RESEARCH ARTICLE

'Betrayed Believers': The Target of Influence of Extreme Right-Wing Minorities

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Informed by Mugny's theorization on minority influence (Mugny, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991; Papastamou & Mugny, 1983), this paper discusses the ideological profile of the target of influence of a minority that does not challenge the system (such as extreme right-wing minorities), but confronts those held responsible for its disintegration. It is argued and empirically verified in a study with Greek participants (N = 333) that, in times of crisis and instability of the social order, people who believe in the core values of the system and who are frustrated by its disintegration support more extreme right-wing beliefs and violent practices than those who challenge the system or who are supporting it. The results highlight the ideological heterogeneity of the population to whom minority influence is addressed, which are discussed in the context of the rise of extreme right-wing beliefs in Greece and in Europe.

Following Solomon Asch's (1956) and Serge Moscovici's works (Moscovici, 1976, 1980; Moscovici, Mucchi-Faina & Mass, 1994; Moscovici & Mugny, 1987), the subject of social influence gained a central position in social psychological theory and research (Butera & Mugny, 2001; Martin & Hewstone, 2010; Mugny, Falomir-Pichastor, Quiamzade, 2017; Papastamou, Gardikiotis & Prodromitis, 2017). In a period where struggles for social change were happening, Moscovici's work opened the question of when, and how, minorities were able to influence, and thus promote, innovation and change. Another key theoretical development that influenced the domain was the work of Gabriel Mugny and his collaborators in Geneva (Mugny, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991; Papastamou & Mugny, 1983). The present paper is informed by this initial work. Mugny's theorization (Mugny, 1982) suggested that processes of influence take place not between two (majority-minority) entities, but between three entities with different relationships amongst them. One of the central propositions of this theoretical model was the differentiation between the majority in terms of Power and the numerical majority called Population. This distinction is very important since these two entities (Power and Population) relate through processes of domination and/or hegemony. In other words, either the Majority-Power uses force to make the numerical majority, the Population, to conform to their beliefs and values, or the Majority Power is

hegemonic and thus the Population embraces the beliefs of the Power even if they are against its own interests. In Mugny's theorization, Power is the social group that dictates the social norms and rules, whereas the Population consists of a fabric of several groups and social categories, an entity alienated through its internalization of the dominant ideology (Papastamou & Mugny, 1985). The theory assumes that the relationship between Power and Population can be changed when another entity, a Minority, openly challenges Power and seeks to convince the Population to join them in a struggle against it. The theory, following Moscovici's path, was concerned with minorities that bring innovation. It was suggested and empirically validated that a Minority that seeks to bring change needs to maintain the conflict with the Majority-Power; it should expose the relationship of domination between Power and Population and ultimately influence the Population to follow their suggestions for change (Mugny & Perez, 1986). This model explains, therefore, a social situation when a Minority is involved in a normative conflict ultimately transformed into a power struggle with the Majority-Power. The minority breaks with Power and the ideology it supports. To win this struggle, the minority needs to triangulate the conflict (in order to get the support of the Population) and to politicize their identity. This politicization constitutes a prerequisite for collective action (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). In our own work on the Communist Manifesto (Chryssochoou & Volpato, 2004), we have shown how the communication of a minority involved in a power struggle includes these aspects: a) the contextualization of intergroup relations and the triangulation of the conflict, b) the definition of

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the identity of the Majority-Population and the acknowledgment of shared grievances, c) the definition of the Minority's identity as that prototypical part of the population that can lead the struggle, and d) the maintenance of the power struggle against the adversary, the Majority-Power.

As said, this model, explains well the processes of influence of a minority that conflicts with the ideology of the Power and seeks to break its hegemony and produce social change. Following this theorization, research sought to understand when minorities can exert influence either directly or indirectly, and focused on the characteristics of the source, the message, and ultimately the conflict. Mugny and collaborators brought into the discussion of minority influence the idea that what we need to study is the framework of influence: the way people perceive the tasks, the relationships between the different actors, and how conflict is elaborated (Perez and Mugny, 1993).

In the present paper we draw on these theoretical propositions to bring into the discussion two related points: a) the presence of a minority that is not ideologically innovative, yet comes into conflict with Power, and b) the fact that the population is not homogeneous and thus there are different potential audiences of the different minorities.

Conservative vs. Innovative Minorities, Their Conflict with Power, and Their Potential Audience

The model of minority influence is based on innovation and looks at the degree towards which minorities challenge the status quo and propose an alternative model to it. As said earlier, it concerns a normative conflict. However, in recent years we have observed in Europe a rise of extreme right-wing populist movements that manage not only to exert latent influence by putting their agenda (for example: anti-immigration) at the core of politics, but also to exert direct influence as evidenced by the rise in their electoral results. In Greece, in particular, the neo-Nazi party of 'Golden Dawn' appeared for the first time in elections in 2009, obtaining 0.26% of the votes. In the elections of 2012, however, this party received on average 6.95% (May 6.97%, June 6.92%) and maintained this percentage in 2015 (Jan. 6.28% and Sept. 6.99%). This is a considerable increase of influence.

In this paper, we are not looking at the processes of social influence exerted by this type of minority, but we are interested to see what constitutes the ideological profile of people that could be their potential audience. In order to do this, we need to describe the conflict raised by the conservative minorities.

Unlike what could be considered a 'classic' minority, a conservative minority does not propose an alternative way of looking at the social reality. It upholds the same values and rules that Power has managed to make hegemonic. For example, in liberal societies characterized by capitalism, one such idea is meritocracy (Wright, 2001; Wright & Boese, 2015). People believe that individual effort will palliate social disadvantage and that they could be socially mobile. This idea sustains the system of inequality between social groups, since people try individually to change their condition. However, it also gives people the impression that they control their fate and that their opportunities are open. A conservative minority will not challenge this idea and insofar that the system upholds its promises, it will not break with Power. Conservative minorities may, in this context, be in conflict with the innovative minorities that want to change the status quo, or with individuals and groups that, in their view, threaten the ingroup with their practices, their weaknesses, or merely their differences.

