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PhD THESIS

**NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN GREECE:
ASPECTS OF THE FEMINIST AND ECOLOGICAL PROJECTS**

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines three case studies of the Greek feminist and ecological movements during the period: 1975-1992. As the most appropriate theoretical framework for the analysis of those case studies, 'new social movement theory' is selected. However, the Greek case studies represent significant variations in regard to the 'ideal type' of new social movements as depicted in the literature. These differences originate to a certain degree from Greek new social movements' different cultural and political environment. The Greek social movements had to face a strong statocratic and partocratic society, where there was lack of an autonomous social movement sector. This led to the formation of semi-autonomous, party-affiliated social movement organisations. Moreover, the Greek political culture has been rooted on two different geopolitical visions. The one has pointed to a more traditionally oriented, inward looking political orientation hostile to Western values and the institutional arrangements of modernity. The other has been a modernising, outward looking orientation, adopting Western institutions and values. The stand of the Greek new social movements towards this open question of modernisation has been variable. Some social movement organisations have underlined the need for empowering national autonomy and have, therefore, been positively predisposed towards the state and the political parties as a significant means for achieving this goal. Others have eschewed the question altogether, focusing only on the local and international level with significant, however, political cost. Another factor, which has influenced the identity of the Greek new social movements, has been the tradition of the Left, which has favoured grand-narratives based on humanism and posing a dichotomy between 'general' and 'particular' struggles. Summing up, the social movements presented show marked variations in comparison with the ideal-typical type. They were strongly influenced by: statocracy and patocracy, the open question of modernisation, and the political culture of the Left.

Contents

Introduction	6
1. Main Theoretical Accounts of Social Movements:	
The Shift in Analytical Frameworks	13
1.1 Introduction	14
1.2 The Classical Model	16
1.2.1 Main Versions	17
1.2.2 Underlying Themes of the Classical Model	22
1.2.3 Main Critiques	23
1.3 Resource Mobilisation	27
1.3.1 Underlying Themes of Resource Mobilisation	28
1.3.2 Main Critiques	34
1.4 New Social Movement Theory	37
1.4.1 Underlying Themes of New Social Movement Theory	38
1.4.2 Main Critiques	50
1.5 Future Challenges for Social Movement Theory	53
1.6 Social Movement Theory in Greece and Latin America	56
2. The Greek Feminist Movement:	
Social and Historical Background	62
2.1 Introduction	63
2.2 The Sexual Division of Labour	63
2.3 Women and Education	70
2.4 The Political Behaviour of Women and the Development of a Feminist Consciousness	72
2.5 The State, Civil Society and the Party System	76
2.6 A Concise History of the Greek Feminist Movement	82
3. The Union of Greek Women	94
3.1 Introduction	95
3.2 1976-1990: From a Women's Organisation to State Feminism	95
3.3 Ideology	108
3.3.1 Capitalist Patriarchy	110
3.3.2 Social Values, Socialisation, Education	113
3.3.3 Humanism, Equality, Androgyny	117
3.3.4 Men, Family, Motherhood, Sexuality	119
3.3.5 Public and Private	127
3.3.6 Monopoly Capitalism, Imperialism, Peace	129
3.3.7 Nationalism	131

3.3.8	The State, Social Engineering, Decentralisation, Community	133
3.4	Organisational Structure	135
3.5	Social Base	140
3.6	Strategy	143
3.7	New Scenarios of Conflict	147
3.8	Summary	148
4.	The Autonomous Feminist Groups	151
4.1	Introduction	152
4.2	1975-1990: The Construction of an Autonomous Feminist Culture	152
4.3	Ideology	162
4.3.1	Collectivity	162
4.3.2	Autonomy	164
4.3.3	The Personal is Political	169
4.3.4	Hierarchism, Science, Capitalism, Humanism	171
4.3.5	Family, Sexuality, Male Violence	176
4.4	Organisational Structure	180
4.5	Social Base	184
4.6	Strategy	187
4.7	New Scenarios of Conflict	192
4.8	Summary	194
5.	The Greek Ecological Movement: . Social and Historical Background	198
5.1	Introduction	199
5.2	Rapid Economic Growth and Regional Imbalances	199
5.3	Environmental Problems	203
5.4	State Administration and the Environment	210
5.4.1	A Short History of Environmental Policy	211
5.4.2	Environmental Policy and Economic Surplus	219
5.5	The State versus Civil Society	220
5.6	Environmental Consciousness	230
5.6.1	The Middle strata and Collective Identity Building	230
5.6.2	Post-War Ideology	232
5.6.3	Other Factors	233
5.7	A Concise History of the Greek Ecological Movement	237
6.	The Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations	256
6.1	Introduction	257
6.2	Seeking Public Support for Green Politics	257
6.3	Ideology	272
6.3.1	Ecocentrism and Humanism, Environmentalism, Social/Political Ecology	272

6.3.2	Holism, Pluralism, Difference	277
6.3.3	Development, Industrialism, Capitalism	279
6.3.4	The State and Civil Society	283
6.3.5	Participatory and Representative Democracy	286
6.3.6	Non-Violence, Pacifism, Civil Disobedience	289
6.3.7	The Local, National and International Level	291
6.4	Organisational Structure	296
6.5	Social Base	303
6.6	Strategy	306
6.7	New Scenarios of Conflict	309
6.8	Summary	310
Conclusions		312
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>		323
<i>Bibliography</i>		324

Introduction

The subject of this thesis is new social movements in Greece, with special attention to the feminist and ecological movements. In the relevant academic literature ecological and feminist movements, which articulated post-materialist values during the '70s and '80s, are referred to as new social movements. The purpose of the present work is to show how far the attributes of the Greek movements studied agree or disagree with the ideal type. While other schools of thoughts in social movement literature are also employed (classical model, resource mobilisation theory), no attempt is made to merge all of these into a single unified model, but simply to employ those theoretical tools that best illuminate the Greek case.

As will be seen, the Greek social movements, which are here examined in depth, developed attributes notably absent from the pertinent literature on Western Europe and the United States. The partial correspondence of the Greek new social movements' identity to the ideal type gives rise to a series of central questions. Since Greek new social movements developed a number of attributes differing from the ideal-typical type, is it still legitimate to classify them as new social movements? If the answer is yes, then which were their novel elements? Were Greek new social movements influenced by the developments in the social movement sector abroad? If the influence was only limited, then which variables defined their different course? Were the emergence and life-course of new social movements in Greek society related to a specific historical cycle? Does this historical cycle correspond to a similar cycle in Western Europe and the United States? Beyond the Greek case, have other researchers on new social movements recorded dissimilarities between the ideal type and specific empirical cases?

The thesis will show that Greek new social movements developed attributes that were novel to the Greek context. Movement politics during the period 1975-1992 expanded the boundaries of the political by introducing new political subjects in the political process. Moreover, the Greek feminist and ecological movements questioned the quality of representative democracy and aimed to further political participation by introducing new organisational principles and structures (e.g. direct democracy). Greek new social movements politicised issues previously regarded as private and introduced into Greek politics a new agenda, concerning identity formation. In this respect, Greek new social movements presented novel elements similar to the ones outlined in the ideal type. However, Greek new social movements also presented

qualities notably absent from the ideal type. The thesis will show that the latter characteristics were due to complex interactions with two distinct, but interrelated phenomena: the internal organisation of the Greek nation-state and the state's relation with the international community. In the first case, the strong statocratic and partocratic elements of Greek society have created conditions, which were unfavourable to the development of autonomous (from party and state) social movements. Thus, the post-junta (post-1974) Greek feminist movement relied heavily on political parties and/or the state apparatus. In the second case, disassociation of the movements' political discourse from the dominant national issues meant a reduction in political influence. For instance, the political discourse of the ecological movement did not include international issues, meaning issues referring to Greece's relation with the international community. As a result its appeal to the large majority of people was quite limited. On the contrary, one organisation of the Greek feminist movement (the Union of Greek Women) underlined the need for strong national autonomy reproducing the political parties' discourse. The geopolitical question of Greece's role in the international community was a necessary element in the discourse of any political force aiming at a broader political support.

Another factor, which influenced the identity of the Greek new social movements, was the political tradition of the Left. The life-course of the Greek new social movements was related to a specific historical cycle of the Left, which favoured grand narratives, humanism and a clear distinction between 'general' versus 'particular' struggles. The political influence of the Left on Greek new social movements differed from the respective historical experience in Western Europe and the United States, where a radical rupture with the Left had usually preceded the formation of new social movements.

Summing up, the variations shown by the Greek new social movements in comparison with the ideal-typical type were due to: 1) statocracy and partocracy, 2) the open question of Greece's position in the international community and 3) the political culture of the Left. These marked variations have not been specific to the Greek context only. The thesis will show that other researchers as well have addressed issues of non-correspondence between the ideal type and the actual attributes of new social movements in various geographical zones (e.g. Latin America).

The two case studies of the Greek feminist movement (of the Union of Greek Women, and of the autonomous feminist groups) both concern the period 1975-1990;

that of the Greek ecological movement (Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations) covers the period 1989-1992. The main parameters of the respective political contexts and the statistical data presented refer predominantly to the time-period of study of each movement. Despite variations in their political conjuncture, the three case studies exemplify the political culture of the post-junta period, which eventually faded out in the 1990's. Accordingly, the subject-organisations of all three case studies were affected by: (i) the issue of autonomy, (ii) the presence of an 'anti-systemic' Left political discourse, (iii) the open question of modernisation. The common origins of the three studies are illustrated by their shared strategic dilemmas. How can political autonomy be obtained and safeguarded in a society with strong statocratic and partocratic elements? Does political autonomy inevitably lead to a feeble presence in a weak civil society? Do the left political forces constitute a political ally? Do political projects aim at the total reconstitution of society? Can a movement flourish in civil society without being supported by the state or the political parties? Is it possible to safeguard national autonomy and self-determination while attacking the state apparatus? The political discourse of all three case studies was built around a core of the same strategic dilemmas, but the answers provided by each case study are different. A detailed account is given of how the common cultural background led to the articulation of different identities and strategies, illustrating thereby that each of the three organisations studied, is not a mere product of its contextual setting, but is also a partial producer of its chosen trajectory.

The title of the thesis mentions new social movements, but the actual case studies analyse social movement organisations (SMOs). The fluidity of new social movements, whose extensive networks vary from formal organisations to individual sympathisers, renders any theoretical endeavour to capture the various forms they have taken almost impossible. A narrower focus on the organisations of the Greek feminist and ecological movements makes the specification of attributes somewhat more feasible and reliable. The 'movement dimension' is introduced into the analysis by brief historical accounts of the movements and their institutional setting, while the subsequent in-depth analyses of the movements' organisations specify more distinct attributes. The thesis keeps away from any fixed and binary opposition between social movements and movements' organisations. The concept of SMO entails three

interrelated meanings.¹ The first meaning of the term, which is dominant in the field, refers to *formal organisation*, meaning 'a complex organisation that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals'.² The second meaning refers to *the organisation of collective action*, i.e. to the forms by which confrontation with challengers are carried out. In different movements, the organisation of collective action ranges from initiatives emerging from below to activities initiated from above. The third element concerns *the mobilising structures* that connect the various organisational levels of a movement (the leadership with grass-root activities, the centre of a movement with its periphery). Mobilising structures often exist prior to the establishment of a formal organisation, as was indeed the case for the Greek ecological movement, where coordinated mobilisations existed a long time before the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations was formed.

Concerning the Greek feminist movement, the decision to report two case studies instead of one, as for the ecological movement, is due to the heterogeneous nature of the movement. Social movements - consisting of interrelated organisations, informal groupings, and single individuals - include core organisations with a usually coherent ideology and rigid structure, as well as loosely connected networks and circles of sympathisers. In the case of the Greek feminist movement the gap between the organised core (the Union of Greek Women) and the peripheral networks (the autonomous feminist groups) was very wide. The core consisted of the party affiliated organisations that dominated the feminist spectrum. The autonomous feminist groups and their mobilisations, on the other hand, introduced the movement dimension that went beyond the borders of party control. To focus on only the core or only the periphery of the movement would have given a distorted picture, especially since the periphery of the Greek feminist movement came into being in direct opposition to the party-aligned core organisations. A proper account of the Greek feminist movement therefore requires looking at both sides.

¹ Tarrow, Sidney (1994) *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

² Zald, Mayer and McCarthy, John (1987) *Social Movements in an Organisational Society*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Transaction Books), p. 20

The research methodology of the thesis employed a combination of primary and secondary sources. Concerning the primary sources, the publications by the three case studies were utilised extensively and interviews with leaders and simple members were conducted. The strong emphasis on the case studies' publications was necessitated by the organisations' total lack of (e.g. autonomous feminist groups) or very restricted access to (e.g. the Federation) the daily press. Moreover, the organisations' publications provided the necessary information about the heterogeneous elements in the organisations' identity. The press presented a wide range of opinions, as well as specific issues generating intra-organisational conflicts. (e.g. *Bulletin* by the Federation). In addition, the coverage of the organisations' press (e.g. *Open Window* by the Union of Greek Women, 1979 -) over a long period of time illuminated the different stages in each organisation's course. This facilitated the demarcation of the various periods in the organisations' histories.

The primary material also includes interviews conducted with leaders or simple members of the organisations. The interviews gave access to the participants' views and strategies. The leaders highlighted the strategic dilemmas they faced, while the simple members outlined the subjective perceptions of the organisations' identity. Furthermore, the interviews conducted assisted the research by providing useful information about the organisations' nucleuses in the countryside. This information was usually not provided by the organisations' press, which focused on major events in urban cities.

Summing up, the primary sources assisted the comparative nature of the thesis. Comparisons were drawn up not only in regard to different case studies or countries but also in relation to variations in each organisation's course or identity.

The secondary sources enhanced the process of unifying fragmented information into a coherent framework. The research was obstructed by the absence of collective archives and the lack of a detailed historical account of the organisations or groups concerned. In some instances (e.g. the autonomous feminist groups) the non-existence of public or private institutions providing collective archives made access to personal records and contacts, the only means for obtaining information. In the absence, furthermore, of any history of the organisations or groups under question, the present accounts of the three case studies constitute original contributions to the subject.

The secondary sources also included theoretical debates initiated by the feminist and ecological movements in a variety of countries (e.g. state feminism, ecocentrism). This endeavour aimed at illuminating the Greek context by explaining the presence or absence of relevant debates. Hence, the comparative nature of the thesis incorporated social reality as well as its social reconstruction.

The Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 explores the academic literature on social movements, concentrating on the model of new social movements. Developments in the field of social movement literature are assessed, and the different models are seen to require integration. This chapter is meant to provide a conceptual framework for the analyses to follow.

Chapter 2 gives a short account of the historical and social background of the Greek feminist movement. It looks at the changes in the socio-economic variables of Greek society, the main parameters of the political system, the recurrent patterns in the movement's history, and finally the specific political opportunity structure of the post-junta feminist movement.

Chapter 3 presents the first of the empirical case studies, that of the Union of Greek Women. This was the only feminist organisation that succeeded in widely disseminating its discourse and to have access to the state apparatus. However, the organisation's party dependency, its pro-state ideology, highly centralised organisational structure, and nationalistic discourse contradicts most characteristics of new social movement organisations as depicted in the literature.

Chapter 4 discusses the case study of the autonomous feminist groups. In this context the element of formal organisation was very largely absent, leaving considerable autonomy to individual members. The groups functioned for consciousness-raising and study. Their identity was structured around a belief in pluralism, participatory democracy, and the political dimension of the private sphere. The autonomous feminist groups declared their solidarity with various national-liberation movements and the oppressed minorities across the world. This anti-imperialist stance was founded on their opposition to any form of domination, rather than on a nationalistic ideology. While the autonomous groups took the lead in most rallies of the Greek feminist movement, dissemination of their discourse was left to their younger, better-educated members.

Chapter 5 presents the social and political environment of the ecological movement. Elements are pointed out that applied equally to the feminist movement, and certain discontinuities with the past are elaborated. The chapter also mentions a number of factors (administrative policies, absence of nuclear plants, regional imbalances, absence of well developed environmental consciousness, etc.) that had their effect on the course of the Greek ecological movement.

Chapter 6 concerns the third case study, that of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (FEAO). The Federation has, until now, been the only extensive and relatively enduring political project of the Green spectrum. However, it was quite short-lived (1989-'92), and its failure marked the retreat of the Greens from any political project. The agenda of the Federation was ideologically very close to that of the autonomous feminist groups. However, its decentralised organisational structure, approximating to the premises of participatory democracy, was incompatible with its strategy, when the Federation chose to become a political party and sought inclusion in the traditional political system. Its attempt to ideologically safeguard the values associated with new social movements, while at the same time involved in electioneering and parliamentary politics, resulted in major internal difficulties and the FEAO's final dissolution.

The *Conclusion* looks at some of the implications of the analyses in this thesis, particularly the viability of new social movements in Greek society. It is argued that the strong presence of the state and the political parties has inhibited the realisation of such projects. Their impact has been mediated by the strong geo-political elements in Greek political culture, favouring political discourses including an international agenda that delineates Greece's potential role in the international community.

CHAPTER 1

MAIN THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: **THE SHIFT IN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS**

1.1 Introduction

Social movement theory has developed out of the study of anomic, marginal phenomena into an analysis of the self-constitution of society (Alain Touraine's 'historicity'). Social movements have been perceived as symptoms of deprivation and anxiety, as well as emancipatory forces. Hence, social movement theory has produced many different analytical frameworks, which differ not only historically (e.g. collective behaviour versus resource mobilisation) but also concerning their geographical context (resource mobilisation has originated mainly in the United States, while new social movement theory developed in Europe). Despite the variations within the field of analysis, the study of social movements has investigated the core elements of social movements that are applicable universally. This search for the ontological essence of social movements has led to competing frameworks, with new theoretical accounts juxtaposed to the existing ones. In consequence social movement theory has undergone a shift in terms of its analytical framework, which originally had completely different starting points (e.g. the individual, organisation, society), and asked very different questions (e.g. why do social movements emerge? how are resources mobilised?).

The still growing literature on social movements has underlined the need to merge diverse elements, and to produce theoretical hypotheses that are both historically specific and multi-dimensional. Instead of reducing social movements to their essence, current analyses present them as complex phenomena, characterised by many conflictual tendencies. The principal goal of the theoretical part of this work is to summarise and evaluate the various frameworks underlying social movement theory today and to outline the current state of social movement analysis. The text on these subjects is relatively concise for two reasons: because, firstly, numerous other authors have already provided a general overview of the field, and secondly, the primary focus here is on what may be called new social movement theory.¹ The literature on new social movements concerns

¹ See McAdam, Doug (1982) *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press); Foweraker, Joe (1995) *Theorising Social Movements* (London and Boulder, Colorado, Pluto Press); Lyman, Stanford (ed.) (1995) *Social Movements: Critiques, Concepts, Case Studies*

itself with the emergence at the end of the 1960s of various non-institutionalised, value-oriented movements (on peace, the ecology, feminism, etc.). The case studies in Part II below (of the Greek feminist and ecological movements) are analyses providing comparisons of actual groups with the ideal type of new social movements found in the relevant literature. As its name implies, this ideal type is independent of any specific empirical case study. This means that the Greek case studies are seen against the theoretical background of the broader debate within the field. The principal focus on new social movement theory is accompanied by references to the classical model as well as to resource mobilisation, since these three complement and elucidate each other. In addition to the Greek case, various other empirical studies (from France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain) are mentioned in order to illuminate theoretical concepts such as the political opportunity structure, or propositions in social movement theory. In view of this, Part I constitutes a broad introduction to social movement theory as a basis for the specific Greek case studies.

Definitions of the social movement concept have varied with different theoretical frameworks. The recent synthesis in the literature of the separate perspectives has led to a more comprehensive definition, stressing the heterogeneity of social movements. This work will use Donatella and Diani's definition:

'We will consider social movements...as (1) informal networks, based on (2) shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about (3) conflictual issues, through (4) the frequent use of various forms of protest'.²

This definition includes the full range of components, variably emphasised by the different schools of thought in social movement literature.

(London, Macmillan); Zirakzadeh, Cyrus Ernesto (1997) *Social Movements in Politics: A Comparative Study* (New York, Longman); Della Porta, Donatella and Diani, Mario (1999) *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Oxford, Blackwell); Buechler, Steven (2000) *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism: The Political Economy and Cultural Construction of Social Activism* (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press).

² Della Porta and Diani, *ibid.*, p. 16.

