

Chapter 1

Approaches to the Post– WWII Labour–Based Social Economy of Greece

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ABSTRACT

The current crisis in Greece, an EU member for over 30 years, has brought to the surface the character of the Greek politico-administrative system as it handles employment, migration and associated forms of social protection. The lack of a unified national labour system does not allow the formation of a national system of employment (qualifications) and, hence, a way to overcome nepotism and the political (party) patronage system which defines labour relations, under the extra-ordinary political situation that emerged after World War II (WWII). This chapter explores this hidden reality defining the organisation of the employment system in Greece, its politico-administrative controls that seem to aim at ‘arresting’ the emergence of a social economy. This leads to a hidden social economy of a fragmented private labour market, regulated separately from the secure “public” employment sector. This rather anachronistic and discriminatory system of political order of labour divides workers in Greece.

PREAMBLE

Relations between states and their citizenry are not, in general, uniform or even homogenous. Political history, historical continuity and discontinuity in national democratic forms, with their associated notions of social citizenship, constitute and subsequently define methodologies with which we may approach the quality of the relationship between citizens and public administration in a national and, subsequently, supra-national territory.

In Greece, the conflict between society (*Gesellschaft*) and the juridical order (*Verfassung*) has involved since WWII a regime which has been exceptionally embedded within a quasi-military apparatus of “administrative provisionality”, acting in a welfare manner only for those who were “politically correct” partners. Welfare (political and social inclusion measures, particularly for employment and social

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security) meant the right of entry to an employment relationship within the state nomenclature. Political inclusion as social protection was provided, through salaried employment affording wage protection within areas of particularly established political power while keeping lip service to vocational qualifications. Political trust was and still one might say rules the day to the detriment of a system of skilled based division of labour to form conditions for territorial competitiveness.

ASPECTS OF THE POST WAR POLITICO-ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

Post WWII Civil War conflict in Greece (1947-49) and the Military Dictatorship (1967-74) (Alivisatos 1986; Tsobanoglou 2011) resulted in a breakdown of the social contract, which is necessary to support the civil state and its institutions. The institutions built after those turbulent periods did not include all (as effective citizens), but as described above, developed two types of Greek citizenry. The first was founded upon the “protected” public sphere (of a state/public nomenclature), and the second upon the “unprotected” private (social) sector. During the post Junta period (after 1974), both internal and external forces imposed a new politico-administrative order that only partially renewed the social contract. EU accession (1981) was to secure Greece’s transition to democratic rule which was nevertheless embedded within this dual system. The privileged and socially protected public employment domain was characterised by nepotistic clientelist relations that over-determined the national division of labour. Similarly the private sphere, while being influenced by public procurement, lacks labour standards as it is outside the general social security system reserved for the public domain.

Sources of conflict thus were not eliminated, creating, firstly, a mass labour exodus, largely for political and economic reasons, to Germany, Australia, South Africa, Belgium, Sweden, the USA and Canada. All in all, while the post-war European States were building social citizenship systems, placing emphasis on the development of social (support) professions that began to occupy public space in place of the previously dominating military professions, Greece was not following that trend. After WWII West European States witnessed the slow growth of civil and social administrations that took over in employment, from the military sector predominant until then due to the war effort. Similarly, civil protection that was under “security” administration constraints, due to war conditions, began to be as socially inclusive for the whole of the population and as democratically accountable as was the new post-war institutional order.

Historically the trend, in OECD countries, towards social protection and an expansive and largely inclusive national employment policy with generally accepted standardised employment and social security systems across the public and private spheres has entailed arrangements for the social regulation of conflicts in labour affairs, as well as for dealing with problems such as child care, nursing, primary health care and general social service provision, and leading to the organisation of civil administration at local/territorial level.

Unfortunately, the turbulent political history of Greece from 1936 (Metaxas Fascist Regime) to the restoration of Democracy in 1974 led to a hydrocephalic military security apparatus, with a quasi military form of civil (public) order and protection. The Police (Public Order Ministry), the Fire Brigades, the Coast Guard and the Ministry of Merchant Marine were situated in this apparatus and were reproduced by the norms and administrative regulations of the politico-administrative system.

Although the above-mentioned situations fostered the establishment of conditions for legal rule, as prescribed by the constitutional and other civil systems, they did not necessarily allow the establishment

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