However, in times of crisis when the social fabric disintegrates, a conservative minority faced with economic and social threats may appear challenging Power. Their conflict, though, is not normative. They put into question the capacities of the political establishment to keep their promises and they blame the establishment for their incompetence and perhaps corruption. Losing the idea of control of their life, people may start thinking that omnipotent forces govern, that politicians and elites are at the service of these forces, that the media equally are dominated and lie consistently. Their conflict with Power is not about the norms but about their own representation. They may feel betrayed and not represented. In this context, a conservative minority that upholds beliefs about order and discipline, that blames openly the failing establishment (Power) and offers explanations of this failure may gain influence. This minority explains the decadence of the system by the presence of weak, immoral, or culturally different individuals and groups that wanted to change it. They blame the tolerance and the democratic rules that allowed the presence of these people and the development of these ideas. They use the democratic rules and procedures to come into power positions (through elections) but they accuse these rules for allowing the disintegration of the system. In other words, these minorities justify the system but challenge the way that it is upheld and the way their interests are represented.

Is there an audience ready to listen to the claims of this minority? What is their ideological profile? This is what this study aims to explore in the context of the Greek society.

The context of the study

Between 2009 and 2015, the economic crisis hit Greece. In the 2009 elections, the right-wing party of New Democracy was defeated by the Socialist party of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), who assured everyone that there was money to keep the level of living at the existing standards. However, a few months later (April 2010), the Prime Minister, G. Papandreou, announced that the country was unable to fulfill its obligations and asked help from a mechanism that emerged for the first time in Europe that included the IMF, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission. His and subsequent governments voted in tough austerity measures, and very soon Greek society found itself in an economic, social, political, and humanitarian crisis. It is in this context that the neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn increased their influence. At the same period, another minority, 'Syriza', of left-wing orientation who had earned 4.60% of the

vote in 2009, increased its influence considerably in 2012 (May 16.78%, June 26.89%). During this period, the two minorities addressed the population with different messages, albeit with a common rejection of the austerity measures and the memoranda of agreement between the Greek government and the so-called Troika (IMF, ECB and EU Commission). Both minorities increased their appeal and, thus, we could assume that their message and their strategies were successful. Their influence surprised the political establishment within and outside the country. On the one hand, the political establishment was becoming anxious by the support that a left-wing group was gaining. On the other hand, the extreme right-wing support to Golden Dawn was taking votes from conservative parties and their allies.

Undoubtedly Golden Dawn, with its extreme messages and symbols in a country that suffered from Nazi occupation, presented a danger for democracy in Greece with its violent actions against immigrants. The fact that they also opposed austerity and memoranda gave the political establishment (hereafter Power) the opportunity to try to 'silence' the left-wing opposing force by developing the 'Theory of the Two Extremes'. Thus, politicians of the governmental side and media alike proposed that society and democracy were endangered equally by the two groups. The parties in government were characterized as being part of the 'constitutional arc', whereas both Syriza and Golden Dawn were excluded. This is a well-known strategy (Bar Tal, 1990; Volpato, 2011; Volpato & Durante, 2003) to delegitimize the message of the left-wing group by association with a neo-Nazi, criminal association, and they were considered not only anti-systemic but also anti-democratic. In parallel, this association gave Golden Dawn a so-called anti-systemic character which, along with the fact that they were represented as 'strong', made them attractive to a part of the population, including young people, that was looking for vigilantism. With this strategy, the ideological nature of the messages and actions of the two groups were somehow equated and the emphasis was put on the fact that they were 'extremes'.

Equating left-and right-wing beliefs is not new to social psychology (Rokeach, 1956, 1960). This association might have served a period characterized by the Cold War and it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss counter-arguments that have been already expressed (Billig, 1976). The point here is not to look at the content of the messages of the two groups, nor is it to determine whether agreement with their beliefs presupposes a certain cognitive style. We argue that these minorities address different audiences among the Population. We set up to investigate whether there is a distinction at an ideological and emotional level amongst the population that would form different audiences of these minorities.

In this exploratory study we set to investigate ideological profiles that might be open to the messages of the different minorities (Conservative vs. Innovative). These profiles will be formed according to perceptions of the crisis and emotional and practical reactions to it, as well as beliefs about the social order and its disintegration. We will also assess beliefs about the superiority of one's nation and about class hatred. Forlin (2013) presents a historical analysis of the fascist phenomenon in Italy and mentions that Mussolini's fascist movement combined beliefs about the Italian Nation with beliefs of class hatred. Thus, it seems important to see whether there is a similar ideological pattern. Finally we will measure a key aspect of liberal societies, namely the belief that there are opportunities for individual mobility and that the boundaries between groups are not closed (Wright 2001; Wright & Boese, 2015).

Further, following our argumentation about the context in which conservative minorities can thrive, once the groups will be formed we will look whether they differ in terms of demographics (material position), perception of the context as threatening, disappointment from national and European politics, system justification, and political positioning in terms of left/right politics. Ultimately, we will measure endorsement of fascist beliefs and violent practices in order to investigate whether the emerging profiles are differently associated with these beliefs.

We argue here that a part of the population are agnostic to politics and, in times of crisis, they may attribute the crisis to individuals, groups and mismanagement, and they might believe more in conspiracies, identify more with the nation, and believe in meritocracy. These people might endorse right-wing, conservative beliefs that sustain social hierarchies, leadership, and power; they may be opposed to diversity; they may value discipline and obedience and may believe that violence is justified to support these values and keep the social order. These people may form the audience of a conservative minority. Another part of the population may constitute the audience of an innovative minority. These people may attribute the crisis to the system itself and opt for collective solutions, be less ethnocentric, and believe less to meritocracy. In turn, they will less endorse conservative beliefs and the use of violence. These people could be the target of an innovative minority. Finally they might be a part of the population whose perception about the crisis is mild and hold intermediate positions in all ideological variables. These people could be the target of influence of Power.