Social movement theory can be seen as consisting of three general analytical frameworks: (i) the classical model, (ii) resource mobilisation, and (iii) new social movements. There are significant variations even within each framework, leading to many different classifications. However, in general terms these three categories describe the divisions within social movement analysis concerning the level of analysis (the individual, organisation, society); the polity model (pluralist, elitist, neo-Marxist); the relation between agent and structure (e.g. passive versus active social subjects); and the evaluation of the role of social movements (e.g. positive, negative).³

1.2 The Classical Model

There is general agreement on the analytical distinction of 'resource mobilisation' and 'new social movements' as different perspectives. There is considerable dispute, on the other hand concerning social movements analysis prior to the 1970s. I shall adopt McAdam's classification and subsume the different strands of pre-1970 theory under a single model known as the classical model.⁴ The different versions of this classical model are not interchangeable, but what they have in common is the assumption that collective mobilisations are caused by structural strains disrupting the psychological state of individuals who then become susceptible to mobilisation.

³ A fundamental premise of the pluralist model is that power is shared by numerous groups in society. When resources are widely dispersed throughout the population, there are no limits to political opportunity and options. In the elitist and neo-Marxist models, resources are scarce and limited to specific socio-economic groups, thereby preventing full and equal political participation. The elitist model underlines the significance of political elites in parties and public offices, while it provides a fragmented pattern of social and political conflict. The neo-Marxist model on the other hand focuses on the distribution of socio-economic resources, the function of the state, and the emergence of corporatist arrangements. It provides a societal model based on class analysis, including various definitions of 'class'. See Held, David (1987) *Models of Democracy* (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press).

⁴ McAdam, Doug, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

There are a number of other shared factors that unite the different versions into a single category. For the classical model, the level of analysis is the individual. The polity in all its different versions is that of pluralist democracy. There is a negative bias towards social movements as irrational responses, and social action is presented as the result of structural change and not vice versa. These points will be elaborated further after a brief review of the main versions of the classical model. These are: Davies' J-curve theory of revolution, relative deprivation, mass-society theory and collective behaviour.

1.2.1 Main Versions

In the 1960s a considerable literature developed concerning the role of strain in producing collective behaviour. The main contributors to this were Davies (J-curve), Gurr (relative deprivation), Kornhauser (mass society) and Smelser (collective behaviour).

A) *J-Curve Theory of Revolution*: The concept of the J-Curve developed by Davies explains that

'revolution is most likely to take place when a prolonged period of rising expectations and rising gratifications is followed by a short period of sharp reversal, during which the gap between expectations and gratifications quickly widens and becomes intolerable. The frustration that develops, when it is intense and widespread in the society, seeks outlets in violent action'.⁵

Davies argues that revolutionary outbreaks are linked with improvements of political and economic conditions, followed by sudden breakdowns. If the frustration of individuals is widespread, intense, and focuses on government, it can lead to a revolutionary upheaval that displaces the ruling government and alters the societal power structure. However, if violence remains contained within the political system, then the resulting rebellions modify but do not displace the political regime. Davies' analysis integrates elements of Karl Marx's theory that revolutions are more likely to occur when

⁵ Davies, James Chowning (1979) 'The J-Curve of Rising and Declining Satisfaction as a Cause of Revolution and Rebellion', in: Hugh Davies Graham and Ted Robert Gurr (eds.), *Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (London, Beverly Hills, Sage Publications), p. 415.

conditions are deteriorating, as well as de Tocqueville's observation that an improvement in social conditions gives rise to increased expectations that may foster revolutions.⁶ Davies gives a psychological explanation for the causes of revolution, with the individual as a unit of analysis. Therefore central in Davies analysis is the individual's state of mind in the context of society.

B) *Relative Deprivation*: Gurr's theoretical contribution to the classical model has been the concept of 'relative deprivation'. He defined the concept as 'a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities'.⁷ Accordingly, an increase in expectations without a simultaneous increase in capabilities to satisfy those expectations, or a decrease in capabilities without a simultaneous reduction in expectations, leads to the politicisation of discontent and the emergence of collective behaviour. For Gurr, political violence results not from some general form of discontent, but from relative deprivation in specific.⁸ Gurr has also introduced a multiplicity of other factors (such as regime legitimacy, tradition of political violence, response by the regime) that influence the development of collective behaviour.

Since the concept of relative deprivation refers to subjective perceptions and expectations, the question arises whether these perceptions do or do not correspond to objective circumstances.⁹ Gurr tried to deal with this problem by bringing in a number of political and economic indicators. This, however, has led to several methodological problems. Since he does not elaborate the complex interaction between the subjective perceptions of individuals and the objective indicators, this leads to a definitional vagueness as to how the final intensity of deprivation is to be measured.

⁶ Marx, Gary, and Wood, James (1975) 'Strands of Theory and Research on Collective Behaviour', *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 1.

⁷ Gurr, Ted R. (1970) *Why Men Rebel*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press), p. 13.

⁸ Marx and Wood, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

⁹ Gurney, Joan Neff and Tierney, Kathleen (1982) 'Relative Deprivation and Social Movements: A Critical Look at Twenty Years of Theory and Research', *The Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 23.

C) *Mass Society Theory*: Kornhauser's work examines the social conditions that result in the abandonment of constitutional modes of political activity in favour of uncontrolled mass action. Accordingly, Kornhauser employed the term 'mass society' to explain extremist tendencies in society, such as the rise of totalitarianism. He specified, however, that mass society in itself is not totalitarian, though rather more vulnerable to totalitarianism than other forms (e.g. pluralist, communal societies). According to Kornhauser, a mass society includes:

'(1) the weakness of intermediate relations, (2) the isolation of primary relations and (3) the centralisation of national relations'.¹⁰

His core proposition is that in certain conditions society may give rise to masses of large numbers of people who are not integrated into any broad social grouping, including that of classes. These alienated individuals, not belonging to any specific social group, tend to be susceptible for recruitment in mass movements. For Kornhauser, therefore, lack of organisational affiliation leads to political protest or violence. Significant factors that dissolve the individuals' social bonds, and therefore contribute to the formation of mass societies, are large-scale social processes (e.g. urbanisation, industrialisation), severe economic crises, or war.

Kornhauser's argument has been repeatedly refuted by resource mobilisation theorists who have pointed out that social movements usually recruit not the non-incorporated or alienated, but individuals that are already part of secondary organisations. Proponents of resource mobilisation have elaborated the way secondary organisations can function as a positive indicator for the availability of individuals to recruitment.¹¹

Kornhauser's analysis of secondary organisations has not been confirmed. Still, secondary organisations do indicate the influence civil society has on the development of social movements. The dissolution of social bonds reduces the ability to build independent

¹⁰ Kornhauser, William (1960) *The Politics of Mass Society* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul), p. 75.

¹¹ Oberschall, Anthony (1973) *Social Conflicts and Social Movements* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall); Freeman, Jo (1973) 'The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement', *American Journal of Sociology*, 78 (no. 4).

spaces between the individual and the state, and decreases the possibility of autonomous social movements.

D) *Collective Behaviour*: The most prominent approach in the classical model is Smelser's theory of 'collective behaviour', which questions the predominance of psychological factors as set out in previous formulations. Smelser has defined collective behaviour 'as mobilisation on the basis of a belief which redefines social action'.¹² Since, collective behaviour aims at reconstituting a distinct component of social action, its definition is social and not psychological. Accordingly, Smelser has elaborated six determinants at the social level, which constitute both the necessary and sufficient conditions for collective behaviour to develop. They are: structural conduciveness, structural strain, growth and spread of generalised beliefs, precipitating factors, mobilisation of participants for action, and the operation of social control. For Smelser, structural conduciveness means that social conditions are such as to permit collective behaviour, and where collective behaviour is possible, a structural strain is needed to create tensions and conflicts both on the social and the personal level. The spread of some generalised belief interprets the strain, and creates a common culture in which collective behaviour can develop. Precipitating factors then function as a dramatic incident that reveals the strain and reinforces the generalised beliefs. Individuals must of course be available to be mobilised and finally the accumulation of the previous determinants must not be inhibited by the exercise of social or personal control. Smelser specified this schema as a value-added process, where a temporal sequence of activation of the aforementioned determinants must take place, if collective behaviour is to occur.

Smelser's analysis of collective behaviour differentiates between norm-oriented and value-oriented social movements. In the first case, the movement attempts to restore, modify or protect norms in the name of a generalised belief (for example, feminist groups agitating to establish a private educational system for women). In the second case, the

¹² Smelser, Neil (1962) *Theory of Collective Behaviour*, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 8.

movement aims at a basic reconstitution of self and society (for example, a movement for national independence or a religious cult). Smelser argues that norm-oriented movements are more likely to develop in societies where institutions are highly differentiated, while societies with a low degree of institutional differentiation are more prone to value-oriented movements. Smelser's differentiation expresses the generalised belief of the post-war period that conflict in the advanced industrial societies has ceased to centre on fundamental principles of social organisation. Social conflicts become mediated and elaborated through differentiated institutions and political institutions are an outlet that not only aggregates, but also harmonises conflictual interests. Underlying Smelser's scheme is the functionalist assumption that, since political mobilisation becomes channelled via the political institutions, the political discourse will focus predominantly on institutionalised norms, rather than on social values. However, this premise was later fiercely criticised by new social movement theorists, who showed that the demands of these movements questioned the very foundations of the post-war consensus.

Smelser's analysis by incorporating new variables, further elaborates the concepts of structural strain and relative deprivation. All theorists of the classical model regard structural strain as the necessary precondition for collective behaviour. They give different answers, however, to the question whether it is also a sufficient condition. Smelser provides an elaborate account of necessary and sufficient conditions, by incorporating in his analysis the role of ideology (generalised beliefs) and social controls.¹³ For him, ideology as a crucial component of collective behaviour puts forward the purposive nature of such behaviour as well as its correlation to social change.¹⁴ On the other hand, Smelser reproduced the psychological and irrational premises of the classical model by emphasising the 'magical' element of generalised beliefs (e.g. belief in the existence of extraordinary

¹³ Zald, Mayer (1992) 'Looking Backward to Look Forward: Reflections on the Past and Future of the Resource Mobilisation Research Program' in: Aldon Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (eds.) *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press).

¹⁴ Marx and Wood, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

forces) and their distinctiveness compared with the social norms guiding conventional political action.

1.2.2 Underlying Themes of the Classical Model

The classical model has been associated with the focus on the individual. Social movements are not presented as collective phenomena, but as an aggregation of discontented individuals.¹⁵ This means that the classical model concerns itself not with the behaviour of collective actors, but with single individuals. Furthermore, the analysis of social structures and dynamics only functions as a background to this initial focus. Accordingly, collective behaviour will occur only if objective changes (e.g. structural strain) are followed by a change in the individuals' state of mind (e.g. individual frustration). Since the classical model locates the origins of collective behaviour in individuals, it will have to explain how individual discontent becomes translated into episodes of collective action.

Collective behaviour in the classical model is not a result of rational decisions but of the disrupted psychological state of the individual. In consequence, the motivation for movement participation is based not so much on the desire to achieve political goals, as on the need to manage the psychological tensions of a stressful social situation. Thus, collective action emerges, when the individuals can no longer cope with the psychological tension created by structural changes. In the classical model, the association of collective behaviour with psychological tension identifies instances of collective action with irrational social responses. Consequently, collective behaviour is perceived predominantly as formless, unpatterned, and unpredictable.¹⁶

A third core assumption of the classical model is that collective behaviour is essentially non-institutional, and is therefore juxtaposed to institutionalised forms of action.¹⁷ The latter represents the long-term, organised articulation of social demands,

¹⁵ McAdam, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

¹⁶ Buechler, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

¹⁷ Neidhardt, Friedhelm and Rucht, Dieter (1992) 'The Analysis of Social Movements: The State of the Art and Some Perspectives for Further Research', in: Dieter Rucht (ed.)

while the former refers to short-circuited psychological responses to extreme conditions of strain.

The classical model is associated with pluralist democracy, where power is widely distributed. In the absence of a concentrated power centre, the political system is accessible to any social group. Different groups have different goals and utilise different resources, but none wields sufficient political power to impose its interests. Every group has to ally itself with others in order to achieve its goals. Although the distribution of power is unequal, power is so dispersed that no social group monopolises it or becomes excluded from the political system. The pluralist model of democracy posits that any political demand can be articulated through the existing political channels. So, the classical model perceives non-institutionalised collective behaviour as an irrational response generated by intense individual strain.

The classical model underlines the significance of continuous communication and interaction between movement participants. Goals are not taken as given, but instead become the product of the participants' interplay. The classical model shares with new social movement theory an emphasis on the fluidity of goals and the importance of constant interaction by the participants. However, in the classical model the impact of this interaction is interpreted in negative terms (for instance, as accumulative irrational responses), while in new social movements theory interaction is perceived as an expressive and self-reflective process.

1.2.3 Main Critiques

The most common criticism of the classical model is that it oversimplifies the connection between structural strain and collective behaviour. The interaction between structure and actors is always a complex one, with different theoretical models illustrating different balances between the two. The classical model, it is argued, assumes a simple one-to-one correspondence between strain and collective behaviour.¹⁸ It is for this reason

Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the U.S.A. (Frankfurt, Campus).

¹⁸ McAdam, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

that it cannot explain why collective behaviour is only an occasional phenomenon, although there is always some structural strain. The classical model has been criticised for assuming either a very static perception of society where social change and hence social strain are quite exceptional, or for ignoring the intervening variables that render strain a necessary but not sufficient condition. However, as time has passed, the classical model has developed from a simple relationship between individual strain and collective behaviour to a more sophisticated version (see Smelser), where strain is only one of the variables mentioned. Still, the assumption underlying the classical model is of a linear, causal sequence between structural strain and the occurrence of collective behaviour. This premise equates the macro-question of movement emergence with the micro-questions of individual participation, and so seeks to explain the occurrence of social movements with the psychological profile of the participating individuals.¹⁹

Another common criticism of the classical model is that it ignores the socio-political environment in which collective behaviour develops.²⁰ Resource mobilisation theorists particularly argue that the socio-political environment is a crucial variable for explaining the absence of social movements, even in the presence of structural and personal strain. Resource mobilisation focuses on the importance of resources and the political opportunity structure for the development of collective behaviour. In the classical model, social movements are portrayed as mere social responses to situations of extreme stress.²¹ Since they are not seen as purposive and rational actors, they are not able to consciously interact and take advantage of the resources available in their broader environment.

The different versions of the classical model are all agreed that individual deprivation and breakdowns of the social order constitute necessary preconditions for the emergence of social movements. Non-institutional collective action is juxtaposed to conventional action guided by the existing social norms, and this identification is

¹⁹ Mayer, Margit (1995) 'Social Movement Research in the United States: A European Perspective', in: Lyman, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

²⁰ McAdam, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

²¹ Banks, J. A. (1972) *The Sociology of Social Movements* (London, Macmillan).

interrelated with its dominant polity model. That model cannot account for non-institutionalised political behaviour, given that it assumes that a liberal polity is accessible and responsive to all forms of interest articulation. This means that extra-institutional forms of collective action are regarded either as irrational, or as the political behaviour of marginalised and underprivileged groups not using the available channels of interest articulation. There is, therefore, an implicit assumption in the classical model that collective behaviour embeds elements that may endanger civility and the liberal-democratic regime.²²

The individuals participating in social movements are assumed by the classical model to be under psychological stress (relative deprivation) or to be socially alienated (mass- society theory).²³ In both cases, social movement participants are seen as different from the average citizen. Resource mobilisation theorists have empirically disproved those assumptions, by providing data concerning the high degree of social integration of movement participants.

Another significant criticism of the classical model is that it is representative of the structural-functionalist framework that dominated the social sciences in the United States at that time. Thus, especially in Smelser's analysis, society is perceived as a social system consisting of interrelated parts, each of which is assigned a certain function that contributes to the stability and reproduction of the system as a whole. The classical model, being centred on problems of social order, perceives instances of collective behaviour as undermining the existing balance of the system. Moreover, the classical model shares the structural-functionalist premise that if social order prevails, this normally prevents collective action; if collective behaviour does occur, it must be explained in terms of a breakdown of social order.²⁴ This conservative bias in the classical model in favour of the dominant social structures has been heavily criticised by other social movements theorists, who have underlined the positive role of social movements in bringing about social and political change.

²² Zirakzadeh, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

²³ McAdam, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

²⁴ Buechler, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

Since the classical model cannot account for collective actors and the social properties of collective behaviour, individuals are portrayed as passive respondents vis-à-vis structural changes. As they absorb the impact of social changes they become frustrated, but never actively intervene in the social order to change it. Although the classical model focuses on the individual, it subsumes the individual to the dynamics of structure. A partial explanation for this structural determinism is the inability of the classical model to perceive of collective actors. It can account only for individuals, who as single units obviously cannot determine the dynamic of structures. Moreover, presenting social movements as spontaneous emotional outbursts does not accord them the ability to influence or change long-term, organised political processes.²⁵ This passive portrayal of individuals in the classical model is in sharp contrast with the premises of resource mobilisation and new social movement theory, where individuals and collective actors are the main protagonists of social and political change.

In summary, the classical model considers collective behaviour the result of structural strain disrupting the psychological state of individuals. However, it has a long tradition and a variety of different approaches. In the early phase the classical model stressed particularly the psychological factor and the irrationality associated with collective behaviour. This was reflected in the research into short-circuited collective behaviour (panics, crazes, mobs, riots, etc.), rather than into organised forms of political mobilisation. An exaggerated contrast was presented between social movements and rational, conventional conduct. From the early 1960s onwards, the classical model has centred more on organised social movements than on irrational forms of collective behaviour. The gap between the classical model and the subsequent models of resource mobilisation and new social movements derives partially from their different objects of study. The classical model, especially in its earlier versions, focused on short-lived, unorganised collective behaviour, while resource mobilisation and new social movements concentrated on long-term, organised forms of political mobilisation. However, since both objects were lumped together under the same analytical terms ('collective behaviour' or 'social movements'), this led to definitional vagueness. In others words, the

²⁵ Mayer, *op. cit.*, ref. 19.

incompatibility of the various theoretical models of social movement theories was both reflected in and reinforced by their different objects of research.

1.3 Resource Mobilisation

The resource mobilisation model came as a reaction to the classical framework. The civil rights, the antiwar (Vietnam), the women's, the environmental movement all challenged the assumptions of the previous theoretical model. The resource mobilisation framework emerged in a totally different social and political environment. Its main objective became to analyse the movements of the 1960s (their conditions of emergence, dynamic of development, structure of organisation, etc.), while the classical model had focused on the mass movements of the 1920s and 1930s (fascist and communist).²⁶ These different objects of study meant different analytical questions. Resource mobilisation does not try to define the reasons why individuals align with social movements (classical model) or the historical meaning a movement may have (new social movements). Resource mobilisation is interested in why some movements are more successful than others. It sees success as depending on the clear definition of the organisational goals and an effective utilisation of resources, both of which ensure a positive response from the established institutions. For resource mobilisation theorists, social movements are organisations like any other. They articulate specific aims and goals, and strive to realise them by applying their resources (capital, manpower, ideas, etc.) in what they see as the most effective way. The predominant question asked by the resource mobilisation theorist is, which organisational forms are the most effective for mobilising and applying resources.²⁷ Since, resource mobilisation studies the mechanisms of recruitment and the mobilisation of resources, the model identifies social movements as collective actors pursuing rational interests.

²⁶ Mayer, *ibid.*

²⁷ Eyerman, Ron, and Jamison, Andrew (1991) *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach* (Cambridge, Polity Press).

1.3.1 Underlying Themes of Resource Mobilisation

Shared assumptions of resource mobilisation theorists are as follows:

- (i) Rational calculations lead to collective action.
- (ii) Social movements are an extension of rational and institutionalised conventional politics.
- (iii) The participants of social movements are not marginalised, alienated individuals. On the contrary, their participation in social movements reflects their active participation in social networks.
- (iv) Collective conflicts occur not in a pluralist model of democracy, but in an elitist political system where asymmetries are endemic.
- (v) Grievances in societies are constant, collective protest is not. The catalysts that transform grievances into collective action are the availability of resources and the political opportunity structure.

These assumptions of resource mobilisation theory are analysed in greater detail in what follows, in order to illustrate the theoretical premises that differentiate resource mobilisation from the classical model as well as from new social movement theory.

The cornerstone of the resource mobilisation approach is Olson's theory of collective action.²⁸ He argues that a necessary precondition of an individual's rational decision to join collective action for providing a collective good is that his/her individual cost of participation must not outweigh the individual benefits.²⁹ On the subject of a public good, he notes that there is always the possibility of individuals getting a free ride at the expense of others' effort. In order to ensure collective action, therefore, incentives must be provided to the individual contributors aside from the objective of the collective good. Olson's theory provides an explanation why people do not take part in collective action despite their interest in collective goals.

