

Greece: A Modern Semi-Colony

***The Contradictory Development
of Greek Capitalism and Its Failed Attempts
to Become a Minor Imperialist Power***



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

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The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Some Specific Features

By Michael Pröbsting

This book is dedicated to all those who devote their lives to the working class' liberation struggle and to the building of the revolutionary world party without which this liberation struggle can not win.

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Introduction

The question of the class character of Greece is of crucial importance both for the domestic as well as for the international workers movement: Is it an imperialist state, a semi-colonial country or something else, and what are its specific features?

The importance of this question arises from the intensity of the class struggle in Greece during the recent years. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that what the Arab Revolution has been for the world in the past few years, Greece has been for Europe. While the former has been the region of the world with the most advanced class struggle since 2010, Greece has played this same role for the European class struggle.

The Greek workers' movement and left are divided on the issue of the country's class character. Some argue that Greece is a minor imperialist power while others argue that it is a dependent or semi-colonial country. There are also some who characterize Greece as a sub-imperialist state.

Such an analysis is often used to justify certain tactics. Various reformists and centrists, who consider Greece as dependent, use the country's backwardness as an excuse for their opportunism with regard to Greek nationalism and their adaptation to the Greek bourgeoisie. Others, who consider Greece as an imperialist or a sub-imperialist state, use their analysis to justify sectarian tactics.

The RCIT has elaborated the analysis that Greece is an advanced semi-colonial country with some specific features.¹ We endorse the historical characterization of Greece by the Trotskyist Fourth International which stated in 1945: *"Greece is undoubtedly among the most backward and poorest countries of Europe. For over a century it has been condemned to the status of a semi-colony of the major European Powers."*²

It retained such a dependent position in the decades after World War II. We recognize that Greek capital has made serious attempts to become a minor imperialist power during the 1990s and 2000s. However, in the end it failed to overcome its backward character and remains a dependent country subordinate to the European imperialist powers.

Hence, we support the slogan for Greece's exit from the EU and the Eurozone

1 We first elaborated our analysis of Greece's class character in a pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting: *Revolution in Griechenland. Möglichkeiten, Gefahren und Perspektiven*, November 2011; in English: *Perspectives on the Greek Revolution. Greek tragedy is the lack of revolutionary leadership of workers movement! For Workers' Councils, Workers' Militias and a Workers' Government!* <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-revolution-or-tragedy/>

2 The Editors of Fourth International: *Civil War in Greece*, February 1945, in: *Fourth International, Volume VI, No. 2*, <https://www.marxists.org/subject/greek-civil-war/fourth-international/1945/02/x01.htm>

and combine this with a transitional program for socialist revolution. The European workers' movement must mobilize against the colonialization of Greece by the EU-Troika and support the Greek resistance. At the same time revolutionaries should oppose Greek chauvinism in all its various forms. This includes the need to support the rights of Greece's migrants and national minorities as well as to oppose the expansion of Greek capital into the Balkan countries.³

The following study will present a more detailed analysis of the contradictory development of Greek capitalism, its failed attempts to become a minor imperialist power and its present situation as an advanced semi-colonial country with some specific features. Finally, we will discuss the most important programmatic conclusions of this analysis.

We hope that the present publication will provide a useful contribution to the discussion among revolutionaries in Greece in order to clarify the class character of Greece and the consequent tasks. We await feedback and criticism from our Greek comrades in arms.

Finally, we wish to express our special thanks to comrade Gerard Stephens who performed the English-language editing for this book.

³ We refer readers to the numerous statements and articles in which the RCIT has outlined its analysis and perspective for the Greek class struggle in the recent years. They have been published in various issues of our international journal *Revolutionary Communism* and are collected in a special subsection on Greece on our website: <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/articles-on-greece/>