Method
Participants and Procedure
Data collection took place between December 2013 and April 2014.[1] The opportunity sample included only Greek citizens. From the 400 people approached, 333 completed the questionnaire, 172 men and 161 women aged between 19–84 years old (mean 42.60; median 42 years old). Almost half of the participants were married (46.9%) and had children (50.6%). More than half of the participants had higher education degrees (55%) or had completed secondary (24.5%) or technical (13.9%) education. Only few had a primary education certificate (6.6%). Most participants were working for the private sector (75.5%) and only 22.7% were public sector employees. A small number (1.9%) declared doing voluntary work. Regarding their working status, a little less than half of the participants declared working full time (43.5%) whereas 4.6% declared being part-time workers. Moreover, 17.3% were

retired, 15.1% students and 9.9% unemployed, which is much less than the percentage of unemployment in Greece at the time (27.5% December 2013 Eurostat). Finally, 3.1% took care of their families at home. The median family income per year was between 20.000 and 30.000 Euros.

Participants were approached by interviewers that handed a questionnaire to them for self-completion. They were presented with a series of statements and were asked to carefully read them and indicate their level of agreement using a seven-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Once the questionnaire was completed, it was handed to the interviewer in a sealed anonymous envelope.

Measures

The questionnaire included a series of measures in order to investigate how participants viewed the social situation and the social order in Greece. In that respect we used items that investigated *perceptions of the crisis* in Greece and <u>reactions to it</u> that were previously used in other research (see Chryssochoou, Papastamou & Prodromitis, 2013). These concerned 20 items of attributions of responsibility for the crisis, 23 emotions generated from the crisis, and seven measures to exit the crisis (see also Prodromitis, Chryssochoou & Papastamou, 2017).

Another series of items concerned *perceptions of the disintegration of the social order*. This measure included 15 items aiming to assess feelings of disintegration of the social fabric (i.e. 'Today in Greece there is political polarization'; 'oday in Greece there is a civil war climate'), perceptions of severe problems that are not regulated (i.e. 'One of the biggest problems in Greece is corruption', 'One of the biggest problems is that laws are not respected'), and perceptions of the crisis as a master strategic plan (i.e. 'the current situation of the country is part of a conspiracy plan from particular groups that act secretly').

Eleven items assessed *beliefs about the national group* and *beliefs about class hatred and immigration*. These beliefs corresponded at extreme positions of ethnocentrism, class hate feelings and extreme feelings about immigration. They were included in the questionnaire because they were in the popular everyday discourse as truisms announced without argumentation and historically they were part of fascist ideology (Forlin 2013). Examples of these items are: 'When in Greece we had civilization in other countries barbarism was dominating,' 'The only true civilization was the Greek one of which we are the descendants', 'Immigrants are responsible for unemployment,' 'The real enemy of the people is the capitalistic system that aims to dominate them,' and 'One cannot befriend people from classes that are one's opponents'.

Another aspect that was assessed were *beliefs about the possibility of social mobility* in Greece with two items: 'In our society whoever tries hard succeed,' that denoted open boundaries between groups for social mobility, and 'In our society even if somebody has the skills if he/she does not originate from upper classes he/she will not succeed,' that denoted closed boundaries between groups.

Since the crisis changes people's everyday life in unexpected ways, and to assess the context in which conservative minorities might influence, *feelings of no control or fate control* of one's life were also assessed with two items (seven-point scale where 7 = Totally agree): a) 'I do not control different aspects of my life' and b) 'my life depends on the intervention of divine and metaphysical forces.' Another aspect that was measured were feelings of temporal relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976; Guimond & Dambrun, 2002; Runciman, 1966) ('In relation to 2009 my family's financial situation is today in a [1 = much worse, 7 = much better] condition') and in relation to what people feel they deserve ('I believe that I deserve much more than what I have at the moment'). We also assessed feelings of personal *economic vulnerability* with 5 items as in Staerklé, Delay, Gianettoni and Roux (2007). Participants' *political self-positioning* on a 10-point scale ranging from 1 = extreme left to 10 = extreme right was also measured. Furthermore, *national identification* was measured with six items adapted from Taylor and Lambert 1996; Verkuyten and Thijs 2002 (i.e. 'Being Greek is important to me', 'I feel strong ties with other Greeks'). Seven items looked at *system-justifying beliefs* in Greek society (i.e. 'Greece is a fair society for all', 'Everybody has equal opportunities in Greece'). In order to assess disappointment with national politics, we also looked at how people *felt about the post-dictatorship years in Greece*. In 1974, with the end of the dictatorship, the regime changed by referendum to become a Parliamentary Republic headed by a President. The period after the referendum, called *Metapoliteysi,* is currently put into question in media and popular discourse concerning the functioning of the State. The fulfillment of the expectations of this era concerning prosperity, democracy, security, redistribution of wealth, and strength of institutions and rights were assessed with five items. The fulfillment of the same expectations regarding prosperity, democracy, security, institutions and rights and solidarity among European nations were also assessed concerning the European Union[2] with a similar scale. A single additional item measured whether people expected that the EU will save Greece from the current financial situation.

In order to assess whether a particular group of people were more prone to conservative-fascist beliefs and violent practices, a series of items were constructed and measured on seven-point scales (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). 31 items assessed conservative beliefs adapted from the Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) F scale, from Duckitt and Bizumic (2013), from the Four Items F scale (Lane 1955), and from beliefs that circulated in websites of extreme right wing organizations in Greece (i.e. 'An able leader can save the country beyond any law', 'The most important things that children should be taught is obedience and respect of power', 'Abortions should be done only for medical reasons', 'Greece cannot nurture all foreigners arriving here'). Furthermore, 19 items assessed violent practices that took place in Greece recently, or beliefs about violent resolution of conflicts and treatment of groups (i.e. 'Violence is sometimes efficacious to solve disagreements between groups', 'Only with violence immigrants will understand that they are undesirable in the country', 'Protesters destroying banks is justifiable', 'The reaction to bullying should be violent').