²⁸ Kitschelt, Herbert 'Resource Mobilisation Theory: A Critique', in: Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

²⁹ Olson, Mancur (1965) *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press).

Resource mobilisation posits that every collective group chooses, by means of a cost-benefit analysis, a policy to ensure maximum rewards and minimum costs. To this end, collectivities manage their resources so as to achieve the most efficient results. These resources are material (money, goods, services, etc.) and non-material (knowledge, technical skills, organisation, authority, mass publicity, popular support, friendship and moral commitment, etc.).³⁰

Organisation is an important resource since it decreases the costs of participation, is vital in the recruitment of participants, and finally increases the chances of success.³¹ Although resource mobilisation overstresses the significance of formal organisation, empirical research has produced conflicting findings on the role of organisation and structure for the success of social movements. McCarthy and Zald have found that centralised and bureaucratically organised movements are more efficient, while Piven and Cloward have underlined that decentralised, informal movements are more likely to succeed, especially in the case of dispossessed social groups.³² Contrary to the classical model that focused on the psychological, irrational elements of collective behaviour, as well as new social movement theorists who stress the spontaneity and informality of the social movements of the 1960s, resource mobilisation theorists argue that at the core of social movements are organisations with coherent ideologies and rigid structures. They hold that it is these organisations that actually constitute the backbone of social movements. In addition they assert that, in the historical context of post-industrial societies, the formal elements of social movements are enhanced by the dominant trend of professionalisation.

³⁰ McCarthy, John, and Zald, Mayer (1977) 'Resource Mobilisation and Social Movements: A Partial Theory', *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 82, no. 6; and Obershall, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

³¹ Klandermans, Bert (1992) 'New Social Movements and Resource Mobilisation: The European and the American Approach Revisited', in: Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

³² Piven, Frances Fox, and Cloward, Richard (1979) *Poor People's Movements* (New York, Vintage Books); and McCarthy, Zald, *op. cit.*, ref. 30.

The emphasis on the significance of organisations for the success of social movements has led resource mobilisation theorists to view social movements as an extension of institutionalised, conventional politics. In place of the old duality (classical model) of unconventional and normalised political behaviour, resource mobilisation presents social movements as part of mainstream politics, as coexisting with institutional politics within the political arena.³³ This premise arose partly in response to the successful co-opting of various social movements into mainstream politics.

The classical model, by stressing the isolation and alienation of individuals (mass-society theory) or the irrational and hence socially marginal elements in social movements (collective behaviour), had presupposed that the participants in social movements were deviants on the margins of society or outcasts on the edge of structural strain. The resource mobilisation framework overturned this assumption by providing data demonstrating the positive correlation between social movement participation and membership in secondary organisations. In fact, potential participants in social movements are people actively engaged in the existing social networks.³⁴ It is not isolation that makes people susceptible to collective action, but knowledge of social processes and the rational decision to participate in them.

Resource mobilisation applies an elitist polity model.³⁵ According to this, social movements are not irrational responses to an open polity, but a tactical response to a closed and exclusionary political system. So, the unconventionality of social movements results not from the disrupted psychological state of the participants, but from the strategic problems confronting the movements. In the elitist model of democracy, resources are unevenly distributed, leading to the differentiation of elite groups versus non-elites. Those deprived of resources may develop the following strategies when trying to compete with the other collectivities in the political arena: they will try to utilise innovative practices and unconventional resources; they will try to extract resources from reform-oriented factions of the elite and they will ask their allies for support. Hence, open access to political

³³ McAdam, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

³⁴ Obershall, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

³⁵ Obershall, *ibid.*

institutions, the presence/absence of influential allies, and divisions within the elite are significant factors for the future development of a mobilised collectivity.

In resource mobilisation theory, collectivities that are excluded from the resources of the system become marginalised also on the theoretical level, and the model's preoccupation with formal organisation and resources contributes to the theory's class bias.³⁶ The predominant focus on organised protest reduces lower stratum protest politics that are devoid of resources to merely irrational and apolitical eruptions. The resource mobilisation model exclusively takes into account collectivities that are capable of participating in the elite versus non-elite conflict. The actors, in resource mobilisation theory, are therefore in possession of power, which they try to maximise by skilful use of resources and cost-benefit considerations.

Resource mobilisation theorists argue that since grievances are always present in society, the rise and dynamic of social movements cannot be directly attributed to the existence of deprivation in a population.³⁷ It is the variability of resources and the opportunities for collective action that will define a social movement's dynamic. Hence, the success of a movement depends on its ability to mobilise resources and to exploit the opportunity structure. The focus of analysis shifts from the 'why' of the classical model to the 'how' of resource mobilisation.

Earlier versions of the theory focused mainly on the variability of resources as the catalyst for a movement's success. Then, in response to the criticism that it lacked any contextual analysis, it developed new concepts, such as 'political opportunity structure', 'multi-organisational fields' and 'social movement sector'. The term political opportunity structure refers to resources that are external to an organisation but can be exploited.³⁸ So, the political opportunity structure of a movement refers to the group's organised allies and

³⁶ Piven, Frances Fox, and Cloward, Richard (1995) 'Collective Protest: A Critique of Resource Mobilisation Theory', in: Lyman, *op. cit.*, ref 1.

³⁷ Zald, Mayer (1992) 'The Continuing Vitality of Resource Mobilisation Theory: Response to Herbert Kitschelt's Critique', in: Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

³⁸ Tarrow, Sidney (1994) *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

opponents, as well as to the structure of the institutions (party system, state, etc.) of the political system.³⁹ So a social movement has an alliance system, as well as a conflict system consisting of representatives and allies of the political system that is being challenged.⁴⁰ A movement's progress depends on the dynamics of the multi-organisational field. For instance, the cleavage between its organisational alliance and its conflict system may coincide with other cleavages, such as created by class or ethnic divisions.⁴¹ The social movement sector is defined as the total of all 'social movement industries', meaning all the movement organisations oriented toward a similar social goal, which as such competes with other sectors of society for resources.⁴² By introducing the social and political environment into the analysis, resource mobilisation presents a more complex and elaborated theoretical model, where American elements of resource mobilisation are merged with some European elements of the new social movement theory.

A significant theoretical strand, within the resource mobilisation framework, has been the political process model.⁴³ This approach focuses on the political and institutional

³⁹ According to Tarrow, the term political opportunity structure has the following dimensions: '...changes in opportunity structure result from the opening up of access to power, from shifts in ruling alignments, from the availability of influential allies and from cleavages within and among elites'. See Tarrow, *ibid*, p. 18 and for a further elaboration on the concept: Kriesi, Hanspeter (1995) 'The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on their Mobilisation', in: Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans (eds.) *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*, (London, University College of London).

⁴⁰ Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref. 31.

⁴¹ Klandermans, *ibid*.

⁴² Mayer, *op. cit.*, ref. 19. There are also other terms, which have been introduced by recent resource mobilisation studies (e.g. social movement infrastructure). These, as well as those mentioned earlier will be examined more thoroughly later.

⁴³ McAdam, Doug, *op. cit.*, ref. 1; Tilly, Charles (1978) *From Mobilisation to Revolution* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley); Jenkins, Craig (1995) 'Social Movements, Political Representation, and the State: An Agenda and Comparative Framework', in: Jenkins and

environment, where social movements emerge and become activated, and so elaborates further the interaction between social movements and the state as well as institutionalised political actors.⁴⁴ In this way, variables - such as electoral realignments, availability of significant allies, changes in governing coalitions, the political conflicts between or within elites, the degree of closure/openness of the established political system, and the institutional structure of the state - become significant factors for understanding the function and evolution of social movements. The political process approach has provided a more elaborate account of the interaction between new, non-institutionalised actors and traditional, institutionalised forms of interest representation.⁴⁵ Moreover, it has introduced the element of value-systems (e.g. the belief systems of leaders), thereby broadening the frontiers of resource mobilisation theory. On the other hand, the model has been criticised for neglecting large-scale structural changes and favouring a political reductionism devoid of broader social and cultural attributes.⁴⁶

While the classical model aimed at depicting the reasons for individuals participating in social movements, resource mobilisation has tried to define the process of an organisation's successful evolution. It sees society as collectivities of rational actors, rather than as of individuals. It considers that there is a meso-level of mediating institutions and organisations between the individual and society.⁴⁷ The social agents in resource mobilisation are perceived as interacting with the structural elements of their environment. Individuals are not simply reflections of structural strains, as in the classical model; instead, they become organised and take advantage of the structural potentials.

Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref. 39; Burstain, Paul, Einwohner, Rachel and Hollander, Jocelyn (1995) 'The Success of Political Movements: A Bargaining Perspective', in: Jenkins, Klandermans, *ibid.*; Costain Anne (1992) *Inviting Women's Rebellion: A Political Process Interpretation of the Women's Movement* (Baltimore, Maryland, John Hopkins University Press).

⁴⁴ Della Porta and Diani, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

⁴⁵ Della Porta and Diani, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Melucci, Alberto (1989) *Nomads of the Present* (London, Hutchinson Radius).

⁴⁷ Eyerman and Jamison, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

Thus resource mobilisation, although it studies the restrictions imposed by the environment, perceives social agents as active collectivities.

1.3.2 Main Critiques

Resource mobilisation, partly in reaction to the classical model, has focused on the mobilisation process. Instead of stressing objective strains and individual beliefs, it has tried to depict the underlying rationality of collective action. Its theoretical assumptions have been criticised, by both collective behaviour and new social movement theorists, and that criticism has led to a less rigid formulation of the model. The cornerstones of resource mobilisation theory that have been deprecated are as follows:

(i) *Oversimplification of 'rationality'*: Resource mobilisation identifies rationality with instrumental rationality, the essence of which is the effective relation between means and ends.⁴⁸ However, disputes about the goals are related to substantive rationality. Resource mobilisation takes the goals of collective action for granted, instead of perceiving them as the result of communication and learning. Since the objectives are given, resource mobilisation can account only for rational strategies based on analytical knowledge. It excludes, therefore, collective action guided by substantive rationality, which addresses a totally different set of questions (social norms, values, etc.).⁴⁹ Moreover, a necessary premise of resource mobilisation is that individuals are clear about their objectives, and have all the necessary information to calculate the cost/benefit ratio of different courses of action. This precondition applies only in an ideal situation, however the reproduction of which is highly problematic in reality. This means that the collective actor's rationality remains conditional.

(ii) *Normalisation of protest*: Resource mobilisation's reaction to the irrational perception of collective action (classical model) has led to the overstatement of similarities between conventional and protest behaviour. For example, resource mobilisation has identified

⁴⁸ Ferree, Myra Marx, (1992) 'The Political Context of Rationality: Rational Choice Theory and Resource Mobilisation', in: Morris and Mueller, *op. cit.*, ref. 13.

⁴⁹ Habermas, Jürgen (1970) *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics* (Boston, Beacon Press).

social movements with their formal organisations, thus normalising collective protest as a simply another kind of institutional behaviour. As the distinctions between normative and non-normative forms of collective action became blurred, the differentiation disappeared between rule-violating and rule-conforming collective action.⁵⁰

Resource mobilisation's partial inability to analyse anti-systemic movements is the result of its emphasis on resources, and its minimisation of the importance of values as well as of repertoires of action. Since it focuses on only the instrumental rationality of movements, it cannot incorporate in its analysis the confrontational elements of social movements. It sees movements as pursuing given goals by choosing the most effective means. However, by instrumentalising social movements, it dismisses their potentially confrontational character. Another consequence of the model's focus on instrumental rationality is that it privileges institutional politics and in particular social struggles having distributional aims. Only such struggles can conform to the economisation of politics, meaning the perception of the political arena as a free market where rational actors bargain for resources. By contrast, struggles associated with general values (freedom for example), create problems in the theoretical assessment of their 'rationality'.

(iii) *The problem of indeterminacy*: The usual critique by resource mobilisation of the classical model is that it does not account for episodes where the necessary structural preconditions (e.g. relative deprivation) or individual beliefs do exist but social movements fail to emerge. The same critique can also be applied to resource mobilisation itself.⁵¹ Its preconditions for collective action are mobilisation of resources and an open political opportunity structure. Both factors are indeed necessary, but not sufficient conditions for collective action. Since the model cannot account for those instances where the above-mentioned preconditions exist, yet collective action does not develop, it shows itself unable to predict collective action. While resource mobilisation analysis has further elaborated the question of preconditions for collective action, it has not solved the problem of indeterminacy.

⁵⁰ Piven and Cloward, *op. cit.*, ref. 36.

⁵¹ Piven and Cloward, *ibid.*

(iv) *Claims of universal applicability*: By summarising the essence of social movements as the rational pursuit of interests, the resource mobilisation approach implicitly claims to be applicable to all kinds of movement. However, its historical and societal context is the United States in the 1970s. There, the existing pragmatist political tradition influenced social movement research towards an analysis of mechanisms rather than focusing on their objectives. The non-ideological tradition of social movements in the United States is in accord with the instrumental rationality of the resource mobilisation paradigm. Moreover, in the United States it is mainly self-limiting movements that have developed, which focus on single issues and achievable success; in Europe on the other hand, there is a tradition of articulating grand projects that aim at a total transformation of society. The two different models of social movement analysis are representative of these two traditions.⁵² Resource mobilisation concentrates on instrumental rationality and the analytical level of organisation. New social movement theory focuses on ideology, identity and the structural level. Resource mobilisation reflects the policy of pressure groups, while new social movement theory reflects the articulation of alternative politics. Different types of movements require different analytical tools to construct their logic of mobilisation.

(v) *The cultural and symbolic dimension*: Resource mobilisation does not incorporate into its analysis the process of the construction of meaning. It considers the ends of a movement as fixed –not as the result of an ongoing process of communication. Perceptions and beliefs can change, however, and in order to perceive those changes a theoretical understanding of the cognitive dimension is needed. Moreover, resource mobilisation reduces social movements to the bearers of instrumental rationality, while in reality they are involved in a symbolic struggle over meaning. They are dedicated not only to clearly defined distributional goals, but also to values and the significance of identity formation.⁵³ While value commitments and dedication are seen by the model as merely resources, a positive opportunity structure may be of only marginal importance for a social movement in comparison with the transformation of the self. Collective identity and values constitute significant variables, which help to explain how instrumental rationality may be

⁵² Mayer, *op. cit.*, ref. 19.

⁵³ Ferree, *op. cit.*, ref. 48.

overpowered, thereby also leading to the practical negation of Olson's free-riders problem.

(vi) *The assumption of homogeneity*: The resource mobilisation perceives the collective actor as a single unit. It does not explore the multiple, potentially conflictual trends that compose the identity of a collective actor. By insisting on clarity of the goals pursued, the theory excludes diversity from the analysis, as supposedly impeding the process of rational decision-making. However, the field of collective action should not be considered as a homogeneous entity. Collective actors may play many different games at the same time, making the empirical behaviour of a group the result of a variety of systems, orientations, and meanings.⁵⁴ Moreover, the degree of homogeneity of beliefs decreases as one moves from the centre of a social movement to the periphery of sympathisers or loosely associated individuals. In addition, and contrary to resource mobilisation premises, diversity may also function as a positive asset.⁵⁵ Its existence increases the viability of a social movement by not making it narrowly dependent on the growth or decline of a given organisation.

In summary, resource mobilisation stresses the organisational needs of movements, and in particular the need for managing resources. It emphasises the role of pre-existing networks for the emergence of new movements, and points out the complex relationship between organisation and the political opportunity structure.

1.4 New Social Movement Theory

Since it was developed mainly in Europe, the new social movement theory has become known as the European approach to social movements, in contrast to resource mobilisation, which became dominant in the United States. The European approach deals more with the structural trends that lead to the genesis of new social movements, while the American approach examines the mobilisation potentials of already existing movements. In other words, the former concerns itself with the emergence of new political and cultural

⁵⁴ Melucci, Alberto and Diani, Mario (1992) 'The Growth of an Autonomous Research Field: Social Movement Studies in Italy', in: Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

⁵⁵ Freeman, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

trends, while the latter delineates the factors facilitating the organisation and efficient contestation of demands.⁵⁶ Additionally, while it is an important premise of resource mobilisation that the model can be applied to all kinds of social movements, new social movement theory, for its part, focuses on the historically specific type to be found in the advanced capitalist or post-industrial society.

1.4.1 Underlying Themes of New Social Movement Theory

The concept 'new social movement' refers to a number of social movements (e.g. ecological movement, the peace movement, squatters, the gay liberation movement, citizen's initiatives, feminist movement, anti-racism, urban movements, counter-cultural movements, and consumer-protection groups).⁵⁷ In the literature they are depicted as a single category simultaneously representing two major ideological currents: one offensive and emancipatory, the other negative and defensive.⁵⁸ Accordingly, new social movements are presented as both bearers of social change and as a form of reaction to social change. Hence, on the one hand reflecting the reality of advanced capitalist or post-industrial societies, while on the other dissatisfied with the negative effects of continuous modernisation and economic growth.

The new social movement model developed in opposition to mainstream social theory, which forecasted increasing institutionalisation, routinisation, and the end of ideology in advanced capitalist societies.⁵⁹ At the end of the 1960s, large-scale mobilisations in these societies questioned the fundamental values of the societal order. The student movement and the New Left articulated an anti-systemic political discourse,

⁵⁶ Tarrow, Sidney (1992) 'Comparing Social Movement Participation in Western Europe and the United States: Problems, Uses and a Proposal for Synthesis', in: Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

⁵⁷ Rucht, Dieter (1992) 'Preface', to Rucht, *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Rucht, Dieter (1992) 'The Study of Social Movements in West Germany: Between Activism and Social Science', in: Rucht, *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Maier, Charles (1987) 'Introduction', to Charles Maier (ed.) *Changing Boundaries of the Political* (Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press).

which demanded authenticity, identity, and human liberation.⁶⁰ This historical legacy, together with the civil-rights movement and its tradition of civil disobedience, became the ideological foundations on which new social movements have built their own distinctive identity.

The next section will outline the main elements in the new identity of social movements. After a definition of their common core, the various macro-structural explanations for the emergence and evolution of new social movements will be presented.

There is a long on-going debate in the literature about the alternative dimension of new social movements features. It is argued that in the concrete historical context of the post-war period new social movements represent a rupture with conventional politics, embedding constitutive elements that are supposed to be qualitatively different from interest groups and the labour movement.⁶¹ These novel elements are:

A. Ideology

New social movements have been concerned predominantly with post-materialist values (the quality of life, a sense of community, etc.), and their political agenda is described as a major historical change in the value system of West European countries.⁶² Their ideological platform subordinates traditional materialist values (economic growth, military security, and domestic order) to a new set of post-materialist issues (ecological balance, anti-racism, gender, sexuality, etc.). The new social movements' discourse seriously criticises the post-war affluent society (and its symbol, the Keynesian welfare state) for representing a productivist model of development that concentrates on material goods and ignores cultural and individual needs. The criticism goes beyond the specifically economic and political arrangements of the post-war era to the broader foundations of modern culture. The new social movements question the cultural correlates of

⁶⁰ Boggs, Carl (1995) 'Rethinking the Sixties Legacy: From New Left to New Social Movements', in: Lyman, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

⁶¹ Eyerman and Jamison, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

⁶² Inglehart, Ronald, and Flanagan, Scott (1987) 'Value Change in Industrial Societies' *American Political Science Review*, vol. 81, no. 4.

instrumental-rationality, aggressive acquisitiveness, and uniformism. In their agenda, individual needs acquire a new substance as well as magnitude.⁶³ Cultural regulations and collective arrangements that overlook and suppress individual needs become seriously questioned. Consciousness-raising, communication, and identity formation are the driving forces of their political struggle.

In contrast to political parties and labour unions the new social movements have avoided the formulation of grand projects and abstained from articulating principles for transforming society as a whole. This attitude arose out of their strong belief in pluralism and heterogeneity.⁶⁴ One of their shared axioms is that the prevailing plurality of social struggles is by definition incompatible with any grand manifesto favouring some specific aspect of social reality while excluding others.⁶⁵ In parallel, they also oppose the formation of 'totalising identities'. They argue that there is no such thing as a single unitary political subject, since individuals are variously affected by the different social areas to which they belong.⁶⁶ In consequence, new social movements most strongly advocate the right to uniqueness within the broader context of a pluralistic culture.⁶⁷ This support of pluralism is not, however, coupled with a politics of individualism. On the contrary, new social movements have striven to establish alternative and egalitarian communities, where individual autonomy can co-exist with collective identity and belonging. Therefore, their ideology contains as important targets the construction of community and the attainment of solidarity.⁶⁸ Active political participation for new social movements consists precisely of

⁶³ Pakulski, J. (1991) *Social Movements: The Politics of Moral Protest* (Melbourne, Longman).

