

This essay describes the radicalization of the Greek society and the rise of the political extremism in Greece in the period of 2000-2012. In this time important changes could have been observed in the Greek political scene and in the society which were linked to the polarization of the electorate and the growth of populism, nationalism, euroscepticism, xenophobia and racism. As a result of modernizing efforts of Constantinos Simitis cabinet (1996-2004), which were related to the Greek ambition to become fully-fledged member of the EU and the Eurozone, under the influence of globalization, immigration crisis and finally the recent slump of the Greek economy, a new social conflict emerged in Greece. This essay analyzes these problems from the perspective of the cleavages theory by Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan and tries to find social and political roots of such conflict. The radicalization of the Greek society between 2000 and 2012 does not represent a new phenomenon, but is a continuation of long-term ideological clashes present in the Greek social reality since the World War I. After identifying the main cleavages in interwar and postwar period the essay identifies the main conflict of Greece after the fall of junta in 1974. Afterwards it confronts the new political issues of the period 2000-2012 with the stances of six chosen Greek political parties and analyzes their programs and ideological approaches with the aim to show how they reflected the social radicalization and if they contributed to it.