Results

Perceptions of the Social Situation in Crisis-ridden Greece

We conducted a series of exploratory factor analysis (Principal Component Factor Analysis, or PCA) with oblimin rotation in order to capture a more synthetic view of the different aspects of the perception of the social situation. From the PCA of the 20 items concerning *attribution of responsibility for the crisis* (KMO = 0.799), three factors that explained 50.27% of the total variance were retained. The first factor (eigenvalue 5.28 and variance 26.38%) included nine items that blamed the economic and political system and powerful groups (for example: the EU, powerful EU countries, USA, capitalism, globalization, banks, and employers). After assuring satisfactory reliability (α = 0.88), a new variable was created by the mean score of these items and was named *global power-system*. The second factor (eigenvalue 2.76 and variance 13.80%) included seven items that attributed responsibility to groups of people and the Greek mentality (i.e. workers, union leaders, employees of the public sector, immigrants, left-wingers). Again the reliability being satisfactory (α = 0.69), a new variable was created by averaging the scores of the relevant items and was named *social groups and mentality*. The third factor with the remaining four items (eigenvalue 2.02 and variance 10.08%) concerned particularly the attribution of responsibility to Greek governments (past and present) and the Greek state. Its reliability being satisfactory (α = 0.73), the items were averaged into a new variable named *Greek state and governments*. Examination of the mean scores of these factors showed that participants first attributed responsibility for the crisis to the Greek governments (*M* = 6.06), next to the global powers and system (*M* = 5.20), and then to the different social groups and the Greek mentality (*M* = 3.98). Three factors were also retained from the PCA of the *emotions* generated by the crisis (KMO = 0.851) that explained 49.55% of the total variance. The first factor (eigenvalue 6.95 and variance 30.20%) included nine emotions that denoted fear, frustration and helplessness (i.e. fearful, humiliated, sad, frustrated, helpless, hopeless). Given their strong reliability (α = 0.84), the items were averaged on a new variable named *fear-frustration*. The second factor (eigenvalue 2.82 and variance 12.24%) included seven emotions that denoted feelings of optimism, decisiveness, and efficacy based on combat (decisive, trustful, with optimism and solidarity, combative, calm) that were averaged following a reliability check (α = 0.82) into a new variable named *positive emotions-optimism*. Finally the third factor (eigenvalue 1.64 and variance 7.11%) included the remaining seven emotions that denoted anger and disappointment (i.e. angry, indignant, threatened and disappointed). These emotions formed a new factor (α = 0.81), labeled *anger*, by averaging their scores. Examination of the mean scores of these factors showed that participants felt 'anger' (*M* = 5.42) and then they were 'positively optimistic' (*M* = 4.74) and finally 'fearful-frustrated' (*M* = 3.75). A two-factor solution explaining 54.35% of the total variance was retained from the PCA (KMO = 0.746) on the *measures to be taken in order to exit the crisis*. The first factor (eigenvalue 2.47 and variance 35.23%) included

five items pertaining to *collective solutions* (i.e. collective struggle of workers, all Greek together should fight, solidarity and organization in neighborhoods) and following reliability check (α = 0.68), these items were computed into a new variable by averaging their scores. The second factor loaded two items: 'Each person with one's family should try to get through the crisis', 'Give the governance to foreigners' (eigenvalue 1.34 and variance 19.14%). The items of this factor denoted a more *individualistic* view and the willingness to let external forces take the government. These items were also averaged to create a new factor (*r* = 0.22. p < .001). Collective solutions were generally more agreed upon (*M* = 5.45) than individual ones (*M* = 2.57). The fifteen items of the perceptions of the disintegration of the social order were also submitted to a PCA with oblimin rotation (KMO = 0.764). Three factors were extracted, explaining 55.39% of the total variance. The first factor (eigenvalue = 4.73 and variance 31.53%) included five items assessing perceptions of polarization and division in the Greek society. After a satisfactory reliability index (α = 0.79) these items were averaged to form a new variable labeled *polarized climate*. The second factor (eigenvalue = 1.93 and variance 12.84%) included four items that concerned perceptions of the crisis as a conspiracy plan. After testing the reliability (α = 0.73) a new variable was computed by averaging their scores and was labeled *conspiracy*. Finally, on the third factor (eigenvalue = 11.65 and variance 11.01%) loaded six items that assessed feelings of disintegration of the political system (i.e. corruption, no respect of legality etc). The reliability being satisfactory (α = 0.73), these items formed a new variable labeled *disintegration* by averaging their scores. In general, participants thought that this disintegration was more severe (*M* = 6.05) than the conspiracy (*M* = 5.22) or the polarization-division (*M* = 4.73). It has to be noticed though that all factors were above the mean point of the scale. The 11 beliefs about the national group, immigration, and class struggle were subjected to a PCA with oblimin rotation (KMO = 0.790). The analysis yielded two factors that explained 53.49% of the total variance. The first factor (eigenvalue = 4.56 and variance 38.03%) included the five ethnocentric items and the two items against immigrants. After testing for reliability (α = 0.84), a new factor was computed by averaging the scores of these items and was labeled *ethnocentrism-against immigration* (*M* = 3.54). The second factor (eigenvalue = 1.86 and variance 15.46%) included four items about class hatred. Their reliability being satisfactory (α = 0.68), the scores of these items were averaged in order to produce a new variable called *class hate* (*M* = 4.17).

Profiles According to Beliefs about the Perception of the Situation in Greece, the Social Order, and the Disintegration of the Social Fabric

The factors emerging from the previous analyses on the perception of the social situation in Greece, the beliefs about the social order, and the disintegration of the social fabric, as well as the two questions regarding social mobility, were used in a combined way to define a typology of people. For that purpose we used k-means clustering, a method adapted for grouping together similar cases. This

method groups together participants and maximizes similarities within and dissimilarities between categories. We did not have particular theoretical reasons to anticipate a specific number of clusters apart from the different audiences of conservative, innovative minority, and Power explained earlier. Thus, three groupings were requested in order to obtain high, low, and intermediate 'believers' of the different aspects we were measuring. (See **Table 1** for means and standard deviations.)