⁶⁴ Cohen, J. (1985) 'Strategy or Identity?', *Social Research*, vol. 52, no. 4.

⁶⁵ Jordan, Tim (1994) *Reinventing Revolution: Value and Difference in New Social Movements and the Left* (Aldershot, Brookfield, Sydney, Ashgate Publishing).

⁶⁶ Laclau, Ernesto and Chantalle Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards A Radical Democratic Politics* (London, Verso).

⁶⁷ Cohen, *op. cit.*, ref. 64

⁶⁸ Epstein, Barbara (1990) 'Rethinking Social Movement Theory', *Socialist Review*, vol. 20, no. 1.

their members belonging to multiple networks and spheres of solidarity.⁶⁹ This means that their organisational structure is very different from that of political parties and interest groups.

B. Organisational Structure

The new social movements have criticised political parties and labour unions for creating hierarchical and centralised organisational structures. They themselves try to overcome hierarchy and domination by relying on decentralised and fluid organisations. Their loose organisational structure is representative of their ideological stand for participatory democracy.⁷⁰ They question the institutions of representative democracy on the basis that representation weights power in favour of the representatives, who then become autonomous towards those they represent. In other words, the new social movements criticise formal democracy for its oligarchic tendencies, and are wary of being drawn into institutional politics.⁷¹ Where a new social movement has become transformed into a political party, it has introduced innovations in its organisational structure (e.g. the rotation principle) to help safeguard the party against the development of oligarchic tendencies.

Organisation of the new social movements is based on the principle of de-differentiation.⁷² They rely on neither horizontal (insiders versus outsiders) nor vertical differentiation (leaders versus rank-and-file members), and have no strict division between supporters and sympathisers or members and leaders. On the contrary: they try to merge

⁶⁹ Melucci, Alberto (1985) 'The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements', *Social Research*, vol. 52, no. 4.

⁷⁰ Dalton, Russel, Kuechler, Manfred and Burklin, Wilhelm (1990) 'The Challenge of New Movements', in: R. Dalton and M. Kuechler (eds.), *Challenging the Political Order: New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies* (New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press).

⁷¹ Dalton, Kuechler, Burklin, *ibid.*

⁷² Offe, C. (1985) 'New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics', *Social Research*, vol. 52, no. 4.

members and formal leaders, public and private roles in order to expand the borders of democracy.

Although this organisation of the new social movements as a whole is looser than that of political parties and labour unions, it is complex enough to embrace a wide range of bodies, from formalised and bureaucratised organisations to completely decentralised groups. The structure of new social movements can be described as web-like.⁷³ The core of the movement includes groups with a quite coherent ideology and rigid structure, and in the periphery are more loosely structured associations, networks and circles of sympathisers. Corollary of this is that the boundaries of social movements are not clear. When resource mobilisation identifies social movements with their formal organisations, it misses the fact that the new social movements as a whole lack coherence. What must be taken into account are the overall relations amongst its various organisations, informal groupings, and single individuals committed to action. While the new social movements are decentralised, one can still find within their broad spectrum a wide range of formalised and institutionalised organisations. The organisational rigidity attributed to new social movements depends on whether the focus is on the core or on the periphery of the movements.

C. Social Base

The social base of the new social movements is not very well defined, but certain aspects are held in common by the various social categories that support or are active participants in them. Three societal segments can be said to form their backbone:

- i. the new middle class (especially individuals working in the public sector or in the service professions)
- ii. sections of the old middle class and
- iii. people excluded from or being only peripherally involved in the labour market (students, the unemployed or retired).⁷⁴

⁷³ Pakulski, *op. cit.*, ref. 63.

⁷⁴ Offe, *op. cit.*, ref. 72.

Accordingly, new social movements are principally middle-class movements, but they do not act on behalf of a class.⁷⁵ Quite the contrary, they aim at representing multiple social groups, without unifying them into a single social category. Their concerns apply to society in general, not to the special interests of the middle or any other class. This differentiates the new social movements from the discourse and practices of the labour movement. Moreover, their self-identification goes beyond established political or socio-political classifications (e.g. Right-Left, rural-urban, wealthy-poor). Instead, their identity results from the issues they are concerned with (gender, race, age, etc.), and may include the whole of the human race (e.g. the pacifist and the ecological movements).⁷⁶

The members of or sympathisers with new social movements are characterised by high educational levels and relatively high economic security. Usually they are employed in the public sector in the areas of welfare and cultural services.⁷⁷ This means that, on the one hand, they have personal experience of the negative side of bureaucratisation and the contradictions of the administrative system, but on the other hand they enjoy considerable autonomy from the instrumental rationality of the market. Members or sympathisers are not marginal in the socio-economic sense, as the classical model would assume. Neither are they the principal victims of the processes against which they protest. They are, however, in a certain sense peripheral.⁷⁸ New social movements espouse values that are opposed to the dominant discourse. Hence, there is a 'normative' marginalisation of the members. Moreover, in a predominantly market economy new social movements' members suffer from a peripherality, which was reinforced in the beginning by their exclusion from neo-corporatist deals, and later by the ascendancy of neoliberal policies. The significant contraction of the public sector of the economy in the 1980s undermined

⁷⁵ Offe, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Offe, *ibid.*

⁷⁷ Brand, Karl-Werner (1990) 'Cyclical Aspects of New Social Movements: Waves of Cultural Criticism and Mobilisation Cycles of New Middle-class Radicalism', in: Dalton and Kuechler, *op. cit.*, ref. 70.

⁷⁸ Offe, *op. cit.*, ref. 72.

the material security and social status of the wage-dependent members of the middle class in public employment.⁷⁹

Concisely and generally, the supporters and sympathisers of new social movements are usually well educated, enjoy economic security, and belong to the younger age groups. Moreover, their social base presents a higher degree of internal differentiation than that of the labour movement.

D. *Strategy*

Unlike political parties and interest groups new social movements, predominantly address the general public and not the elites. In consequence, their strategy lies in educating the public in the issues they are concerned with. They reject the political practices of elite lobbying, of tactical coalitions or political deals, as belonging to the authoritarian and instrumental function of political parties, interest groups, and labour unions. In their endeavour to reach the public, the mass media are a very important resource for them in building and maintaining mass support.⁸⁰ A strategy frequently applied by new social movements is to stage public incidents, which by attracting mass media coverage come to the attention of the public and highlight the issue.

A second fundamental element in the new social movements' strategy is that their modes of action are founded on the concept of civil disobedience. They make extensive use of unconventional forms of action (protests, mass rallies, 'happenings', unofficial strikes, sit-ins, etc.).⁸¹ Their political practices deliberately diverge from those of the established political actors, given that they eschew the traditional channels of political intervention. Their unconventional modes of action underline the value-based and non-negotiable nature of their claims, and simultaneously engage the participants in a process

⁷⁹ Olofsson, Gunnar (1988) 'After the Working-class Movement? An Essay on What's "New" and What's "Social" in the New Social Movements', *Acta Sociologica*, vol. 31.

⁸⁰ Dalton, Kuechler, Burklin, *op. cit.*, ref. 70.

⁸¹ Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref. 31.

of collective learning.⁸² It is the tradition of civil disobedience that has endowed new social movements with the knowledge of practice of dissent and self-organisation.

The loci of action by new social movements have been many. They may disrupt political processes in the public sphere, or focus on consciousness-raising in small groups. In the literature their new identity is chiefly associated with their function in civil society.⁸³

⁸² Offe, *op. cit.*, ref. 72.

⁸³ There are many different definitions of the concept of civil society, structured around two contradictory meanings. The *first* meaning is a liberal-individualist one, which arose in the eighteenth century with the development of capitalism. It referred to the emergence of a liberal market economy and a bourgeois public sphere where individuals were free, at least in the negative sense, to pursue their own private interests. This first meaning underlines the individual economic dimension of civil society without providing any intrinsic democratic value in civil society. The *second* meaning of civil society underlines the positive rights of citizens in the context of a highly participatory model of democracy. Civil society is composed by self-constituted units (social movements, interest groups, ideological associations, etc.), which possess a high degree of autonomy in defining their collective interests. Those units resist subordination to the state and market rationality, while simultaneously struggling for inclusion into the broader realm of politics. Civil society can therefore be defined as the realm of agency, creativity, association, and freedom. In the literature on new social movements (e.g. Cohen and Arato) it is almost exclusively identified with this second meaning, and so it is in this section of the chapter. However, the definition adopted in the thesis generally and the analysis of Greek society specifically, is as follows: Civil society 'refers to all social groups and institutions which, in conditions of modernity, lie between primordial kinship groups or institutions on the one hand, and state groups and institutions on the other... Political parties, particularly in democratic parliamentary contexts, will be considered as the major organisational means for articulating civil society interests with the state'. See Mouzelis, Nicos (1995) 'Modernity, Late Development and Civil Society' in: John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*, (Cambridge, Polity Press), p. 226; Hann, Chris (1995) 'Philosophers' Models on the Carpathian Lowlands' in: Hall, *ibid*; Blakeley, Georgina

New social movements, it is argued, aim to repoliticise the institutions of civil society. Thus, the actions of new social movements are not always coterminous with 'visible' conflicts in the political arena.⁸⁴ New social movements with a stronger cultural orientation may be absent from the public sphere but present in other areas of movement activities, such as networks of people sharing a collective identity, groups challenging the routine procedures of everyday life, etc. The articulation of new political demands that were previously considered as private and personal, as well as the increase in non-institutional forms of political participation in civil society, has challenged the established boundaries of 'the political'.⁸⁵ Ever, since the 1970s the delimitations implied by concepts such as 'political' and 'private' or 'state' and 'civil society' have become increasingly blurred.

The augmenting intrusion of the state in various aspects of social life has led to the fusion of the non-political and political spheres of social life. New social movements have struggled to protect civil society against state intervention.⁸⁶ They do not target the economy and the state for inclusion, like political parties and labour unions used to do. Instead, they try to safeguard the democratic spaces they have built within civil society against capital, technology, and the state.

The strategy of new social movements has been based on the premise that the means always have an important influence on the ends. Therefore they avoid means founded on instrumental rationality, when trying to achieve their goals.⁸⁷ In their endeavour to adopt strategies in accord with their ideological commitment to democracy

(1998) 'Democratisation and Civil society in Chile: A Blind Alley for Feminists?' *Contemporary Politics*, vol. 4, no. 2; Habermas, Jürgen (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Polity Press); Cohen, Jean and Arato, Andrew (1995) *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press).

⁸⁴ Melucci, *op. cit.*, ref. 46.

⁸⁵ Offe, *op. cit.*, ref. 72.

⁸⁶ Habermas, Jürgen (1981) 'New Social Movements', *Telos*, no. 49.

⁸⁷ Pakulski, Jan (1988) 'Social Movements in Comparative Perspective', *Research in Social movements, Conflicts and Change*, vol. 10.

and identity formation, the participatory procedures and the egalitarian collective articulation of ends are often perceived as ends in themselves.

E. *New Scenarios of Conflict*

New social movements theorists are concerned with a macro-structural level of analysis. The movements are perceived as historical actors articulating long-term trends, and are presented as symptoms of a qualitative shift in the nature of capitalist/industrial societies. Theories of post-industrial or late capitalism have been developed to explain the growth of new social movements in terms of the underlying structural change. These explanations can be subsumed in two general categories, as follows.

(1) *The post-industrial interpretation*: Current class analyses stress the decline of the manual working class and the rise of new middle classes, mainly in the service sector, as manufacture-based production gives way to knowledge-based industry.⁸⁸ These structural changes are coupled with the tendency to move away from the polarised structure of the industrial-manufacturing era towards increased fragmentation and internal differentiation. The labour movement, so the argument goes, represents the old industrial society when the dominant conflict was between capital and labour. Industrial society has changed, however, giving rise to new structures and new political subjects. In post-industrial society the central conflict no longer takes place in the sphere of production but concerns the production of symbolic goods (e.g. images, culture, information).⁸⁹ This means that the area of conflict has moved away from the workplace, and the new social movements have emerged as the new central social actors.

⁸⁸ Giddens, A. and Mackenzie, G. (eds.) (1982) *Social Class and the Division of Labour* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press); Esping-Andersen, Gosta (April 1992) *Post-Industrial Class Structures: An Analytical Framework*, Working Paper 38, Centre for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Juan March Institute, Madrid; Wright, E. (ed.) (1989) *The Debate on Classes* (London, Verso Press).

⁸⁹ Touraine, Alain (1985) 'An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements', *Social Research*, vol. 52, no. 4.

(2) *The late capitalism scheme*: This shares with the above-mentioned theoretical formulation a belief in the decreasing importance of the capital-labour conflict and the new significance of the culture industries of knowledge and information. However, use of the term 'late capitalism' suggests that the theoretical roots of this line of argument lie in the Marxist tradition. Although it agrees that social conflict has left the shop floor, it still incorporates into the analysis the capitalist mode of production and its impact on the social dynamic. The late capitalism scheme can be subdivided into two complementary hypotheses:

(a) Corporate capitalism: In the post-war period the Keynesian welfare state developed in the countries of Western Europe. Mass political parties as well as the labour movement became part of a political consensus, which accepted the logic of profitability and the market as the main principle for the allocation of resources in exchange for employment, higher wages, and increased union power. Neo-Corporatism - meaning the institutionalisation of the relation between capital, labour, and the state - became the predominant form of interest intermediation. Political parties as well as labour unions stressed the need for economic expansion, distribution, and class consensus and their discourses chiefly concerned issues relevant to class cleavages.⁹⁰ In this way politics became articulated around the workplace, excluding representation of issues referring to other areas of what Habermas calls the life world. Moreover, social actors not involved in neo-corporatist arrangements became excluded from the political arena.⁹¹ The new social movements challenged this liberal-democratic welfare state consensus, which had remained uncontested by the political forces of the Right and Left.⁹² In other words, they developed in reaction to the bureaucratisation of the political parties and labour unions and

⁹⁰ Schmitter, Philippe (1981) 'Interest Intermediation and Regime Governability in Contemporary Western Europe and North America' in: Suzanne Berger (ed.), *Organising Interests in Western Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)

⁹¹ Hirsch, Joachim (1988) 'The Crisis of Fordism, Transformation of the 'Keynesian Security State', and New Social Movements', *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, vol. 10.

⁹² Offe, *op. cit.*, ref. 72.

to their productivist logic. Excluded from the dominant political agenda, the new social movements used non-institutional means to articulate their interests. There were opposed to the values and the institutional modes of conflict resolution prevailing in western societies during the post-war era.

(b) Colonisation of the life-world: New social movements are described in the literature also as a reaction to the growing expansion of the economy and the state into the life world.⁹³ The capitalist mode of production has generated an economic mechanism that has extended the subsystems of purposive rational action (the army, school systems, health services, family, etc.). However, since the last quarter of the nineteenth century there has been an increase in state intervention in order to secure the system's stability. State regulation of the economic process has meant a change in relations between the economy and the political system. Since society ceased to perpetuate itself through self-regulation, legitimation could no longer be derived from the order constituted by the relations of production. This meant that the ideology of free exchange gave way to government initiatives oriented toward the economic system's stability and growth. This new system of state management was coupled with a new ideology, which held that the development of social systems was determined by scientific-technical progress.⁹⁴ In other words, the process of societal rationalisation has been dominated by the imperatives of both capitalist growth and administrative steering. In late capitalism, the increasing intrusion of the capitalist economic system and state administration into the 'life-world' (culture, society and personality) has led to new forms of crises and conflicts. Struggles over social control have been concerned with new issues and taken place in other areas, than in the past.⁹⁵ New social movements react against this 'colonisation' of the life-world by the system, and oppose capitalist and administrative projects with demands for a better quality of life, individual self-realisation, and participation.

⁹³ Habermas, *op. cit.*, ref. 86.

⁹⁴ Habermas, Jürgen (1970) *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics* (Boston, Beacon Press).

⁹⁵ Epstein, *op. cit.*, ref. 68.

To sum up: The theorists of the new social movements proceed from a macro-structural level of analysis, and consider social movements as historical actors articulating long-term trends. For them, the polity model of the new social movements is neo-Marxist (Offe, Schmitter, Panitch) or post-Marxist (Touraine). Whether it is corporate capitalism or remains undefined (as in post-industrial theories), it is a polity with a fundamental social conflict. Touraine, for instance, argues that the mobilisation of new social movements takes place in opposition to a historical Other. The conflict, therefore, concerns the overall system of meaning that shapes the prevalent rules in a given society.⁹⁶ New social movement theory usually situates this core conflict in the socio-cultural sphere, or in the control-authority relations of the state apparatus. Concerning relations between actors and structures, the theory interprets new social movements as intervening actively in the socio-historical process of society's self-reproduction. These movements are therefore assigned an active role as bearers of society's 'self-reflection' and 'self-creation'.

1.4.2 Main Critiques

New social movement theory perceives new social movements as a structural outcome of late capitalism or post-industrial society. The theory's emphasis on the structural origins of social movements goes hand in hand with its tendency to overlook the significance of the political environment. The theory has often reduced the political context to a residual category, which accords with the theory's emphasis on macro- and micro-levels of analysis.⁹⁷ By linking its enquiry to the macro-structural tendencies that lead to the emergence of social movements, and the micro-processes that lead to the crystallisation of the participants' identity, the theory has neglected the meso-level of analysis, which concerns the mediating organisations. This means that contextual questions on, for instance, mobilisation potential (Does the movement respond to political opportunities?, Did polity members aid the movement?, Are some organisations more co-

⁹⁶ Touraine, Alain (1981) *The Voice and the Eye: An Analysis of Social Movements* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press)

⁹⁷ Tarrow, Sidney (1988) 'National Politics and Collective Action: Recent Theory and Research in Western Europe and the U.S.', *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 1.

optable than others?), have either never been asked or were underrated in new social movement theory.

Another major criticism of the theory has been that it is reluctant to study the influence of conventional politics on the development of new social movements. Its focus on civil society makes it overlook the interrelationship of social movements and conventional politics. Although, a distinction must be made between the internal logic of social movements and that of conventional political groups since they do differ significantly, the dynamics of collective action, even in their most expressive and anti-political forms, must be analysed also in relation to the political process.⁹⁸ A totally segregational perspective remains utopian, because it presumes that new social movements can build their democratic spaces within civil society without any interaction with the other actors of the polity.⁹⁹ But, if rising movements want to become autonomous and attain their purposes, they are compelled to both seek alliances and confront their adversaries—neither of whom they can ignore, given that they find themselves in a polity already full of activity.

Moreover the theory, by overstressing the non-institutional character of new social movements, cannot account for cases of social movements' cooptation. This deficiency is becoming more serious as more new social movements join conventional politics. The relatively strong anti-systemic attitudes of the late 1970s began to blur in the 1980s. The mainstream of the new social movements has become more pragmatic, and closer collaboration with public authorities is now widely accepted.

New social movements are perceived as a promise of social emancipation, and equated with de-alienation and cultural-political activities. From this perspective they appear as an articulation of human potential. New social movement theory having included in its discourse elements of socialist humanism and especially the critique of technocracy articulated by the proponents of Critical theory, can in certain cases be charged with

⁹⁸ Klandermans, Bert (1990) 'Linking the "Old" and the "New": Movement Networks in the Netherlands', in: Dalton and Kuechler, *op. cit.*, ref. 70.

⁹⁹ Plotke, D. (1995) 'What's so New about New Social Movements?', in: Lyman, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

essentialism.¹⁰⁰ It assumes that there is a 'true' human nature from which the capitalist process and the institutionalisation of scientific and technical development have alienated individuals. This 'true' essence of the social subjects has to be liberated again, and (it is argued) the new social movements that have replaced the labour movement in its historical mission will carry out this emancipatory project. Given that the new social movements are very fragmented, the issue of creating a unified force out of these diverse emancipatory collectives still remains problematic.¹⁰¹ In addition, analytical categories would have to be elaborated to differentiate new social movements from anti-democratic movements (neofascism) or neo-traditional ones (neo-religious movements).

