but 'affect[ed] the course of [its] social configuration only in a conjunction with, and through the development of, the semi-autonomous social network of power' (Marangudakis and Chadjipadelis, 2019: 428). It was not Greece's historically-embedded code orientations in clientelism, amoral familism (i.e. the prioritisation of family above communal/societal interests) and anarchic individualism *per se* that precipitated the economic meltdown, but their opportunistic mobilisation in specific national policies. The focus on such mobilisation patterns, which produced or reinstated hegemonic networks of social action across the country's political spectrum, corrects Michael Mann's economic explanation of crises.

Previous etiological investigations into Greek economic self-destruction, which date back to the *Metapolitefsis* (1974) or political restoration from the dictatorship of 1967-1974, present a recurring weakness, according to Marangudakis and Chadjipadelis: their

proponents recognise Greek structural pathologies as ‘lacks’ - of rational organisation, bureaucratic efficiency, rational ethos or civil-social solidarity. Such analyses are plagued by an internal contradiction: on the one hand, they identify in cultures of clientelism the main obstruction to structural change; on the other, the root of delayed modernisation is identified in Greek culture’s entrapment between an ultra-conservative attachment to ancient Greek civilisation as the cradle of European values and the enduring institution of Christian Orthodoxy as a second state. Marangudakis and Chadjipadelis argue for a focus on ‘culture-as-morality’ and a monitoring of the ‘structure of culture’ (mores, habits, symbolic orders and codes) (ibid., 431). Greek culture’s ‘schismogenetic’ nature or symbolic organisation around contestations and social breakdowns, is attested in Greek advocations of emotive visions of democracy or authentic egoistic action. Both patterns are understood as ‘pathological’ – indeed, Marangudakis and Chadjipadelis suggest a radical symbolic reorganisation of civic-religious and institutional-religious attitudes for the improvement of Greek civic culture.

The study’s methodological ‘middle ground’ is less affiliated with Eisenstadt’s work and more with anthropologist Michael Herzfeld’s (1993, 2005) Weberian thesis on the symbolic roots of Western democracy and the structural affiliation between institutional and civic performances of belonging. This has inspired other studies of Greek modernity that debate precisely the cultural contradictions and consequences on which the present monograph develops its thesis (e.g. Tzanelli, 2008, 2011; Mazower, 2008). Against Herzfeld’s globalised outlook, the present monograph is a valuable resource specifically for students of *Greek culture*, because it advocates Greek exceptionalism in terms of civilizational development – a contested thesis in modern Greek studies. Also,

the authors' identification of a cure to modernisation in the moralisation of Greek culture mirrors Hannah Arendt's ethics of action, which subordinates culture to politics. The classical-sociological resources of Marangudakis and Chadjipadelis' methodological portfolio (Weber, Durkheim and even Eisenstadt) and their overall conclusion (Greece should modernise according to civic codes) appear to endorse in parts Greece's Westernisation and Europeanisation without further discussion of the very histories on which they base their analysis. As an exercise in structural sociology, the study raises as many questions as it attempts to answer – the symptom of an exciting, if controversial piece of work.

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