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Greece

Fear versus hope

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The Greek general election campaign which has kept the Troika and the financial powers in suspense has ended. The masters of the world, the 1%, as Occupy Wall Street symbolically refers to the dominant financial hierarchy, are concerned with the possibility of an electoral victory for Syriza on the basis of an anti-Memorandum agenda. We know that elections are an annoyance for the élites when there is the rare possibility that the masses do not vote as they desire.

Structural adjustment policies have imploded the traditional party system in Greece. The economic and social crisis has been transformed into a generalised political crisis, a crisis of hegemony and an "organic crisis of the state". In this scenario, the appeal to fear has been the sole asset of the Greek right through an authentic campaign of media terror and demonization of Syriza that is fed with permanent blackmail from the Troika. The infamous article appearing yesterday (Friday June 15) in the German edition of the "Financial Times" urging the Greek people to vote for the right-wing New Democracy party shows the exacerbation of the centre-periphery logic and neo-colonial relations within the EU in the context of the crisis. But also it is an example of the fear of the dominant classes that the situation in Greece will open too large a fissure within the EU.

It is not clear whether Syriza will win the election or that it will have the majority to form a government. If not it is likely that another scenario of political crisis will open, possibly with new elections or a fragile pro-Memorandum government in the midst of growing difficulty for the parties of the system in sustaining governability of the country. It should be recalled, on the other hand, that the rise of Syriza and the left coexists with the rise of the fascist wing that offers a way of channelling the social unrest in a reactionary sense and illustrates the growing polarization before the intensification of the social contradictions caused by the adjustment policies.

A government formed by Syriza, a plural coalition in which different orientations coexist, would be subject to contradictions and brutal pressures to which its reaction and resilience would be unpredictable. It would open a new scenario full of possibilities, but also with an uncertain outcome and a sinuous trajectory. This being the case, the strengthening of social self-organization, of the currents of the anti-capitalist left (some within Syriza itself and others grouped in Antarsya, a coalition which is electorally weak but has a relevant social implementation), and combative trades unionism would be fundamental variables. There can be no consistent logic of rupture with the structural adjustment policies without a mobilized and organized society and the development and unity of currents and political and social organizations that argue more consistently for an anti-capitalist alternative.

Simultaneously a test bed and laboratory for adjustment and social resistance, the outcome of the "Greek tragedy" will have a crucial impact crucial throughout the European Union. Here the most decisive battle of the continent is being waged in the global fight against the plans of financial capital, a battle in which this Sunday's election is a particularly significant moment.

Greece shows the dark side of the crisis and the high social and human cost that it entails. But, conversely, Greece also opens, for the first time in decades in Europe, the possibility of a beginning of a rupture, however imprecise, with an ever more unbearable present.