The claim of new social movement theorists that these movements represent entirely novel forms of social protest has been seriously questioned. It is argued that, quite on the contrary, they share many attributes with older dissenting groups.¹⁰² Their 'novel' characteristics can also be found in previous historical periods, and should not be attributed exclusively to the structural conditions of post-industrial or late capitalist society. There are many studies that point out similarities with cultural and ecological movements at the beginning of the century, illustrating that new social movements are not an inherent part of any specific historical stage, but a more general reaction to the overall process of modernisation. In this respect, new social movements are seen as moralistic and idealistic expressions of middle-class radicalism.¹⁰³ According to this view, they represent a cultural criticism of the fundamental aspects of modern life, such as commercialisation, industrialisation, political centralisation, bureaucratisation, etc.¹⁰⁴ This means, that their

¹⁰⁰ Kellner, Douglas (1989) *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press).

¹⁰¹ Jordan, *op. cit.*, ref. 65.

¹⁰² D'Anieri, Paul, Ernst, Clair and Kier, Elizabeth (1990) 'New Social Movements in Historical Perspective', *Comparative Politics*, vol. 22, no. 4.

¹⁰³ Eder, Klaus (1985) 'The "New Social Movements": Moral Crusades, Political Pressure Groups, or Social Movements?' *Social Research*, vol. 52, no. 4.

¹⁰⁴ Brand, *op. cit.*, ref. 77.

'novel' aspects are in fact part of the broader history of middle-class protest against the values that underlie present-day modernity.

In brief, the theory of new social movements stresses their anti-state/administrative character, their location within the realms of civil society, and their claim for participatory forms of democracy. New social movements are characterised by discontinuity and marked by waves of recurrent mobilisation. Mass mobilisation is perceived by new social movement theory as rational, simultaneously promoting self-awareness and collective learning. The theory locates the causes of the movements in macro-structural trends.

1.5 Future Challenges for Social Movement Theory

Most of the observers in the mid-1980s agreed that many of the social movements had gradually fizzled out. The wave of political participation and movement mobilisation that started in the late sixties 60s was followed in the nineties '90s by either the movements' institutionalisation or their retreat. However, the literature on social movement theory never stopped growing, and research into social movements has become an independent field. The growing importance of social movement analysis may be attributed to the fact that social movement theory concerns issues fundamental to sociology, such as the process of social change, the relation between actor and structure, or the emergence of a new historical paradigm. Moreover, social movements did have a significant impact. They stimulated collective learning and generated traditions that affected the repertoires of action and also left behind multiple networks that were often reactivated in later periods.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, social movements, even those that eventually fail, stimulate social reform. This suggests that social movement theory will continue to develop, seeing that it is related to the fundamental questions of the self-constitution and evolution of society.

The proliferation of research on social movements has been accompanied by attempts to merge the three different approaches into one.¹⁰⁶ Theorists have pointed out

¹⁰⁵ Jamison and Eyerman, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

¹⁰⁶ Melucci, Alberto (1996) *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, (Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press); Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref.

that all three can be perceived as complementary. More specifically, new social movement theory focuses on broader structural changes, resource mobilisation emphasises the necessary preconditions concerning the mobilisation process of participants, while the classical model illustrates the mediating processes through which people give meaning to events and interpret situations.¹⁰⁷ Since social movements cannot be reduced to any single level of analysis, the convergence of the three models constitutes a precondition for a more comprehensive theory of social movements. Such a study of social movements must involve three levels of analysis: the actors, the institutions and formal movement organisations, and the broader societal context. Analysis on the level of actors highlights how individual cognitive and normative orientations are formed and crystallised; the organisational framework elaborates the interaction among actors in a concrete institutional setting; while finally the structural context specifies the prevailing economic, political and cultural changes in society.¹⁰⁸

From this we can draw the following conclusions:

- (a) All three models of social movement theory have contributed to the development of social movement analysis.
- (b) All three models have been criticised for their shortcomings and no single model has become the dominant paradigm in social movement analysis.
- (c) There is a general call for the synthesis of the three models, so as to expand the borders of social movement theory, and their complementary character has been emphasised in the more recent studies.

A problem that has undermined previous endeavours to synthesise the three models has been that each of them predominantly concerned itself with instances of collective action in a specific historical period (e.g. the classical model belongs to the period 1920-1960) and geographical unit (e.g. the United States). On the other hand, this temporal and geographical disparity between the three models also constitutes the most

31, Tarrow, *op. cit.*, ref. 38; Eyerman and Jamison, *op. cit.*, ref. 27; Della Porta and Diani, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref. 31.

¹⁰⁸ Kitschelt, *op. cit.*, ref. 28.

positive asset in terms of their synthesis. For example, in the Greek context the new social movement theory has its shortcomings because it refers almost exclusively to advanced capitalist societies. By introducing resource mobilization into the analysis, one can highlight the political opportunity structure and the tradition of repertoires of action in Greece, without being constrained by the historical premises of new social movement theory. Or take the classical model, which by focusing on the individual, allows tracing the complex process of cognitive orientation in societies with diverse cultures. In view of the above, theoretical endeavors to integrate different historical periods or geographical areas into social movement analysis contribute to the flexibility of social movement theory. Relating structural factors to outcomes particularly requires a significant variation in the range of structural factors studied, and this is possible only in cross-national or cross-historical research of which there is a marked lack, however.¹⁰⁹

While there are numerous studies on the emergence and meaning of social movements in advanced capitalist countries, few pursue their line of inquiry beyond those countries. The majority of writings on social movements comes from the more advanced countries of northern or central Europe.¹¹⁰ They have concentrated on the internal social conflicts of western societies (e.g. new social movements versus the state), thereby overlooking the possible impact of the international context on the development of social movements. Conversely, the emergence of social movements in less developed countries has been of mostly marginal interest. During the 1990s, the overall emphasis on movements in the advanced capitalist countries caused Latin American intellectuals to challenge the existing body of literature, and to introduce new elements associated with the political and social history of their own region. This new input is a good foundation for elaborating some questions specific to the Greek context. Variables like 'alternative modernities', 'models of development' and 'geopolitics' illustrate the complex forms that protest politics may take in regions where the international and national dimensions are inseparable intertwined.

¹⁰⁹ Rucht, *op. cit.*, ref 58.

¹¹⁰ Tarrow, *op. cit.*, ref. 56.

1.6 Social Movement Theory in Greece and Latin America

In Latin America, increased politicisation in the wake of democratic consolidation led to a proliferation of studies concerning the form and meaning of Latin America's novel associationalism. Furthermore, Latin American academics and activists were reacting to the growing autonomy of social movement theory vis-à-vis actual movements in society. Representative is the argumentation put forward by Joe Foweraker:

'Social movement theory is necessarily drawn from the experience of particular social movements in particular places, but the present generation has seen an increasing separation of the sites of theoretical production and collective action. Most of the theory has been produced in Western Europe and North America, but during the past twenty years, this theory has expanded in direct proportion to the decline of their social movements. In the meantime there has been an exponential increase in social movement activity in Eastern Europe, South Africa, China and Latin America...'.¹¹¹

Thus, in the 1990s a new theoretical challenge to the existing social movement literature and the representation of Latin America's social movements by western theorists gradually took shape.¹¹² It was founded on three fundamental axioms: (i) opposition to the western intellectuals' tendency to homogenise different activities and mobilisations in Latin America, thereby ignoring the area's regional and cultural heterogeneity; (ii) rejection of the devaluation of non-western social movements as of limited radical ability compared to

¹¹¹ Foweraker, *op. cit.*, ref. 1, p. 1.

¹¹² '... many writers in this volume wilfully refuse to judge the movements they discuss by presumed standards of progressiveness or other political criteria that might be taken for granted by metropolitan intellectuals or their readers...here again one senses an effort to vacate a site of metropolitan intellectual authority, the site from which the intellectual finds in the action of others the realisation of his own dreams. These essays refuse to interpret movements on the periphery as signifiers whose signified rests in the metropolis'. See Pratt, Mary Louise (1998) 'Where To? What Next?', in: Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, Arturo Escobar (eds.), *Culture of Politics/Politics of Culture: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements* (Colorado, Westview Press), p. 432.

their European counterparts; and (iii) exposure of the ethno-centric bias embedded in several concepts applied by many western theorists (e.g. the clear divide between civil society and the state).¹¹³ The new theoretical writings did not contain propositions in the form of universal claims.¹¹⁴ On the contrary, it was specific case studies of indigenous

¹¹³ Representative is the work of three important social movement theorists: Laclau, Mouffe, and Touraine. According to Laclau and Mouffe, social movements in post-industrial societies represent authentic struggles against the subordination typical of late capitalism (commodification, bureaucratisation, cultural massification of life, etc.) and in favour of a radical pluralist democracy. However, social movements in Latin America and the Third World constitute more 'conventional' popular struggles against despotism and imperialism. This is to say that democratic revolution in advanced capitalist societies has crossed a certain threshold that has not yet been attained in the Third World. Touraine similarly argues that social movements in post-industrial societies constitute a struggle to attain control of 'historicity' (the set of cultural models that rule social practices), while in Third World and Latin American societies they are merely struggles resulting from the process of social change and development, targeting the political system and the State for inclusion. In other words undeveloped and developing societies have not yet reached the level of 'self-production' through the control of 'historicity'. Laclau and Mouffe, *op. cit.*, ref. 67; Touraine, Alain (1988) *The Return of the Actor* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press) and Touraine, *op. cit.*, ref. 96. See also Slater, David (1994) 'Power and Social Movements in the other Occident: Latin America in an International Context', *Latin American Perspectives*, vol. 21, no. 2.

¹¹⁴ An indicative bibliography in English is the following: Foweraker, Joe and Craig, Ann L. (eds.) (1990) *Popular Movements and Political Change in Mexico* (Boulder and London, Lynne Rienner Publishers); Foweraker, *op. cit.*, ref. 1, (London, Boulder, Colorado, Pluto Press); Calderon, Fernando and Piscitelli, Alejandro (1990) 'Paradigm Crisis and Social Movements: A Latin American Perspective', in: Else Oyen (ed.) (1990) *Comparative Methodology: Theory and Practice in International Social Research* (London, Sage); Escobar, Arturo, and Alvarez, Sonia E. (eds.) (1992) *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy and Democracy* (Boulder, San

social movements that became the point of reference. This endeavor to explore the theoretical flexibility and the inclusive capacity of the existing concepts of new social movement literature has provided many useful conceptual tools that can also be used in the Greek case.

The relevance of the Greek case derives not from a joint categorization of Greek and Latin American societies as 'semi-peripheral', 'backward core' or 'late-developing'. It stems from the theoretical inquiry of the new literature to map the different forms that collective action may take, and the various ways in which 'the political' is constituted.¹¹⁵ This is helpful in the Greek instance because of its endeavour to expand social movement theory by tracing the historical and national context of political strategies and cultural meanings. In the Greek as well as in the Latin American academic communities new social movement literature dominates over that of the classical model and resource

Francisco and Oxford, Westview Press); Escobar, Arturo (1992) 'Culture, Practice and Politics: Anthropology and the Study of Social Movements', *Critique of Anthropology*, vol. 12, no. 4; Escobar, Arturo (1995) *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press); Slater, *ibid.*, Wignaraja Ponna (1993) *New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People* (London and New Jersey, Zed Books); Alvarez, Dagnino, Escobar, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

¹¹⁵ I refer here to the distinction applied by David Slater to 'the political' and 'politics'. Thus 'politics', according to Slater, 'has its own public space-it is the field of exchanges between political parties, of parliamentary and governmental affairs, of elections and representation, and in general of the type of activity, practices, and procedures that take place in the institutional arena of the political system'. The 'political', on the other hand, is a broader category and '...can be more effectively regarded as a type of relationship that can develop in any area of the social irrespective of whether or not it remains within the institutional enclosure of politics. The political, then is... a kind of "magma of conflicting wills" or antagonisms'. See Slater, *ibid.* pp. 387-88.

mobilization.¹¹⁶ As Joe Foweraker notes:

‘On a priori grounds it appears that the different approaches might best be applied to Latin American movements in a selective and pragmatic fashion. New social movement theory might serve to explain the increasing incidence and broader scope of mobilisation in Latin America, while resource mobilisation theory might address the political constraints and opportunities, and explicate the mechanisms of social movements success. Surprisingly the record shows that it is only new social movement theory which has been applied to Latin America, while resource mobilisation theory has been almost entirely ignored’.¹¹⁷

In Greece too, the selective application of both analytical frameworks would facilitate the analysis of different historical periods and aspects of the Greek political system. For instance, new social movement theory could be used to explain the increased politicisation after the junta’s fall in 1974, or the consolidation of direct democratic principles in the feminist and ecological movements. Resource mobilisation, on the other hand, would be helpful for defining the political opportunity structure that new-sprung parties face in the frozen Greek party system. However, in Greece, as in Latin America, resource mobilisation theory is almost entirely absent. The dominance in both instances of new social movement theory is associated with the correspondence between specific properties of the theory and significant attributes of these societies.

As noted earlier new social movement theorists are concerned with a macro-structural level of analysis, and so present new social movements as historical actors, who

¹¹⁶ In Greece, new social movement theory has been fragmentary and incomplete. In the Greek bibliography, the analysis of concrete social movements or cases of collective mobilisation is over-represented by comparison with publications on social movement theory. Notable exceptions have been the debates initiated by the magazines *Elliniki Epitheorisi Politikis Epistimis* (e.g. ‘Social Movements and Social Sciences’, special issue, no. 8, November 1996) and *Leviathan* (e.g. no. 6, February-April, 1990). In Latin America, on the contrary, numerous studies have explored the applicability of new social movement theory to indigenous forms of collective action.

¹¹⁷ Foweraker, *op. cit.*, ref. 1, p. 3.

are both carriers of social change as well as a reaction to it. While new social movement theory focuses on macro-structural changes, resource mobilisation emphasises the institutional and organisational context of movements. The different levels of analysis explain the integration/marginalisation of the two discourses by the Greek and Latin American writers respectively. In both societies collective action has established a repertoire of action and a political discourse that has always embedded the much broader question of the most desirable course to modernisation. New social movement theory, by presenting new social movements as historical actors articulating long-term trends, is better fitted to elaborate on those questions than resource mobilisation theory, which is restricted to the organisational and institutional settings of a society. The macro-structural level of analysis of new social movement theory makes possible the study of social movements that attempt to articulate and establish 'alternative modernities', while resource mobilisation fails to be in accord with broader political projects.¹¹⁸ Accordingly, the predominance of new social movement theory in both of these societies reflects the strong entrenchment of political projects that transcend mere segments of society, and purport to define the course of the nation or the people as a whole. Such holistic projects are concerned not only with the internal organisation of the nation-state, but also with the relationship between the nation-state and the international community.

In social movement literature there is an underlying assumption of a closed (national) political system that is subdivided into different political realms.¹¹⁹ The almost exclusive study of social movements as strictly parts of the fixed orbits of nation-states and their respective civil societies has been extensively criticised. The inability of social movement theory to conceptualise the wider global context in which contemporary

¹¹⁸ Concerning the relation of Latin American new social movements with the cultural project of Western modernity see Alvarez, Sonia E., Dagnino, Evelina, Escobar, Arturo (1998) 'Introduction: The Cultural and the Political in Latin American Social Movements', in: Alvarez, Dagnino, Escobar, *op. cit.*, ref. 112.

¹¹⁹ Lindberg, Staffan and Sverrisson, Arni (1997) 'Introduction' in: Staffan Lindberg, Arni Sverrisson (eds.) *Social Movements in Development: The Challenge of Globalisation and Democratisation*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan).

movements act leaves out of account the crucial role that the supra-national dimension (world politics) plays in the formation and consolidation of this inner realm.¹²⁰ The independent variable of geopolitics has a direct impact on the political tradition and culture of nations, influencing political identities, strategies, repertoires of action, and more generally the existing political tradition.¹²¹ For instance, with regard to a broad number of nation-states (especially late developers), the same process of state building and consolidation, as well as the consequent function of the political system, have been invariably intertwined with the strong presence of the international environment in the inner political realm. For these societies, geopolitics, as an element of interdependency or mere dependency, has been omnipresent in the historical memories, collective identities, political discourses and all the other elements that are constitutive of the terrain of the political. This shows that, the concrete form of the 'political' in a society cannot be separated from the collective political identity of a nation. As Bryant notes,

'... in their historical remembering and forgetting, nations are meta-narratives which connect past with present and present with future'¹²².

The implications of the previous analysis for our understanding of Greek new social movements are discussed in Part Two of the thesis, which depicts the specific case studies. First the feminist movement is presented, while the ecological movement follows next, in line with their historical sequence.

¹²⁰ Slater, David (1998) 'Rethinking the Spatialities of Social Movements: Questions of (B)orders, Culture and Politics in Global Times', in: Alvarez, Dagnino, Escobar, *op. cit.*, ref. 112.

¹²¹ I refer here to David Slater's definition of the 'geopolitical', which is broader than the usual confinement of the concept to the transnational environment. According to Slater, the concept 'geopolitical' can refer to three different but interrelated instances 1) the local-regional constitution of the nation-state, 2) the sovereign nation-state and finally 3) the global world order. See Slater, *ibid.*

¹²² Bryant, Christopher (1995) 'Civic Nation, Civil Society, Civil Religion' in: Hall, *op. cit.*, ref. 83, pp. 137 and 139.

CHAPTER 2

THE GREEK FEMINIST MOVEMENT: **SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the contextual setting of the Greek feminist movement. In the course of the socio-economic variables being assessed, the political system is analysed in terms of the role of the state and the political parties. Since the political opportunity structure of the Greek feminist movement has been shaped also by the existing tradition of movement politics, this will be illustrated in section 2.6, which provides a short history of the Greek feminist movement.

2.2 The Sexual Division of Labour

Greece's economy since World War II has displayed features of both advanced and less developed countries.¹ It consisted of a significant offshore shipping and commercial complex, an extensive patriarchal agricultural economy, and a weak-manufacturing base.² In the early 1950s Greece was still primarily an agricultural country, with 47.5% of the population living in rural areas and only 37.7% in towns. In 1981, the rural percentage had dropped to 30.3%, and the urban figure gone up to 58.1%.³ These changes were partially a result of an emigrational flow (1950-1975) to the urban centres as well as to countries abroad. In the agricultural sector, the land appropriation of 1923 led to the establishment of thousands of peasant smallholdings, with concomitant low productivity.⁴ The economic survival of those smallholdings depended largely on the unpaid labour of women and children. Even as late as 1981, most of the women engaged in agriculture (70.3%, as against 10.9 % of men) had the legal status of 'auxiliary and non-remunerated family members', and so were not

¹ The data provided in this chapter refer to the period before 1992, and relate to socio-economic conditions pertaining prior to the emergence and during the development of today's Greek feminist movement. Some significant changes have occurred since then, but have been followed by the demise of movement politics and the rise of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

² Stamiris, E. (1986) 'The Women's Movement in Greece', *New Left Review*, no 158.

³ Panayotopoulou, R. 'The Lost Honour of Greek Women's Political Culture: Thoughts and Remarks Concerning Women's Political Culture', in: N. Demertzis (ed.) (1994) *Greek Political Culture in Our Time* (Athens, Odysseus -in Greek).

⁴ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

entitled to access to credit, to pensions, and to participation in farmers' co-operative.⁵ According to statistics of 1988, women still constituted a very high percentage of the total female labour force in agriculture (37.8 %).⁶ Although, therefore, their economic contribution was extensive and significant, the traditionally strong patriarchal norms and values continued to exclude women from the public realm.

Anthropological research into rural life in Greece has investigated the assumption that women's domesticity and their association with the private sphere deprives women of control over their own lives. The counter-argument was put forward that, since the family is such a significant economic and social unit in the Greek village community, the role of the mother within that unit must have important consequences for power distribution in Greek society as a whole.⁷ This inference is quite misleading, since it portrays the women's domestic role as a basis of power, even if that power may not be legitimate.⁸ Any power women may wield depends exclusively on their compliance with role expectations.⁹ Their 'power' presupposes the successful accomplishment of roles as traditionally defined. That means that even if there are instances of women exercising power, they are instances of reproducing the patriarchal structure.

As a result of the economic developments of the 1960s, women in the agricultural work force left the fields and returned to the house. Throughout this decade the increasing commercialisation and mechanisation of agriculture significantly altered the sexual division of labour. The expanded mechanisation rendered the application of machinery as men's work on the one hand, and on the other it freed men for a wide range of off-farm activities. For the women it meant a

⁵ Papagaroufalas, E. (1990) *Greek Women in Politics: Gender Ideology and Practice in Neighbourhood Groups and the Family*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University.

⁶ Daraki, Pepi (1995) *The Vision of Equivalence of the Two Sexes* (Athens, Kastaniotis-in Greek).