The most numerous group (third cluster, *n* = 126) included people that in most factors agreed less than the other groups. In comparison to the other groups, people in this group attributed the crisis less to *global-power and system* and to the *Greek state and governments*. They reported being less fearful, frustrated, and angry; they believed less in collective solutions to exit the crisis; they agreed less than the others that there was a polarized climate in Greece. They also agreed less that there was class hatred, and that in Greece social membership impeded mobility. They were high, although less than the second group, in attributing the crisis to other groups and to the Greek mentality, in ethnocentrism and against migration, and in believing that who ever tries hard succeeds in Greece. Finally, they scored equally high with the second group on positive emotions, on individualistic solutions to exit the crisis, and to give governance to foreigners. This profile corresponds to people that, in general, legitimize the system as it stands and therefore, for the sake of this presentation, were called *pro-system*. The second more numerous group (first cluster, *n* = 121) included people that held almost-opposing beliefs to the *pro-system* group.

They attributed the crisis to 'Global power and system' and to the 'Greek state and governments' (albeit in equal level with the second cluster). They were less optimistic than the other two groups, but also equally high in fear, frustration, and anger with the second group, and more than the *pro-system* participants. They attributed the crisis less than the other profiles to 'other groups and Greek mentality'; they were less ethnocentric and against migration; they believed less than the others that effort could be a means to success in Greece, or that individualistic solutions were a way to exit the crisis. They were high, but less than the second cluster, in exhibiting class hatred, believing that the social climate in Greece was polarized, and that the crisis was the outcome of a conspiracy. Moreover, they believed equally with the second cluster in collective solutions to exit the crisis. Given their profile and the differences they had with the *pro-system* group, participants with this profile were named *system challengers*. The third cluster (*n* = 82) had slightly different characteristics than the other two. They were characterized by their higher attribution of the crisis to 'other groups and Greek mentality', their higher 'Ethnocentrism and against migration', their higher belief in effort as a mean to social mobility, their belief to class hate and to the disintegration of the social fabric, their belief to a conspiracy explanation of the crisis, and to the polarized climate of Greece. They shared with the *pro-system* participants, however, positive emotions and optimism, and they equally believed that individualistic solutions should contribute to exit the crisis. They also shared a number of beliefs with the *challengers of the system* that were somehow contradictory with some

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of the Three Groups on Perceptions of the Crisis and the Situation in Greece and of the Social Order.

	Group A *Challengers*	Group B *Disaffected*	Group C *Pro-system*
Attribution to Global power-system	5.64 (0.84)[a]	5.75 (0.83)[a]	4.40 (0.98)[b]
Attribution to Groups and mentality	3.65 (1.0)[a]	4.38 (1.03)[b]	4.03 (0.84)[c]
Attribution to Greek-State and governments	6.37 (0.77)[a]	6.40 (0.67)[a]	5.54 (0.99)[b]
Fear-frustration	4.28 (0.96)[a]	4.05 (1.13)[a]	3.42 (1.11)[b]
Positive Emotions-Optimism	4.20 (0.98)[a]	4.85 (1.15)[b]	4.83 (1.06)[b]
Anger	6.05 (.1.04)[a]	5.94 (0.99)[a]	4.72 (1.36)[b]
Collective solutions	5.66 (0.93)[a]	5.97 (0.93)[a]	4.94 (0.95)[b]
Individualistic solutions	2.09 (1.13)[a]	2.98 (1.31)[b]	2.75 (.1.22)[b]
Polarized climate	4.34 (1.31)[a]	5.48 (0.88)[b]	3.90 (1.18)[c]
Conspiracy	5.27 (1.04)[a]	5.99 (0.95)[b]	3.95 (1.22)[c]
Disintegration	6.01 (0.85)[a]	6.42 (0.66)[b]	5.93 (0.90)[a]
Ethnocentrism-against immigration	2.92 (1.33)[a]	4.98 (1.11)[b]	3.16 (1.06)[a]
Class hatred	4.33 (1.21)[a]	5.02 (1.15)[b]	3.43 (0.85)[c]
Mobility effort	3.00 (1.28)[a]	5.60 (1.22)[b]	4.96 (1.29)[c]
Mobility membership	4.97 (1.32)[a]	4.77 (1.71)[a]	2.95 (1.11)[b]

Note: Scale from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree. Different letters correspond to significant differences (p < 0.05) in means (post-hoc Games-Howell).

of their other beliefs. In that sense, they also attributed the crisis to 'Global-power and system' and to the 'Greek government and mentality'; they were highly fearful-frustrated and angry; they believed that social mobility was obstructed by social memberships, and that considered that collective solutions were a mean to exit the crisis.

Thus, the third cluster seemed to share beliefs with the two groups. With the *pro-system* group, they shared core values of the system (individualistic solutions) and optimism, whereas with the *challengers* they shared frustration and anger, the belief that memberships blocked mobility, and that the crisis had also systemic causes. Moreover, these people were characterized by high ethnocentrism and class conflict, by blaming other groups for the crisis, and by believing in effort as a means to mobility. They were also the more disaffected by the situation in Greece. Because of their profile, they were labeled *disaffected by the system*. Whether this group could form the target of influence of the extreme-right minority is tested later in the paper. In the next section, we look at other ideological or demographic attributes that can describe these three groups.

Who Are the Pro-System, the System Challengers, and the System Disaffected, and What Do They Believe?

Looking at their demographics, the three groups did not differ in terms of gender distribution. However, there was a significant difference (post-hoc Gate-Howell $p < 0.05$) in terms of age and income. The *disaffected* ($M = 47.64$, $SD = 17.40$) were older than the *pro-system* ones ($M = 39.56$, $SD = 15.21$) and declared less income than this group (*disaffected* $M = 1.96$, $SD = 0.86$, *pro-system* $M = 2.42$,

$SD = 1.01$). No differences were observed with the *challengers* (age $M = 42.55$, $SD = 15.58$; income $M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.15$). Moreover, there was a significant difference in terms of education level. The *disaffected* ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.01$) declared having lower degrees than the *pro-system* ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.88$) and the *challengers* ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.93$). A series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted in other variables assessing different beliefs in order to see ideological differences between the three groups. As can be observed on **Table 2**, the *disaffected* were higher on national identification and believed more that their life depended on divine intervention than the two other groups. In terms of helplessness and relative deprivation, the *disaffected* and the *challengers* thought more than the *pro-system* ones that they did not control different aspects of their life, and that they deserved more than they currently had. However, the *challengers* declared that in relation to 2009 (when the crisis begun in Greece) their families were in a worse situation now that did the *disaffected* and the *pro-system* participants. They also identified with having a more vulnerable position in the future than the two other groups. The *disaffected* and the *challengers* were more disappointed by Greek democracy and the EU than the *pro-system* participants. However, the *pro-system* and the *disaffected* declared higher agreement with beliefs justifying the system and finding Greece a fair society of equal opportunities; they believed more that a salutary solution for Greece will come from the EU and declared being more right-wing than the *challengers* did. These results indicate that there are demographic and ideological differences that characterize and differentiate the three groups. The question that remains to be answered

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Different Beliefs and Identifications of the Three Profiles.