⁷ Friedl, E. (1986) 'The Position of Women: Appearance and Reality', in: J. Dubisch (ed.), *Gender & Power in Rural Greece* (Princeton, N.J, Princeton University Press).

⁸ Dubisch, J. (1986) 'Introduction', to Dubisch, *ibid.*

⁹ Juliet du Boulay 'Women - Images of their Nature and Destiny in Rural Greece', in Dubisch, *ibid.*

return to their traditional task of food production for the family. So while men's work increasingly took on wage forms, women's work, both on the land and in the household, remained unpaid.¹⁰

The dual burden of responsibility borne by women, who also work outside their home, is not, therefore an exclusive product of our time. It was a salient feature also of pre-industrial relations, as shown by the women's role in the agricultural sector in Greece. While women in farming and urban women share this dual burden, the former are usually not paid, do not participate on an equal basis in decision-making concerning family property, and are excluded from representative political bodies. The social position of women in the countryside is very important for understanding the dynamic of the feminist movement in Greece since, according to the 1981 census, the highest percentage of working women (41.6% percent) were in agriculture.¹¹ The social and political marginalisation of these women is reflected in their low interest in politics. A 1985-research project, which was conducted by the National Centre for Social Research, revealed that only 39.9% women of the agricultural population were interested in politics, while the figure for urban women was 55.9%.¹² Thus, the 'power' women may wield by virtue of their participation in the productive process or their role in the private sphere, does not contradict their obvious exclusion from the public sphere. Moreover, women in the agricultural areas are more intensively exposed to the strong ideological influence of the Church, which continues to regard the female sex as inferior.¹³

The 1950-75-urbanisation process significantly changed certain features of Greek society. The massive population movement from rural to urban areas had a marked effect on women's participation in education and the non-agricultural labour

¹⁰ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹¹ Dobratz, B. (1986) 'Socio-political Participation of Women in Greece', *Research in Politics and Society*, no 2.

¹² *Political Culture in Southern Europe* (1985), Research conducted by the National Centre for Social Research, Athens (in Greek). The impact of other variables (age, education) is illustrated later on in this section.

¹³ Dobratz, B. (1992) 'Differences in Political Participation and Value Orientations among Greek Men and Women', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 12, 8.

force, although at a slower rate than in most other European countries.¹⁴ All of Western Europe experienced a continuous increase in the percentage of women in the labour force between 1961 and 1981, but in Greece the figures remained static until 1971.¹⁵ Over fifty years, women's formal participation in the labour force increased by only five per cent (from 26.2% in 1928, to 31.9% in 1981), but in the twenty years from 1971 to 1991 the increase was almost the same.¹⁶ Yet, although more women participated in the workforce, the proportion of paid women remained considerably lower than in the rest of Europe.¹⁷ If Greek women engage in economic activity, this is to a great extent unpaid employment. In 1981, the 'unpaid family members' category constituted 36% of the women's work force, with the great majority of this unpaid auxiliary female labour in the agricultural sector.¹⁸ In 1981 women constituted 70,3% of unpaid assistants in farming, but unremunerated employment existed in other sectors as well. In the same year, unpaid assistants constituted 8% of women in the secondary sector, and 13.7% in the tertiary.¹⁹ According to the Labour Force Survey (Eurostat), by 1991 the category of 'unpaid family members' had fallen to 25.2% in Greece - with the average rate for the European countries being 4.7% at this point.²⁰

The persistence of the low degree of women's integration into the wage economy is due to several factors. One of them is the structure of the Greek economy,

¹⁴ Kyriazis, N. (1995) 'Feminism and the Status of Women in Greece', in: D. Conostas and T. Stavrou (eds.), *Greece Prepares for the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C. and Baltimore, The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press & The John Hopkins University Press).

¹⁵ Leontidou, L. (1992) 'Women's Labour in Cities: A Contradictory Acquisition', in: E. Leontidou and S. Ammer (eds.), *Women's Greece*, (Athens, Alternative Publications - in Greek).

¹⁶ Women participated in the labour force with 27.7% in 1971, and 32.6% in 1991. See Panayotopoulou, *op. cit.*, ref. 3; Dobratz, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

¹⁷ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14

¹⁸ Kyriazis, *ibid.*

¹⁹ See in Papagaroufalas, *op. cit.*, ref. 5; and Kyriazis, *ibid.*

²⁰ Simeonidou, C. (1994) 'The "incompatibility" of women's family and professional lives', *Dini*, 7 (in Greek).

where relations between capital and wage labour have not been generalised to the same degree as in more advanced capitalist countries and continue to co-exist with widespread self-employment. Another reason is the pronounced role of the family, and the sexual division of labour that subjects female labour as auxiliary and supplementary to the occupation of the male head of the family.

Another important factor for explaining the low degree of women's integration into the wage economy is their participation in informal employment. Although the official figures for women in the labour force remained low in the 1950s and the '60s, women were not economically inactive during that period of rapid urbanisation. As they migrated to the urban centres they became integrated into the informal economy through occupations that were actually a direct extension of housework: as live-in domestics, house cleaners, seamstresses, piece-workers, etc.²¹ Being informally employed, they were automatically subject to a domestic marginalisation that deprived them of social security, union protection, and social recognition.²² This domestic isolation of large segments of the female population, during a process of rapid urbanisation, functioned as a necessary substitute for the limited state expenditures on social welfare. Women provided essential services that elsewhere formed part of the social infrastructure of the welfare state.²³ The low degree of socialisation of reproduction led women either to take employment in jobs that were associated with the services of reproduction, or to assume the domestic responsibilities of their family themselves. Hence, reproductive activities within the family became the exclusive responsibility of women.

Informal employment is still very prevalent in Greece. It can take the form of piecework at home, of seasonal engagement and unpaid work in family enterprises, etc. It is noteworthy that most women participating in the informal economy today are married with children. This reverses some of the earlier tendencies of female labour participation. In the 1960s, women with paid employment in the urban centres were usually unmarried and worked in order to accumulate a dowry.²⁴ Only a limited number of them continued to work after marriage and the birth of their first child. In

²¹ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2

²² Stamiris, *ibid.*

²³ Stamiris, *ibid.*

²⁴ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

other words, women entered paid employment chiefly during a stage of their life in which such outside work did not question or interfere with their traditional status as wives.²⁵ The 1980s brought a significant change in women's attitude to employment and their numbers in the labour force increased, including that of married women and mothers. However, even if marriage or motherhood has ceased to be perceived as excluding outside employment, they are still factors influencing the type of paid work that is chosen. The high percentage of married women in paid employment, yet selecting occupations that enable them to carry on their family role as well, demonstrates on the one hand the erosion of traditional values underlying the domestication of women, and on the other the lack of shared responsibilities at home.

With regard to occupational distribution, according to the 1981 census, 41.6% of female workers were occupied in the primary sector, 18.2 % in the secondary, and 40.2% in services. The figures for 1989 were: 32.3% in the primary sector, 17.4% in the secondary, and 50.3% in services - i.e. fewer women now worked in agriculture, and more in the service sector.²⁶ According to the Labour Force Survey of 1989, occupations where women outnumbered men are: in the professions as office workers, in service-sector employment, agriculture and -animal-husbandry; men predominate in business as corporate and public executives, craftsmen and labourers.³¹ A specific characteristic of Greek society is the large number of independent small producers. Independent production has been a viable strategy for men to make money without losing completely control of the production process.³² The 1981 labour force survey found that the category of self-employed accounted for 37.3% percent of the male labour force, but for only 20.0% of the women's.²⁸ It has been more usual for women to work in occupations where there is a strong element of dependency (for example as auxiliary and non-remunerated family members). An obsolete patriarchal Family Law further reinforced the low number of women among the self-employed because prior

²⁵ Kyriazis, *ibid.*

²⁶ Panayotopoulou, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

²⁷ Kassimati, K. (1994) 'Female Education and Employment: Problems of Equal Opportunities in Greece', in: A. Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos (ed.), *Women's Rights: Human Rights*, (Athens, Estia).

²⁸ Dobratz, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

to 1982, when the country's Family Law was revised, married women could not legally establish a business without their husband's consent.²⁹

It could be argued that the Greek labour market is divided into occupations identified as strictly for women and others predominantly for men. In addition there is also a huge earnings differential. For the period 1967-80, women on the average received only 68.0% of what men were paid. This situation was substantially improved in 1982. Following twenty years of relative stability in pay differentials, with only small fluctuations, the women's average hourly wage rose from 67.2% to 73.1% of men's pay.³⁰ Not only are Greek women paid less than men, but during periods of economic difficulties they are the first to be dismissed.³¹ In 1983, women accounted for 66% percent of the total of unemployed, and for 60-63% of all part-time employment.

In the European Community (E.C.) Greece has had one of the highest rates of women's unemployment. In 1991, the unemployment rate for women was 12,9%, compared to the average European rate of 10.7%. By contrast, unemployment among the men (4.6%) was among the lowest in the E.C. (7,1% average).³² Another significant factor concerning female labour in Greece has been the high percentage of women (55% in 1991) who either worked continually, or have had to stop working at some time and never became integrated into the labour market again. While elsewhere in Europe it is quite common for women to stop working more than once and later go back to it, in Greece the labour market proves to be inflexible for women.³³

Overall, the women's disadvantaged position in the economic sphere expresses itself as greater unemployment, intermittent employment, lower pay and a low degree of responsibility in low- status occupations (auxiliary professional roles in the public sector and the services, as helpers in agriculture and small- family businesses, etc.).³⁴

³⁷ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

³⁰ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

³¹ Papagaroufalas, *op. cit.*, ref. 5.

³² This has changed significantly during the 1990s. See Simeonidou, *op. cit.*, ref. 20.

³³ Simeonidou, *ibid.*

³⁴ Kassimati, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

2.3 Women and Education

The division of labour between men and women is present not only in the economy, but is also a marked characteristic concerning education. In the late 1980s women accounted for 79% of the country's illiterates.³⁵ Although the majority of them were older women, educational inequality between the sexes has been prominent.

Women students at Greek universities have tended to select distinctly 'female' subjects. In 1989, their main choices were literature/anthropology/psychology/theology. Male students on the other hand chose economics (25.7% against 16.4% of women), architecture/engineering/agronomy and veterinary medicine.³⁶ The selection of 'female' subjects for study, associated with 'non-productive' sectors of the market, strongly affects the women's future occupational choices, of course.

It should be noted that women's participation in higher education has increased significantly in recent years. While, in the 1970s only approximately 30 % of university students were women, the 1986 figure was almost 50 % higher.³⁷ Paradoxically enough, in the 1960s and '70s the growing number of women in higher education was sometimes associated with a reinforcement of traditional values. During that period, education became a factor of crucial advantage in the dowry package of women, especially for those who aspired to urban marriages of better social standing. In the villages, the family still devoted all its limited resources to the education of only the most promising male children, while girls were restricted to household training for their domestic roles. In the urban context, however, education (together with a dowry-apartment) became a significant asset for women wishing to attain a higher social status, not in their own right but through the position of the husband.³⁸ Although the educational system may have been perceived instrumentally for the prospect of a successful marriage, the more massive entrance of women in the educational system has set the preconditions for a more active and equal participation

³⁵ Pollis, A. (1992) 'Gender and Social Change in Greece: The Role of Women', in: T. Kariotis (ed.), *The Greek Socialist Experiment* (New York, Pella Publishing).

³⁶ Kassimati, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

³⁷ Pollis, *op. cit.*, ref. 35.

³⁸ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

of women in other social spheres (economy, politics, etc.) as well as for the articulation of a feminist consciousness. The second -wave Greek feminist movement drew its support mainly from women that held educational qualifications.³⁹

As more women became educated significant changes occurred in the composition of the female labour force that, from the 1980s onwards, has been less homogeneous and more polarised than the men's.⁴⁰ Earlier, women workers, whether in the public sector or in factories, were employed only in the lowest ranks, but in the '80s class disparities among working women began to grow and resulted in marked differentiation. At one end of the scale are the young professionals of Athens and Salonica; at the other are the manual workers in the factories and the informal economy. The increased heterogeneity of the social subject 'woman' is reflected also in the degree of feminist consciousness and the political behaviour of women. The changes in women's political behaviour, as well as the impact of variables such as education, age, and occupation on the formulation of a pro-feminist stand, are elaborated in the section below.

³⁹ In Greece, the first-wave of a feminist movement emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century. The second-wave refers to the movement, as it developed during the post-junta period after 1974. Concerning international feminism, the first-wave concerned women contesting their fundamental rights (political, economic, educational, etc.). The second-wave on the other hand established a very different agenda of demands and a new body of feminism, centred on the notions of reproduction, experience and difference. Accordingly, the first wave is usually associated with the principle of equality (legal and socio-economic), while the second is linked to the principle of 'women's liberation'. The second-wave did not propose to resolve the conflict between the sexes within the context of the existing society, but it argued that the abolition of women's oppression presupposed overturning the existing patriarchal society (e.g. in terms of its values, sexuality, power). See Humm, Maggie, (ed.) (1992) *Feminism: A Reader* (New York and London, Harvester Wheatsheaf).

⁴⁰ Leontidou, *op. cit.*, ref. 15.

2.4 The Political Behaviour of Women, and the Development of a Feminist Consciousness

In 1987, a U.N. study on the participation of Greek women in decision-making processes presented a very negative picture: compared to other Western European countries Greece had the lowest proportion of women in Parliament (4.3%). In the rest of Europe, the figures for 1987 varied between 6.4% for the United Kingdom and 34.4% for Norway.⁴¹ The Greek women's participation in official posts, always having been very restricted, raises the question of whether this reflects a more general political participation gap between Greek men and women. In 1988, the National Centre for Social Research conducted an enquiry into the political behaviour of women. The research found that women considered politics as less important in their lives than did men.⁴² For example, to the question 'Would you say that political decisions have an impact on your life?', 20.6% of women, but only 13.2% of men, answered 'No impact at all'. However, the disparity was chiefly due to the traditional attitudes of older women.⁴³ Among the younger generation, where age and education functioned as homogenising factors, there was no difference in the perception of politics by the two sexes. This is to say that in many instances the influence on political behaviour of gender was less important than that of age and education. The fact that young women and young men often had more in common than young and older women shows radical differentiations within the category of women.⁴⁴ Men on the other hand, regardless of age, presented a more homogeneous stand vis-à-vis politics.

Another significant variable affecting the political behaviour of women is the nature of their occupation. Its impact is, however, less significant than that of age and

⁴¹ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

⁴² Pantelidou-Malouta, M. (1992) *Women and Politics: The Political Profile of Greek Women*, (Athens, Gutenberg - in Greek).

⁴³ Pantelidou-Malouta, *ibid.*

⁴⁴ Age has a different impact on the political behaviour of men and women. Older men are more likely to discuss politics, older women are less so. See Dobratz, *op. cit.*, ref. 13.

education.⁴⁵ According to the study by the National Centre for Social Research, university students were most likely to declare themselves in support of the feminist cause, while women in the agricultural sector, pensioners, or unpaid working family members were the most reluctant to do so. Overall, older illiterate, pensioners or auxiliary and unpaid working family members constituted the hard core of traditional attitudes about the role of women; they were alienated from the political process and expressed resignation where political developments are concerned. On the other hand, the women who were supportive of the feminist cause also showed a participatory interest in politics. In other words, the political participation gap between the two sexes was significant only in regard to specific categories of the older population.

The absence of any major divergence between the political behaviour of Greek women and men holds also in respect of the political alignment of the two sexes, which diverges much less in Greece than in many other European countries.⁴⁶ The results of the 1981 national election showed no major differences in the way men and women cast their ballot – i.e. there was no clear identification of the Right or Left with either men or women. What does have a significant influence on women's positioning in the political spectrum is their degree of feminist consciousness.⁴⁷ This means that women with a low degree of feminist consciousness usually align with the Right, and women with a high degree of feminist consciousness tend towards the Left.⁴⁸ For instance, the National Centre study showed that 44.5% of the women who were negative or indifferent to the feminist discourse belonged to the Right, and only 10.2% to the Left. This is partially explained by the fact that historically it was almost exclusively the political forces of the Left that have supported women's issues.⁴⁹ Moreover, the mass-mobilisation and organisation of women took place in the left-wing political spectrum, while right-wing women became organised only very

⁴⁵ According to Pantelidou, the distinction between working woman and housewife is less decisive for defining the political behaviour of women than the influence of age and education.

⁴⁶ Dobratz, *op. cit.*, ref. 11.

⁴⁷ Dobratz, *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Pantelidou-Malouta, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁴⁹ See section 2.6 below: 'A Concise History of the Greek Feminist Movement'.

recently (since the 1980s), following the model of political parties of the Centre or the Left.

The National Centre study also brought out another significant dimension concerning the political stance of women: they predominantly choose one specific form of political participation, namely that of conventional politics and the rules of parliamentary democracy.⁵⁰ To the question what citizens should do who disagree with a governmental decision, the majority of both men (53.0%) and women (53.9%) opted for the institutional processes of the parliament; only 25.0% of men and 20.7% of women favoured demonstrations to express their dissent. It was especially women with feminist ideas who seemed most positively predisposed towards the parliamentary system, and demanded a larger presence of women in the centres of political decision-making. They did not, therefore, discredit conventional political activity (e.g. electoral campaigning, contact with specialists or party activists), nor challenge the legitimacy of its institutional expression (political parties). These findings are in accord with the political strategies chosen by most second-wave feminist organisations that have aligned themselves with political parties in order to promote women's issues through the party organisations. In Europe, on the contrary, second-wave feminism was associated with opposition to the prevailing political system, which was regarded as the personification of male supremacy.

We have seen that age, education, occupation and feminist consciousness have had a positive influence on the degree of women's political participation. Concerning now the total of the Greek population, there are two significant factors that have affected the consolidation of a pro-feminist stand: the vitality of the feminist movement, and the incorporation of the principle of equality into the official public discourse.

According to the E.C. survey *Women and Men in Europe*, the participation of Greek women in feminist organisations was 4% in 1983, Greece ranking significantly above the European average (1%).⁵¹ In regard to the sharing of household and family duties, Greece and Denmark were the two countries where sexual equality emerged

⁵⁰ Pantelidou-Malouta, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁵¹ The first survey of *Women and Men in Europe*, which incorporated Greece in the analysis, was in 1983, two years after the country became a full member of the European Community.

most clearly as a popular concept of the woman's role (Greece: 51%, Denmark: 46%, E.C. average: 36%).⁵² Concerning contemporary women's liberation movements, only in Greece and France were men and women equally in their favour. This could be explained by the similar political context of the two countries, in both of which the socialists made 'equality of the sexes' a primary target of their policies.

The attitude of Greek society generally has been affected by the presence or absence of the feminist movement and the extent to which women have joined its organisations. In the early 1980s, the feminist movement flourished and the socialist government articulated a clear pro-equality public discourse, influencing thereby Greek society positively vis-à-vis the importance and goals of sexual equality. The subsequent divisions and eventual demise of the Greek feminist movement, together with the government gradually distancing itself from its pro-feminist agenda, was clearly reflected in the 1987 *Men and Women of Europe* survey. While the idea of equality did not disappear altogether in Greece, it certainly lost ground after 1983. The survey found that Greek society had retreated '...to a more nuanced position: the woman has a less absorbing job than the man, and does more of the housework and looking after the children'.⁵³ The 1987 *Eurobarometer* also illustrated a retrenchment in social attitudes towards the idea of equality, but provided a far more positive image in comparison with later findings. So in the *Eurobarometer* for 1995, Greece ranked higher than the European average in supporting a sexual division of labour in family life.⁵⁴ The data correctly reflect the total absence of a feminist movement and the significant de-evaluation of feminist issues in the official public discourse of the 1990s. It was therefore only the earlier presence of a strong feminist movement that had pressured and achieved the introduction of 'gender' in the official political discourse and so made society as a whole more receptive to feminist issues. The strategies of the feminist organisations for achieving this have been various, and closely associated with the enduring structures of the Greek political system.

⁵² *Women and Men of Europe in 1983*, Commission of the European Communities, Supplement no. 16.

⁵³ *Men and Women of Europe in 1987*, Commission of the European Communities, Supplement no. 26, p. 15.

⁵⁴ *Eurobarometer*, (Spring 1995), no. 42.

2.5 The State, Civil Society, and the Political Parties

When the second-wave Greek feminist movement emerged, it was faced with a political tradition devoid of any recent autonomous feminist struggles. Only at the time of its initial mobilisation, during the inter-war period, did the Greek feminist movement have an independent status, and from 1936 onwards the historical divisions of the Greek feminist movement have coincided with major breaks in the political process.⁵⁵ Thus, women's struggles were considered as rather particularistic in regard to the 'general' struggle for establishing basic democratic institutions (through the coups d' etat of 1936 and 1967), defending the national integrity (World War II), and defining the country's political regime (civil war of 1945). At all these historical junctions the feminist discourse was submerged in the more general political discourse that focused on the dominant principles of class or nation, leaving no room for the articulation of specifically feminist demands. The association of feminist issues with more general political struggles was facilitated by the forces of the Left being willing to incorporate women's demands in their program. So while the second-wave feminist movement had to deal with a tradition that knew nothing of autonomous feminist struggles, it also found itself vis-à-vis parliamentary forces open to and supportive of women's demands. In the final instance, the majority of the second-wave women's organisations built alliances with the political parties and accepted a status of semi-autonomy.

Throughout its development the Greek feminist movement had to contend not only with more general conflicts predominating over the feminist cause, but also with a political disposition opposed to any attempt at mobilising civil society and developing any kind of movement independent of the state and the political parties.⁵⁶ By definition, the goal of political parties is the attainment of political power. Their political vision encompasses the transformation of society through control over and use of the state. The alignment of the second-wave Greek feminist movement with the political parties therefore implied a positive attitude towards the state. This aspect of the contemporary Greek feminist movement contradicts some basic dimensions of the ideal type 'new social movement'. It can, however, be explained by a historical analysis of the statocratic and partocratic characteristics of the Greek political

⁵⁵ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2

⁵⁶ For a definition of the concept 'social movement sector' see chapter 1.

system. An analysis of the evolution of the relations between the state, civil society, and the party system is necessary for understanding the political strategies that were available to the feminist organisations and their final course of action.

As Tsoucalas notes, the distinctive historical role of the Greek state has been its function as a decisive and autonomous factor in determining social and political variables.⁵⁷ The historical causes for this extended role can be traced back to the nineteenth century, when liberal political institutions were imposed from the outside on the young Greek social formation without any prior development of civil society. The imposition of these institutions led to a false modernisation, as well as to them not functioning as expected.⁵⁸ The general non-correspondence between institutional structures and the development of social relations resulted in a state apparatus for extensive patronage recruitment, instead of a more limited, rationally functioning state. The huge size of the public sphere has had a decisive influence on political struggles, given that it deprived social movements of any significant resources. Moreover, the long tradition of a strong state dominating over civil society eventually led to the identification of politics with political forces that are state-dependant. Hence, the vastness of the state and the scantiness of other social networks have predisposed Greek society to an affirmative stand vis-à-vis the state and the administration in general. This is exemplified by the long history of state dependency and state intervention in the labour movement. In consequence, Greek society developed a corporatist political system. Political power became centralised, and political participation usually channelled through groups authorized by the state. This means that the presence in modern Greek society of a political culture supportive of autonomous citizen's associations has never been more than feeble.⁵⁹ A brief historical account of the party system will outline its main properties and their impact on the feminist movement.

⁵⁷ Tsoucalas, C. (1983) *Social Development and the State: The Formation of the Public Sphere in Greece*, (Athens, Themelio - in Greek).

⁵⁸ Tsoucalas, *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Cacoullos, A. (1994) 'Women Confronting Party Politics in Greece', in: B. Nelson and N. Chowdhury (eds.), *Women and Politics Worldwide* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press).

The evolution and consolidation of the political institutional structures in Greece proceeded in three historical stages: (i) oligarchic clientelism (1863-1909), (ii) centralised clientelism (1909-67), and (iii) clientelism-populism (1967-92).⁶⁰ During the first phase, political representation was restricted. Political parties constituted loose coalitions led by patrons whose political power rested on regional clienteles. This decentralised form of clientelism was succeeded by the more centralised political structures of phase two. Political parties ceased to be mere clubs of notables, and developed centralised organisational structures that enabled the national leadership to control the centrifugal tendencies of local bosses. However, the political parties continued to reproduce the particularistic/clientelistic features of the political system throughout the interwar period and until the 1967-74 military dictatorship.⁶¹ The fall of the dictatorship and the 1981 rise to power of the Socialist Party (*Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima* - PASOK) brought significant and radical changes to the organisation of political parties. PASOK was Greece's first non-communist political organisation based on a mass party.⁶² It developed a large political network consisting of local branches that spread all over the country. In this way it broadened political participation and undermined the established power of traditional patrons. However, PASOK did not succeed in eliminating the personalistic/particularistic features of the political system, but it did make them more centralised. Clientelistic bosses gradually lost their power to a centralised party structure, which replaced traditional patrons with better-educated party cadres. If the personalistic/particularistic politics of the pre-junta parties has persisted, it is in a different form. A new type of personalistic/particularistic politics, based on populist mobilisation and organisation, has succeeded local bosses. Therefore, in Greece the transition from decentralised to more centralised political forms did not go hand in hand with the marginalisation of the personalistic/particularistic features of the political system as it did in Western Europe.⁶³

⁶⁰ Mouzelis, N. (1995) 'Greece in the Twenty-first Century: Institutions and Political Culture', in: Constan, Stavrou, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

⁶¹ Mouzelis, *ibid.*

⁶² Mouzelis, *ibid.*

⁶³ Mouzelis, *ibid.*

The persistence of clientelist politics is one of the basic features of the Greek party system. Another significant characteristic is the prevalence and constancy of three political camps, which developed as the result of two major historical conflicts. The first of these was the national schism (*dihasmos*) between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists over the issue of the monarchy, which generated the first major cleavage between the Right and the Centre.⁶⁴ The second conflict was the civil war of 1946-49, and its violent confrontation between the bourgeois parties of the Right and a communist-dominated Left. These historical cleavages have resulted in the demarcation of three deeply rooted and lasting political camps: the Centre, the Right and the Left.⁶⁵ All through the 1980s the three-party system kept its structural continuity with the past, and at the four national elections in that decade the three major parties between them carried more than 94 % of the vote.⁶⁶

The three-party system is dominated by a bipolar competition between Right and anti-Right, which has resulted in a political subsystem the basic feature of which is the opposition of Right and Progressive Forces (anti-Right).⁶⁷ The political discourse of PASOK is formulated on the basis of this Right/anti-Right cleavage. It has appealed to three generations - the 1941-44 war time generation, the generation of the Centre Union and its two 'relentless' struggles of 1961-63 and 1965-67, and the

⁶⁴ The main cause of the national schism was the opposition between Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and King Constantine over Greek participation in World War I. However, this clash was symptomatic of a deeper conflict between the liberals, who supported the broad range of Venizelos' radical reforms and the conservatives, who adhered to the institution of the monarchy. Mavrogordatos, G. (1984) 'The Greek Party System: A Case of Limited but Polarised Pluralism?', *West European Politics*, 7, 4; and Papadopoulos, Yannis (1989) 'Parties, the State and Society in Greece: Continuity within Change', *West European Politics*, 12, 2, Clogg, Richard (1979) *A Short History of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).

⁶⁵ Mavrogordatos, *ibid.*

⁶⁶ Nicolacopoulos, I. (1990) 'The Electoral Influence of Political Forces', in: C. Lirintzis, I. Nicolacopoulos (eds), *Elections and Political Parties in the 1980s: Developments and Prospects of the Political System* (Athens, Themelio - in Greek)

⁶⁷ Moschonas, G. (1994) 'The Right - Anti-Right Cleavage in Post-Junta Greece: (1974-1990)', in: Demertzis, *op. cit.*, 3.

generation of resistance to the 1967-74 junta - thereby reconstructing contemporary Greek history as the product of bipolar opposition between Right and anti-Right.⁶⁸ Any political attempt to reconstruct the historical process on a different basis has resulted in considerable political and electoral costs.⁶⁹ Today's Greek party system is divided into the two conflictual subsystems of Right and anti-Right, thereby restricting the strategic choices of the three political camps.⁷⁰ Since the Greek party

⁶⁸ Mavrogordatos, *op. cit.*, ref. 64. The first 'relentless' struggle was the political conflict concerning the elections of 1961. The leader of the Centre Union, George Papandreou, together with the leaders of other oppositional parties, accused the governing 'National Radical Union' and the monarchy of instigating widespread violence and electoral fraud. In the new elections that were finally conducted in 1964, the Centre Union attained an absolute majority and took over the government. The second relentless struggle, which commenced in 1965, refers to Prime Minister George Papandreou's opposition to the monarchy. After a series of political crises the King forced George Papandreou to resign, which led to a cycle of mass mobilisations and popular protests.

⁶⁹ Moschonas, *op. cit.*, ref. 67.

⁷⁰ Chiefly three parties have expressed the anti-right subsystem since the fall of the junta in 1974: the Socialist Party, the Communist Party of the Interior and the Greek Communist Party. The Socialist Party was founded by Andreas Papandreou in 1974, came to power in 1981, and governed until 1989. The Greek Communist Party, outlawed in 1947, split into two in 1968 with the invasion of Prague as the pretext. The Stalinist section retained the stronger appeal to the electorate, while the Communist Party of the Interior adhered to the ideological tradition of Eurocommunism and refused control by Moscow. Both parties were legalised by Prime Minister Konstantine Karamanlis in 1974. It is these three political parties that have constituted the cornerstone of the anti-Right political subsystem. They also compose the left wing of the party system, although the Socialist party, which started as a left-wing party, subsequently moved to the centre. In 1989, following a period of political crisis and scandals, the Right/anti-Right subdivision of the political spectrum was temporarily negated by a brief collaboration of the conservative party with both communist parties. In the elections of 1993, 1996 and 2000 the Socialist Party (PASOK) received the majority of parliamentary seats and continues to govern.

system is that of limited but polarised pluralism, competition for government power is feasible only for the two dominant contenders (the socialists and the conservatives).⁷¹ Moreover, the strong presence of the anti-systemic Communist Party only increases the political polarisation.⁷²

The second-wave Greek feminist movement has relied heavily on the already developed bureaucratic organisations of the political parties and demanded that the state resolve the many women's issues. The only exception was the Movement for Women's Liberation, which tried to create an independent arena for itself within civil society.

The consequences of the political strategy chosen by the party-allied feminist organisations were many. Above all, alliance of most of the second-wave feminist organisations with the political parties restricted their potential for a radical renegotiation of values and power hierarchies. With the principle of democratic centralism dominating the political parties of the Left, the possibilities for direct participatory practices were limited and political decisions were usually imposed from the top. The party-allied feminist organisations took over these organisational principles. Although they developed a whole network of branches, policy was usually formulated by the top executive body and then disseminated to the local branches. The affirmation of the state, as an instrument for the formulation and application of policy reinforced centralised perceptions of politics. The party affiliated feminist organisations were characterised by a centralised perception of politics, which meant that the ideology was decreed at the top. Besides, their alliance with the political parties and especially the positive perception of the state by the Union of Greek Women (*Enosis Gynaikon Elladas* - EGE) led to the achievement of a number of reforms and meant access to social areas, which autonomous feminist groups could not reach. However, some legal changes on social issues were not really assimilated by the Greek society. A good example of that is the civil marriage. Marriage in church still prevails, while the percentage of civil marriage remains minimal.

EGE's heavy reliance on the Socialist Party and the state apparatus did not permit the development of a counterculture that would strengthen civil society vis-à-vis the political institutions. Then again, the party mechanism and state apparatus

⁷¹ Mavrogodatos, *op. cit.*, ref. 64.

⁷² Mavrogordatos, *ibid.*

were able to promote gender equality even in social areas that were not receptive to women's demands.

In summary, while control by the state and the parties undermined the autonomous status of the Greek feminist movement, the party and state apparatus did manage to curb strongly entrenched discriminatory practices through the process of social engineering and central administration. The viability and the duration of these policies were, however, limited, because no machinery was set up to apply and support them on a long-term basis. Moreover, the imposition from the top of the principle of sexual equality was effective only as long as a viable feminist movement existed to mobilise Greek society around the issue.

The political choice and strategy of the party-affiliated women's organisations was severely criticised by the autonomous feminist groups. They charged the party affiliated organisations with circumscribing their activities by the boundaries of patriarchy, since they focused only on modernising patriarchy without actually questioning its foundations. They further argued that the abdication of autonomy of the party-affiliated organisations was a reflection of their unwillingness to trespass on men's political territory. The autonomous feminist groups became the only women's network that remained independent of political parties and articulated an anti-statist political stand. They intervened on the micro-level of everyday life -in the schools, the neighbourhood, and the work place -in their attempt to create an alternative feminist culture. However, the absence of a tradition of independent citizen's associations and the identification of politics with political parties led to the political and social marginalisation of the groups.

The issues mentioned above (state, civil society, parties, autonomy, etc.) are further elaborated in the two case studies discussed in chapters 3 & 4.

2.6 A Concise History of the Greek Feminist Movement

The beginnings of the Greek feminist movement go back to the nineteenth century. Its course, however, has been discontinuous, due to a number of national events that put in question either the independence of the nation-state or the legitimacy of the prevailing political regime. As mentioned already, the historical course of the Greek feminist movement is usually divided into two broad phases: i) from the nineteenth century to 1974, and ii) from 1974 to 1990. The nature of claims

articulated constitutes the distinguishing feature between those two phases.⁷³ The first phase voiced chiefly demands for political, social, and economic equality with men, while the second focused on the consolidation of a feminist identity and questioned male supremacy *per se*.

The earlier phase of the Greek women's movement developed within the context of an industrial boom, when the initial flowering of capitalism gave rise to demands for a restructuring of women's position in Greek society.⁷⁴ In 1834 the women's right to elementary education was legally ratified, but women had to wait another 60 years for the right to receive secondary education (finally granted in 1893).⁷⁵ For all that, the predominant social practices continued: to educate women either at home or not at all.

In 1864, a new Constitution defined the political regime of Greece as a parliamentary monarchy, and Article 66 ratified the right to universal suffrage concerning national elections. In 1889, a group of women addressed a memorandum to Parliament and demanded the ratification of equal rights with men in terms of education, work opportunities and politics.⁷⁶ By this time a growing number of new

⁷³ The year 1990 is selected as the end of the second wave feminist movement in Greece on the grounds that: (i) the last and final spark of the movement was the creation of a united front in 1990 for pressuring the political parties to apply quotas for women to stand as parliamentary candidates; (ii) the feminist movement had already, withdrawn from any form of collective activism; (iii) a new social-movement project had emerged in 1989, the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations, which incorporated some surviving autonomous feminist organisations (e.g. the group *Katina*).

⁷⁴ In the first part of the nineteenth century, even before national independence, women founded institutes and schools for the education of girls, such as the Greek School for Young Girls, the Professional School for Greek Women, and the Sunday School for Girls. The first secondary school for girls was set up in 1835. See, Kaplan, G. (1992) *Contemporary Western European Feminism* (London, Allen & Unwin, UCL).

⁷⁵ Chronaki, Zogia (1996) 'Greek Women in the Nineteenth Century: First Attempts at Equality and Emancipation', *Kathemerini*, 6 Oct. 1996 (in Greek).

⁷⁶ Chronaki, *ibid*

publications written and published by women reflected the change in women's social position, since from the middle of the century onwards, educated women had searched for ways to articulate their own discourse and to write about the living conditions and actual activities of women. Publishing became the predominant means for women to express themselves collectively, and this in turn gave rise to a public debate concerning legal equality with men.⁷⁷ Women's journals increasingly changed their orientation from women's issues towards promoting women's rights to education, employment, as well as full electoral rights. So in 1870, Emilia Ktena brought out the women's journal *Evridiki* in Istanbul, which demanded equal access for women to education and jobs. The founder of the Greek women's movement is considered to be Kalliroi Parren, the first Greek woman journalist, who published the Newspaper for Ladies (*Efimeris ton Kirion*) in 1887.⁷⁸ At the head of a group of feminists, Parren wrote a petition in 1889 that was signed by 2,850 women demanding electoral rights, equal access to employment and to public education.⁷⁹ In 1911, Parren founded the 'Lyceum of Greek Women', the first long-term women's organisation to promote sexual equality under the law. In the same year the Socialists were the first political party to incorporate sexual equality under the law into their political program.⁸⁰

During the period from 1870 to 1920, the political strategy adopted by the women's organisations was predominantly defensive. They tried to enlist the support of prominent men in and out of parliament, and their discourse acknowledged the

⁷⁷ The issue of equality between the sexes was voiced for the first time in the newspaper 'Socrates: Newspaper of Women and the People' (*O Socrátis: Efimeris ton Ginaikón ke tou Laou*) in 1838. In 1842 in Istanbul, Efrosini Samartzidou directed and published the women's magazine *Kypséli* that promoted the equality of the two sexes. In 1867, in Athens, Penelope Lazaridou brought out the magazine *Thália*. In 1897 'Family' (*Ikogénia*) was directed and published by Anna Serouiou. See in Chronaki, *ibid*

⁷⁸ The first issue of *The Ladies' Newspaper* sold around 10,000 copies in 1887. Its first as well as its second edition were sold out. See Leontidou, *op. cit.*, ref. 15.

⁷⁹ Papageorge-Limberes, Y. (1992) 'The Women's Movement and Greek Politics', in: J. Bystydzienski (ed.), *Women Transforming Politics: Worldwide Strategies for Empowerment* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press).

⁸⁰ Daraki, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

traditional roles of women. The men were given assurances that women's struggle would not endanger the male status.

It was only after World War I that the early scattered women's groups developed into a women's movement, though still restricted to a small number of prominent educated, urban women.⁸¹ Among the new associations that came into existence the best known was the Association for Women's Rights (*Sindesmos gia ta Dikeomata tis Ginekas*) founded in 1920 by Avra Theodoropoulou, Maria Svolou, and Maria Negreponti. An important role was played also by the National Council of Women (*Ethniko Simvoulío Ellinidon*), and by the Socialist Association (*Socialistikos Omilos*), both founded in 1919.⁸² The latter was set up by a group of socialist feminists who were also members of the Socialist Workers' Party of Greece. The Association president, Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou, became one of the outstanding figures of the Greek feminist movement.

The demands put forward by the women's groups during the years after World War I concerned

- economic rights: equal pay, equal access to all public employment, equal opportunities for promotion, protective legislation for female and children's labour;
- social rights: revision of the family law, the right to abortion, abolition of prostitution, repeal of state regulations concerning the functioning of brothels;
- political rights: the right to vote and to be elected, unionisation of female labour, international community: peace among the nations.

The strategies applied by these organisations were many and included efforts to increase public awareness of women's issues, mobilisation of support through the press, and lobbying of parliamentary members. Consequently, the women's movement acquired its own autonomous dynamic in the interwar period. A very important external factor that influenced its development was the influx of 1.5 million Greek refugees from western Turkey after the military defeat in 1922. Most of these

⁸¹ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

⁸² There is dispute concerning the exact date that the National Council of Women was founded. The date given here is provided by Papageorge-Limberes, *op. cit.*, ref. 79.

refugees were women, who became integrated into the economy.⁸³ Another major event was the 1923 government decision to appropriate and redistribute big landed estates, which resulted in the creation of thousands of family smallholdings. This actually led to deterioration in the status of rural woman, since the property-less male peasant now found himself a smallholder, while the female member of his household became unpaid custodian (as discussed in section 2.2).⁸⁴

The dictatorship of General Metaxas in 1936 closed down all progressive women's organisations, while most of the conservative groups - such as the Christian Union of Young Women, or the Union of Greek Women Scientists - were allowed to continue.⁸⁵ The fascist ideology of the Metaxas regime kept women restricted to their traditional roles, but in its efforts to win public support it mobilised women as well as men and incorporated them in the public realm. For instance, women played an active part in the regime's youth organisations. As under fascism elsewhere, women were subjects to contradictory processes. Their integration in the realm of politics reinforced their inferior position in the private sphere.

The German occupation finally dissolved the remaining feminist organisations, and women became an integral and important part of the resistance movement. Some of them formed their own resistance organisation of Free Young Women, which was affiliated to the National Patriotic Youth Organisation and so participated actively in the National Liberation Front (*Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo* - E.A.M.).⁸⁶ Equality of the sexes was accepted into the programmes of the majority of resistance organisations, together with the principles of popular sovereignty, social

⁸³ In 1907 women accounted for only 8% of the total registered workforce, while in 1928 their number had risen to 25%. See Leontidou, *op. cit.*, ref. 15.

⁸⁴ Women have ever since been disproportionate in the agricultural labour force. For instance, in 1928 the total female labour force numbered 663,435 of whom 434,623 worked in the agricultural sector, and only 99,712 in industry. The rest was employed in public services. See Daraki, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

⁸⁵ Kaplan, *op. cit.*, ref. 74.