	Group A *Challengers*	Group B *Disaffected*	Group C *Pro-system*
I do not control different aspects of my life	3.60 (1.7)[a]	3.56 (1.74)[a]	3.00 (1.5)[b]
My life depends on the intervention of divine and metaphysical forces	2.03 (1.63)[a]	3.6 (2.17)[b]	1.99 (1.43)[a]
In relation to 2009 my family financial situation is today (1 = much worse, 7 = much better)	2.38 (1.20)[a]	3.02 (1.50)[b]	3.07 (1.36)[b]
I believe that I deserve much more than what I have at the moment	5.21 (1.47)[a]	5.10 (1.48)[a]	4.38 (1.57)[b]
Vulnerability	4.58 (1.35)[a]	4.01 (1.41)[b]	3.77 (1.26)[b]
Political Self-Positioning (1 = extreme left, 10 = extreme right)	4.14 (1.69)[a]	5.47 (2.06)[b]	5.16 (1.46)[b]
National identification	4.60 (1.33)[a]	5.69 (.81)[b]	4.94 (1.05)[a]
System justifying (Greece a fair society)	2.08 (0.95)[a]	2.89 (1.13)[b]	2.64 (0.98)[b]
Failed expectations from Greek Democracy (*metapoliteysi*)	5.82 (1.11)[a]	5.96 (0.96)[a]	4.70 (1.25)[b]
Failed expectations from EU	5.58 (1.34)[a]	5.49 (1.35)[a]	4.20 (1.14)[b]
Awaiting salutary solution from the EU for the GR crisis	2.45 (1.55)[a]	3.79 (2.07)[b]	3.28 (1.53)[b]

Note: Unless otherwise stated, the scales ranged from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree). Different letters correspond to significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in means (post-hoc Games-Howell).

next is whether there are also differences between the *disaffected* and the other two groups in the adoption of extreme-right wing beliefs and tolerance to violence.

Are the Disaffected More Open to Fascist Beliefs and Violence?

An exploratory PCA was conducted on the 31 items assessing beliefs associated with extreme right-wing attitudes and fascism. The analysis (KMO = 0.908) yielded seven factors with eigenvalues greater than one. However, after exploration of the scree plot, and given that five factors explained 51.75% of the total variance, the analysis was done demanding a five-factor solution. The first factor (eigenvalue = 9.93 and 32.03% of the variance) loaded seven items that assessed beliefs about leadership, order, and honor (i.e. 'An able leader can save the country beyond any law'; 'betrayal of honor should be punished'; 'It is good to use autocratic measures to keep order and prevent chaos'). After assessing reliability (α = 0.79), these items were averaged to form a new factor labeled *leadership-order*. The second factor (eigenvalue = 1.94 and 6.24% of the variance) included eight items that denoted that some groups were superior to others and that the social order should reflect this superiority (i.e. 'It is against nature to have women in power positions'; 'Caring for people with special needs burdens considerably society'). After assessing reliability (α = 0.78), a new factor labeled *group hierarchy* was computed by averaging the scores of the relevant items. The third factor (eigenvalue = 1.56 and 5.11% of the variance) included six items that related to religion and morality (i.e. 'Abortion should be done only for medical reasons'; 'Homosexuals should keep secret their sexual orientation to avoid shocking others'; 'Children of a different faith should follow the course on orthodox religion at schools'). Again, a satisfactory reliability (α = 0.75) led to the computing of these items to a new factor labeled *religious morality* by averaging their scores. The fourth factor (eigenvalue = 1.33 and 4.29% of the variance) loaded six items that denoted obedience and discipline (i.e. 'Citizens should obey the laws and respect institutions without questioning'; 'Group members should conform to the will of the leader'; 'Military service should be compulsory'). The reliability being satisfactory (α = 0.78), the items were averaged to form a new factor labeled *obedience-discipline*. Finally, the fifth factor (eigenvalue = 1.26 and 4.07% of

the variance) included five items denoting a negative attitude towards minorities (i.e. 'Greece cannot nurture all foreigners arriving here'; 'Gypsies should conform to the majority otherwise they should not expect any help'; 'Children of immigrants should not carry the Greek flag during school parades'). After looking at their reliability (α = 0.75), the average score of these items formed a new factor labeled *against minorities*. The new factors *leadership-order*, *group hierarchy*, *religious morality*, *obedience-discipline* and *against minorities* were subjected into a series of one-way ANOVAs in order to see whether the groups differ on them. As can be observed on **Table 3**, the group of *disaffected* participants scored on average consistently higher on all these factors in comparison to the other two groups. Moreover, the group of *challengers* scored consistently lower than the other groups, and this difference was significant also in comparison to the *pro-system* participants on the factors *religious morality*, *obedience-discipline* and *against minorities*. Thus, we have here evidence that the participants labeled as *disaffected* are more open to messages of extreme-right or fascist beliefs whereas the *challengers* were less. We further looked as to whether these participants were more tolerant than others to violence.

The 19 items assessing agreement with practices and beliefs involving violence were explored through a PCA with oblimin rotation (KMO = 0.892). The analysis revealed a seven-factor solution with eigenvalues greater than one, but after observing the scree plot, and given that the five factors explained 56.34% of the total variance, a five structure solution was preferred. The first factor (eigenvalue = 7.21 and variance = 31.35%) included four items that assessed activist violent practices (i.e. 'Protesters destroying banks is justifiable'; 'Building occupation is a necessary form of action'). Given that the reliability of the factor was satisfactory (α = 0.78), the items were computed to a new factor by averaging their scores and this factor was called *activist violence*. The second factor (eigenvalue = 1.80 and variance = 7.83%) included four items denoting violence towards weaker groups (i.e. 'Often, women's behavior provoke justifiable violent actions against them'; 'Only with violence immigrants will understand that they are undesirable in the country'). Again, the reliability of the items was satisfactory (α = 0.72) and the items were averaged to form a new factor called *violence*

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of the Extreme Right-Wing (F) Beliefs.

	Group A Challengers	Group B Disaffected	Group C Pro-system
Leadership-order	2.94 (1.11)[a]	4.32 (1.12)[b]	3.02 (1.00)[a]
Group hierarchy	1.80 (0.78)[a]	2.35 (1.07)[b]	1.99 (0.85)[a]
Religious morality	2.22 (1.07)[a]	3.64 (1.36)[b]	2.54 (1.00)[c]
Obedience-discipline	2.46 (1.13)[a]	3.89 (1.17)[b]	3.11 (1.00)[c]
Against minorities	3.13 (1.38)[a]	4.70 (1.18)[b]	3.53 (1.17)[c]

Note: Scale from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree. Different letters correspond to significant differences (p < 0.05) in means (post-hoc Games-Howell).

towards the weak. The third factor (eigenvalue = 1.44 and variance = 6.28%), had four items that denoted that difference and opposition should be exterminated (i.e. 'The best solution for a group that disturbs somehow society is to isolate it'; 'The extermination of the adversary is a necessary bad in a battle where someone is defending superior values'). Their reliability being satisfactory ($\alpha = 0.68$), they were averaged to form a new factor called *extermination of the adversary.* The fourth factor (eigenvalue = 1.31 and variance = 5.70%), included five items assessing devaluation of the other and intolerance (i.e. 'Not to tolerate the opinions of some people is, in some occasions, right'; 'There are moments when it is legitimate insulting or diminishing another person'). These items were computed into a new factor by averaging their scores given that their reliability was good ($\alpha = 0.75$). The new factor was called *devaluation-intolerance.* Finally, the fifth factor (eigenvalue = 1.19 and variance = 5.19%) included six items that assessed violence as defense (i.e. 'In a society where the big fish eats the smaller one you cannot go with "a cross in hand" (a Christian way)'; 'Violence is justified only as a mean of defense against those who use it first'). Having observed a satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = 0.73$), the items were averaged to form a new factor called *defensive violence.*

Following the previous analytic practice, the five factors of different aspects of violence were subjected to a series of one-way ANOVAs with the three groups as between-groups variable. As can be observed on **Table 4**, the group of the *disaffected* participants scored higher than the other two groups on the factor *violence towards the weak* and on the *extermination of the opponent,* which are also the two forms of violence more associated with fascism. In general, they scored higher in all forms of violence, although their mean score is not significantly different from the score of the *challengers* on *activist violence*, on *defensive violence*, and on *intolerance-devaluation.* Interestingly they differ from the *pro-system* participants that score lower on these factors. These results show that, again, the *disaffected* participants are those more keen to endorse violent beliefs and practices.

Discussion

Informed by Mugny's theorization that differentiated between Power, Population and Minority, in this paper we set up to see whether the Population towards which Minority influence (from innovative or conservative minorities) and Power hegemony are addressed is homogeneous, or whether there are different groups ideologically and demographically differentiated that can be potentially open to their different messages. In particular, interested by the rise of extreme-right wing and populist movements, we argued that in times of crisis, those who believed in the core values of the system and at the same time feel disaffected by the situation will be those more supporting extreme conservative messages. Our analysis supports the division of participants in three groups according to their beliefs about the crisis and the disintegration of the social system in Greece. According to our data we can claim that the Population can be split in three groups: those who support the system, those who challenge it, and those who are disaffected by it. The latter are more ethnocentric and display class hatred, believing in individual mobility but realizing that this mobility is blocked, and they attribute the crisis to other groups and the Greek mentality more than the other two groups. We have also found that the groups differ in other, mainly ideological, characteristics. The *challengers* of the system declare themselves to be more left-wing than the other groups, they justify the system less, and they await a solution from the EU less than the others. Moreover, they feel more financially vulnerable and declare more that their family is in a worse condition than in 2009 when the crisis started. The *pro-system* participants declare having more control in their life than the other groups, are less relatively deprived in relation to what they believe they deserve, and they are less disappointed by Greek Democracy in the Metapoliteysi era and the EU than the other two groups. Finally, the *disaffected* are more identified with co-nationals than the other groups and believe that fate controls their life. They declare on average a lower level of education than the two other groups with whom they have common beliefs. With the *challengers,* they share feelings of loss of control and relative deprivation, but feel less vulnerable than them. They also share their disappointment towards Greek Democracy and the EU. With the *pro-system,* they share the same political positioning to the right, they equally find the system just, and they equally await a solution to the crisis from the EU. However, they are older than the *pro-system* participants

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations) of the Agreement with Violent Beliefs and Practices.

	Group A Challengers	Group B Disaffected	Group C Pro-system
Activist violent practices	3.01 (1.53)[a]	2.95 (1.56)[a]	2.25 (0.97)[b]
Violence towards the weak	1.78 (0.99)[a]	2.48 (1.20)[b]	1.85 (0.90)[a]
Extermination of the opponent	3.76 (1.50)[a]	4.56 (1.36)[b]	3.14 (1.10)[c]
Intolerance-devaluation	3.09 (1.28)[ab]	3.31 (1.33)[a]	2.81 (1.00)[b]
Defensive violence	3.09 (1.05)[ab]	3.41 (1.27)[a]	2.91 (1.07)[b]

Note: Scale from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree. Different letters correspond to significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in means (post-hoc Games-Howell).

and declare less family income. These data give, therefore, some indication on what might differentiate the three groups. The *challengers* are mainly ideologically differentiated as they justify less the system and position themselves to the left. The division between the *pro-system* and the *disaffected* is interesting. Both justify the system but the *pro-system* are less disappointed by what the Greek Democracy and the EU fulfilled; they are less identified with the nation and less ethnocentric; are younger, richer, and more educated; they express less class hatred than the *disaffected*. Thus, we could say that amongst those who support the system, there is a category that seems to be disappointed in their expectations. This category of people, according to our data, shows that they also support extreme conservative beliefs and tolerance to violence. Although the opportunistic nature of this sample does not allow us to draw safe conclusions based on their demographics, we could perhaps argue that the *disaffected* are people for whom the crisis revealed their low position in the social strata and closed their opportunities for mobility and for changing this position. These 'glocalised' people (Bauman, 1998) are more open to beliefs that support honor, leadership, group hierarchy, and a world based on morality. They support beliefs that help sustain the social order through obedience and discipline, and they reject minorities (Staerkle, Likki & Scheidegger, 2012). They are also keener to using violence to oppose those in power along with those in weaker positions, as well as to defend themselves and exterminate their opponents. The division in these three groups shows that the targets of influence of the three entities (Power, innovative minority, and conservative minority) are different. Power continues to exert hegemony in a large part of the Population. A Minority that challenges the system has its own audience with specific ideological characteristics. These people differ from another part of the Population that, although they support the system, they differentiate themselves from other system supporters in their assessment of the situation and in their practices. Moreover, this study challenges the 'Theory of the Two Extremes' since it exposes the ideological differences of the targets of the two minorities and their differences in practices (they coincide only on activist and defensive violence, and not, for example, on violence towards the weak). The part of the Population to whom a Minority with conservative characteristics is addressed is ideologically different. Their support of extreme right-wing beliefs and violent practices towards the weak are not a matter of personality or cognitive style, but a way to interpret the conflict at stake (Pérez & Mugny, 1993). Their interpretation is the result of their disappointment in the disintegration of the social system they believed in. We argue that these 'betrayed believers' are the targets of influence of extreme right-wing minorities. As it was shown in research in former Yugoslavia (Penic, Corkalo-Biruski & Elcheroth 2014), in contexts with increasing social and economic deprivation rates, people tend to blame both the authorities and outgroups for the aversive collective situations. The authors interpret their findings as the outcome of protest when the world looks threatening but there is no clear enemy to target. Thus, identities

are not politicized since the definition of a clear adversary is a precondition to the politicization of collective identities which are necessary for fighting for change (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Moreover, if those challenging the system fail to define the adversary or abandon the struggle and declare that 'There is no alternative', the danger is that those disaffected and frustrated will increase.

Other research has shown (Reicher & Haslam, 2006) that in times of crisis, when the system in which they believe collapses and when people find themselves unable to support it, authoritarian solutions seem attractive. Thus, the danger for democracy is not necessarily from the number of organized supporters of extreme right-wing minorities. but from the part of the population that is open to their messages and tolerates their practices. A word of caution is necessary. In reading this research, one has to be reminded that the sample is opportunistic and the study exploratory and correlational. Thus, no causal explanations can be drawn. The nature of the data allows also the possibility that people with conservative and right-wing beliefs react different to the crisis and its administration. Other research in Italy and Greece (Mari, Volpato, Papastamou, Chryssochoou, Prodromitis & Pavlopoulos, 2017) has shown that people self-positioned at the centre perceive the crisis differently from those self-positioned at the left and the right whose views in some respects coincide. Thus, it is not easy to predict what people on different poles of the political spectrum will do insofar as we are relying on political self-positioning. However, even with this caution in mind, one still needs to explain what differentiates the *pro-system* and the *disaffected* participants in this study that both were self-positioned in the right-wing spectrum. More research is needed in this area in order to clarify this distinction of the Population. Moreover, we cannot claim with these data that the beliefs of the three groups are the result of social influence processes of the two minorities and Power. What we can claim, however, is that the Population could be divided in different groups differentiated ideologically and in relation to their perception of the crisis. One of these groups attracted our interest since we hypothesized that they might be more open to extreme right-wing messages and violence in a context of crisis. Our study supported this claim. The evidence provided draws our attention to representational processes and social influence in times of economic, social, and political instability. Staerklé et al. (2012) argued that there are competing conceptions of the social order associated with different attitudes towards welfare. In their analysis, they suggest that these representations are organized around two differentiations: normative/categorical and symbolic/positional. These differentiations define core antagonisms and principles of social regulations. The authors present four conceptions of the social order: moral order, free market, social diversity, and structural inequality. We have also found similar distinctions in our analysis of the social representation of globalization associated with conceptions of economic roles and policies of the state (Griva & Chryssochoou, 2015). The categorization of the participants here, their ideological profiles, and their presumed practices seem to fit these analyses. We could argue that

our *pro-system* participants hold a free market conception, our *challengers* hold a structural inequalities conception, whereas the *disaffected* a moral order conception. Interestingly, the social diversity conception is not objectified in these data. The current Islamophobia in Europe, fuelled by the recent attacks in different European cities, may provide the context where extreme right-wing beliefs are constructed around this conception of the social order. As I have argued elsewhere (Chryssochoou, 2018), in a context of neo-liberal capitalism, dominant classes might promote a cultural representation of society to deflect conflict on the basis of structural inequalities. In this process, even dominant representations such as secular beliefs can be used paradoxically to justify exclusion of cultural minorities (Nugier et al. 2016). Thus, processes of social influence are about the prevailing representation of the social order. As Mugny and collaborators have argued, to understand social influence we need to analyze also the representational context (the groups, their relations, and the way people elaborate the context) in which these processes take place (see also Politi, Gale & Staerkle, 2017 this issue).

Whether an extreme right-wing conception will prevail in Europe, with perhaps different characteristics depending on the context, is a matter of political struggles. Social psychology of societal orientation can contribute in unveiling the social psychological dynamics at stake that facilitate or hinder this struggle.

Notes
[1] NB this is a period before the election of Syriza at the Government.
[2] Greece became a member of the EEC in 1981.

Competing Interests
The author has no competing interests to declare.

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