⁸⁶ The National Liberation Front (EAM) constituted the political body of the resistance movement against the Germans. The military division was named National Popular Liberation Army.

justice, and socialism.⁸⁷ In the spring of 1943, the (opposition) 'mountain government' decided to institutionalise a set of rules for the regions liberated from German occupation. In August 1943, two decrees were issued concerning the electoral processes for self-government of the free regions. They both set down that the right to vote and to be elected to be exercised by women as well as men.⁸⁸ In the popular assemblies in the villages, women now became active participants. On 10 March 1944, the Political Committee of National Liberation preceeded to the election of a National Council. Five women were elected among the 280 members that constituted the National Council (Maria Svolou, Chrissa Hatzivasiliou, Keti Nisiriou, F. Fillipidi, and Makki Mavroïdi).⁸⁹ It was, therefore, during the resistance that Greek women were for the first time able to enjoy full rights - if only briefly. The civil war that followed (1946-1949) led not only to the elimination of all progressive organisations, but also subordinated the women's struggle secondary to the more general civil-war confrontation.

After the end of the war, left-wing women who had participated in the resistance against the Germans became the founders of feminist organisations. So in 1945 the Panhellenic Union of Women (*Panellinia 'Enosi Ginaikón* - PEG) was established by women that were already active in the left-wing National Liberation Front. It gained wide support and mobilised thousands of women for the aims of promoting women's equality, the fight against fascism, and working for international peace.⁹⁰ A distinctive feature of the women's organisations that emerged after the war was the projection of their demands not as specifically women's claims, but as general social issues. One of the last public feminist manifestations before the outbreak of the civil war had been the formation of the Panhellenic Federation of Women and its conference in May of 1946, at which representatives from over 150

⁸⁷ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

⁸⁸ Vervenioti, T. (1993) 'The Institutionalisation by the Resistance Movement of Women's Right to Vote (1941-1944)', *Dini*, 6 (in Greek).

⁸⁹ Vervenioti, T. (1992) 'Greek Women before the War, During the Occupation, and the Civil War', in: Leontidou, *op. cit.*, ref. 15.

⁹⁰ Samiou, D. (1992) 'The Feminist Movement in Greece (1860-1960)', in: Leontidou, *ibid.*

women's organisations were present.⁹¹ However, when the civil war broke out, all left-wing organisations, including the women's, were crushed and organisations supportive of the regime were restricted to charities.

The period from the end of the civil war (1949) to the colonel's coup d'état of 1967 was a time when Greek women acquired important political rights. As mentioned earlier, the presidential decree of 5 February 1930 granted women the right to vote in municipal elections, and law 959/1949 went a step further, so that in the municipal elections of 1951 women could actively participate as candidates; 127 female municipal and communal councillors were elected.⁹² Law 2159/1952 led to the full enfranchisement of Greek women.⁹³ Although women could not yet vote in the national elections of November 1952, they did so for the first time in the Salonica by-election in January 1953, which returned Greece's first woman deputy. In 1953 the Covenant on Women's Political Rights, enacted by the United Nations in 1952, was recognised by the Greek state.⁹⁴ This officially ended all political discrimination against women.

The significant progress in women's rights in the 1950s was not, however, contingent on the existence of a strong feminist movement. The municipal-vote concession of 1930 had been the result of a vigorously active feminist movement, while the women's full enfranchisement of 1952 was mainly a result of international influences. The fact that women's full electoral rights were not acquired in response to demands by the women's movement has meant a devaluation of the significance that women have ascribed to the vote.⁹⁵ Moreover, since the presidential decree of 1952 and the Law of the same year were both interventions of the state concerning women, the idea that it is the centralised state that will find solutions to women's issues was reinforced.

The colonels' coup of 1967 put a stop to all public activities. Women's organisations were forced to dissolve or went underground. During the junta years the

⁹¹ Kaplan, *op. cit.*, ref. 74.

⁹² Pantelidou-Malouta, M. (1989) 'Greeks and the Women's Vote', *Greek Review of Social Research*, 73, (in Greek).

⁹³ Pantelidou-Malouta, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁹⁴ Papageorge-Limberes, *op. cit.*, ref. 79.

⁹⁵ Pantelidou-Malouta, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

restricted entrance of women into the labour force was coupled with a strong reassertion of family values. The ideology of the regime was codified in the slogan 'Fatherland, Religion, Family', and the state-controlled media presented child-care and household duties as the natural sphere of women's activities.⁹⁶ Hence, in the late '60s and beginning of the '70s the Greek feminist movement encountered the prohibition of political activities by the regime together with the official projection of a strong patriarchal identity. During a period when the second-wave feminist movement was proliferating and thriving in Western Europe and the USA, in Greece the movement was once again subdued to the broader struggle for democracy. When second-wave Greek feminism gathered momentum in the mid-1970s, it was in the context of a general political mobilisation for the consolidation of democracy.

After the fall of the junta in 1974, women from the political Left came together in an organisation that called itself the Movement of Democratic Women (*Kinisi Dimokratikon Ginaikon* – KDG). Its immediate aim was to contribute to the firm establishment of a genuine democracy, in which process women's equality with men was perceived as a fundamental component. KDG was a non-partisan, broad umbrella organisation, which however soon split into different factions representative of different party affiliations. In 1976, two of these factions from the KDG set up new women's organisations. Thus, the Union of Greek Women (*Enosi Ginaikon Elladas* - EGE), ideologically and strategically linked to the Socialist Party (as already mentioned) and the 'Federation of Greek Women' (*Omospondia Ginaikon Elladas* - OGE), politically affiliated to the Communist party were established. What was left of the KDG eventually allied itself with the Communist party of the Interior. In 1975, the first autonomous feminist group was formed, the 'Movement for Women's Liberation' (*Kinisi gia tin Aepeletherosi ton Ginaikon* - KAG). It represented radical feminism within the Greek context and remained aloof from any political institutions.

In other words, by the end of the 1970s there was a full spectrum of feminist organisations.⁹⁷ The traditional Marxist position was represented by OGE, which denounced any independent feminist struggle as petty bourgeois. Gender issues were seen as part of a larger critique of capitalist society. It was claimed that the low status

⁹⁶ Lazarides, G. (1994) 'The Feminist Movement in Greece: An Overview', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 3, 2.

⁹⁷ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

of Greek women derived primarily from their position in the structure of production as a reserve army of labour. This made the women's struggle an integral part of the broader working-class struggle against capitalism. It also meant that the emancipation of women could be achieved only in a socialist society.⁹⁸ The chief practical focus of OGE became the working conditions of women employees. The socialist-feminist approach was represented by the EGE and KDG, both of which regarded the oppression of women a result of the complex interplay of patriarchy and capitalism. The class struggle and women's oppression, the mode of production and reproduction, therefore became the main theoretical tools of these two organisations. Their attempt to keep a balance between their struggle for feminism and socialism led to semi-autonomous relations with the respective political parties (the socialists for EGE, and the Eurocommunists for KDG).

The KAG represented radical feminism. Its members considered women's oppression the most fundamental of all social inequalities. Their target was patriarchy *per se*. They formed small groups trying to raise feminist consciousness and rejected all existing authoritarian structures and processes. In consequence they refused to ally themselves with political parties, and vehemently denounced them for colonising and deradicalising the feminist movement in Greece.

A more liberal form of feminism also existed in Greece by the end of the 1970s.⁹⁹ It was represented by a group of organisations pursuing progressive policies for women and struggling for the full integration of women in society on a basis of legal equality with men. These groups never acquired an active social base, did not aim to become a mass organisation, and were never registered as a recognised component of the Greek feminist movement. They restricted themselves to the role of pressure groups and to lobbying political elites, thereby focusing on the established political system and on legislative reforms; they also participated in coordinated feminist activities.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Stamiris, *ibid*.

⁹⁹ Stamiris, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁰ The contribution of these organisations has not been generally evaluated and texts on contemporary Greek feminism do not mention them. However, some of those organisations played an important role, for instance the League for the Rights of

The theoretical premises and actual strategies of the various feminist organisations mentioned above seem not altogether compatible, but they did have some common denominators. All these organisations having been set up during a period of democratic reconstruction, they all perceived women's issues as an integral part of the broader political context. Following the seven years of political repression by the junta, all the feminist organisations emphasised issues like democracy, freedom, and social change. Gender inequalities were regarded as a symptom of the existing social and political institutions, and integrated into the agenda of social change for the collectivity as a whole.¹⁰¹ Even the autonomous feminist groups in their early stages sought co-operation with political parties of the Left and elaborated a broader anti-capitalist discourse. Another common element was the association of equality for women with the ongoing process of modernisation. The years 1974-85 were a period of economic development and institutional revision. The party-affiliated women's organisations perceived feminist issues as a by-product of the modernisation in progress. Thus, it was commonly assumed by the women's organisations as well as the parties that patriarchy is associated with backward societies, and that the process of modernisation will gradually erase inequality between the sexes.¹⁰²

The party-affiliated women's organisations also shared many organisational principles, given that they adopted the organisational structure of the parties on which they relied. Their organisational model included a constitution, a centralised and hierarchical leadership, work in committees, an electoral system, and a wide network of branches.¹⁰³ The autonomous feminist movement, on the other hand, deliberately avoided hierarchical organisational structures and of course political affiliations.

Greece's second-wave feminist movement has on occasion engaged in collaborative efforts, such as the campaign concerning the Family Law. However, in the 1980s there was increased tension between EGE, which was seen as representing

Women (*Sindesmós gia ta Dikeómata tis Ginékas*), which was one of the chief protagonists in the struggle of the reform of Family Law.

¹⁰¹ Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

¹⁰² Varika, E. 'Confronting Institutional Modernisation: A Difficult Feminism', in Leontidou and Ammer (eds.), *op. cit.*, ref. 15.

¹⁰³ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

‘state feminism’, and the other women’s organisations.¹⁰⁴ It was the impact of the Socialist Party’s policies concerning women’s issues that paradoxically led to a temporary stagnation of the feminist movement. After its 1981 election victory, PASOK proceeded to carry out a barrage of legislative and institutional changes that fulfilled many of the feminist demands.¹⁰⁵ As Stamiris notes:

‘Since women’s struggles had for so long been waged at the level of equal rights and opportunities, the government’s thorough reformulation of laws and policies based on the principle of equality eliminated for a while the militant cutting-edge once characteristic of the movement’.¹⁰⁶

A revitalisation of the feminist movement, in the form of a collective effort, took place in early 1990. Before the April parliamentary elections, women’s organisations with different ideological perspectives presented a united front in order to pressure political parties into adopting women’s demands. They formed the Co-ordinating Committee of Representatives of Women’s Organisations (*Sintonistiki Epitropi Ginaikon Ekprosopon Syllogon* - SEGES) and demanded that the government and the political parties guarantee a 35% minimum quota for women parliamentary candidates.¹⁰⁷ Neither sex should exceed 65% of each party’s list. They also demanded a 35% participation of female representatives in all centres of decision-

¹⁰⁴ ‘...State feminism...refers to activities of government structures that are formally charged with furthering women's status and rights’. See Stetson, D. and Mazur, A. (1995) ‘Introduction’ to Stetson and Mazur (eds.) *Comparative State Feminism* (London, Sage Publications), pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁵ The Socialist Party changed the Greek Family Law, the penal code and made other legal reforms in favour of sexual equality under the law. See chapter 3 on the Union of Greek women (EGE).

¹⁰⁶ Stamiris, *op. cit.*, ref. 2., p. 110.

¹⁰⁷ The radical feminists groups did not participate in SEGES, which comprised 12 organisations : National Council of Greek Women, Union of Greek Women, Union of Women Soroptimists, Mediterranean Women's Studies Institute, Democratic Women's Movement, Lyceum of Greek Women, Panhellenic Union of Women Civil Servants, Union of Housewives, League for Women's Rights, Hellenic Association of University Women, Association of Professional/Business Women, and YWCA of Greece. See in Papageorge-Limberes, *op. cit.*, ref. 79.

making (e.g. institutions of local self-management).¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, this last coordinated effort by Greek feminist organisations was unsuccessful. Although many women were mobilised, the parties refused to apply the proposed quota.

Overall, the history of the Greek feminist movement is one of semi-autonomy. The movement has always been to some extent or other dependent on the general political developments in Greek society or the political parties that were the legitimate bearers of political power. The case studies to follow in the next two chapters - that of the Union of Greek Women and of the autonomous feminist groups - elucidate the dilemmas and impasses that the movement as a whole met with in its endeavour to put forward the principle of either 'equality' (EGE) or 'women's liberation' (autonomous feminist groups). The significance and impact of these two cases on feminist politics is still intensely debated in the Greek feminist spectrum.

¹⁰⁸ Daraki, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

CHAPTER 3

THE UNION OF GREEK WOMEN

3.1 Introduction

The feminist organisation of the Union of Greek Women (*Enosis Ginaikon Elladas*, EGE), consolidated itself after the fall of the junta (July 1974). Party-affiliated, it dominated the Greek feminist scene until the late 1980s when the whole feminist movement began to decline. Selecting the EGE for closer study serves two distinct purposes. First it challenges the theoretical boundaries of the concept of new social movement. While the EGE has developed many attributes that are representative of the Greek feminist movement as a whole, some of these attributes come into direct conflict with the qualitative properties of the new social movement concept. Secondly, the EGE is the country's only feminist organisation that, through its affiliation with the Socialist Party, acquired access to government power. The organisation's political project to inaugurate social change by promoting certain social policies and legislative changes illuminates the complex relationship among state agencies, feminist organisations, and social awareness.

A brief account of the EGE's historical trajectory is followed by a discussion of the categories pertaining to the concept of new social movement (ideology, organisational structure, social base, strategy, new scenarios of conflicts). The summary at the end both advances the main argument and serves as a theoretical background for the second case study, the autonomous feminist groups. The latter case exemplifies an entirely different political project to that put forward by the Union of Greek Women. Chapters 3 and 4 are, therefore, in juxtaposition.

3.2 1976-1990: From a Women's Organisation to State-Feminism

The 1974 fall of the dictatorship set into motion a strong political current of collective action, with Greek society entering a prolonged period of politicisation and intense mobilisation.¹ To begin with, the political vacuum created by the fall of the

¹ Laiou-Antoniou argued that the fall of the dictatorship reinforced public awareness that political mobilisation could bring about social change. See Athens interviews of 9 Nov. 1998 with Chrysanthi Laiou-Antoniou, EGE co-founder, Head of the Council of Equality (1983-'85), Secretary of the General Secretariat of Equality (1985-'89), member of the legal committee for the reform of Family Law (1985), ex-member of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

junta was promptly filled by a pluralistic party system. The re-established or new political parties exerted a powerful and pervasive influence over all social sectors, and became extensively involved in all Greek mass movements (labour, student, peace, feminist.). The consolidation of the party system led many women to leave the Movement of Democratic Women (*Kinisi Dimokratikón Ginaikón Elladas* – KDG) and join the newly founded party-aligned organisations of the EGE or the Federation of Greek Women (*Omospondia Ginaikón Elladas* - OGE). In September 1976, Margaret Papandreou, wife of the president of the socialist party, and 29 other women proceeded to the official establishment of the Union of Greek Women.² Most of the founders of this organisation had not previously been politically active. A significant number of them were the wives of prominent members of the socialist party. These two attributes - no prior political involvement and legitimation by the husband's status - were persistently reproduced throughout the EGE's history. Since the organisation consisted mostly of women, who at that time had not yet formulated a feminist identity, it functioned initially as a general women's group without specific ideological orientation. The process of forging a concrete ideological framework took six years, and in December 1982, at the first EGE Panhellenic conference, an overwhelming majority of members voted in favour of declaring the EGE a socialist-

² Margaret Papandreou was born in 1923 in Illinois, USA. After graduating in journalism, she completed a master's degree in public health. While at university, she joined the Democratic Farm-Labour Party in Minnesota and was sent as an official delegate to several state conventions. She was also a founding member of the Stevenson Forum Board. While living abroad during the Greek dictatorship, she was a founding member of the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (*Panellinio Apeletherotiko Kinima* - PAK), a resistance group against the junta. After her return to Greece in 1974 she participated actively in PASOK and became a member of the International Relations Committee. She was president of EGE from 1982 to '89. Margaret Papandreou's American origins were often an easy target of criticism and her ability to perceive the status quo between the sexes in Greece was often questioned. For a short biographical note on Margaret Papandreou see 'Greece: Hellenic Republic' in: Robin Morgan (ed.) (1984) *Sisterhood is Global* (New York, Anchor Press/Doubleday). The 30 founding members are named in the EGE *Constitution*, dated Athens, 15 Sept. 1976.

feminist organisation.³ Socialist feminism has remained part of its overall ideological framework ever since.

After its early years as a small women's organisation, the EGE's development into a mass organisation with branches all over Greece was as prompt as the rise to power of the socialist party.⁴ Between 1976 and 1981 (from the founding of the EGE until PASOK's election victory) the organisation developed on three different fronts: it built up an extensive network of branches and organised debates on gender issues all over Greece; it participated in international conferences and expressed its solidarity with women's organisations in countries under imperialistic domination; and it actively supported the anti-right strikes of progressive labour unions.⁵

Building a mass organisation:

The Union of Greek Women and the Federation of Greek Women were the only two post-dictatorship women's organisations to have an extensive network of branches spread all over the country. To achieve this, both these organisations strongly relied on the mechanisms of the parties they were allied with (the socialist and communist parties respectively). In 1981 the EGE membership numbered over 25,000 women. In 1983 its network consisted of over 120 branches plus 132 cells in 1984.⁶ During the period 1976-81, branches were set up in Salónica, Lárisa, Vólos,

³ Athens, interviews: on 30 Oct. 1998 with Constantina Giannopoulou, EGE co-founder, president 1989-'94, honorary president 1994-; on 14 Oct. 1998 with Soula Merentiti, ex-president of EGE's branch in Trikala, ex-councillor of the municipality of Trikala; on 11 Nov. 1998 with Anni Pitsiori-Kavadia, ex-member of the EGE Executive Board and councillor at the General Secretariat of Equality.

⁴ PASOK succeeded in gaining power just eight years after it was established, with votes figures during the period 1974-'81 as follows: 13.58% in 1974, 25.34% in 1977 and up to 48.07% in 1981. In the elections of 1981, PASOK gained 172 of the 300 seats in the National Assembly and took over the government. See Papadopoulos, Yiannis (1989) 'Parties, the State and Society in Greece: Continuity within Change', *West European Politics*, 12, 2.

⁵ In the Greek political discourse the term 'progressive' denotes the anti-right (non-conservative) political forces.

⁶ See Doulia, Dora (1994) 'To Didi Giannopoulou', *Open Window: Feature 1982-'94*, Athens; *Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation*, publication by the

Yiánnina, Katerini, Martino (Lókrída), Trikala, Patrás, Náfp lion, Tripoli, Agrinio, Spárti, Iráklion (Crete), Sitia (Crete), and elsewhere.⁷ Cells were established to cover a broad range of towns and small villages- in Kalávrita, Dráma, Kastoriá, Argos, Corfú, Lárymna, Réthymno, Ierápetra, in Cretan villages (Xirokámpo and Profitis Ilias), in Mazeika near Kalavrita, in Pýli and Neochóri (near Trikala), etc.⁸ At the same time the EGE was expanding its network in the prefecture of Attica by establishing branches in geographical areas with dissimilar social composition, in for instance Maroussi, Gyzi, Aigaleo, Nea Smyrni, Piraeus, Nikea, Glyfada, Lykovrisi and Aghia Paraskevi.⁹ Its branches and cells came to span the entire country.¹⁰ In this way the EGE became a mass feminist organisation that managed to penetrate into different social strata and even integrated women in the countryside who had never been involved with gender issues.

The public debates, which were organised by the EGE all over the country, concerned primarily the legal framework of the existing Family Law, the status of Greek women in family and society, abortion and family planning, the significance and consequences of child-rearing, children's rights, and women as part of the labour movement.¹¹ The issues that were addressed in these open discussions show the

Union of Greek Women, Athens, 1984; and interview with Constantina Giannopoulou, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

⁷ The branches constitute larger organizational units than the cells. According to the Constitution, a cell can be upgraded to a branch if the Regional Council proposes this and the proposal is approved by the EGE Executive Board. See *Constitution* of 29 Nov. 1983, and 'Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities', *Open Window*, issues 1-14.

⁸ 'Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities', *ibid*.

⁹ 'Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities', *ibid*.

¹⁰ EGE founded branches and cells even in the scattered islands (e.g. on Rhodes, Kalymnos, Mytilini, Skopelos, Alonisos)

¹¹ The following are few examples of the open discussions organized by EGE between 1976 and '81: in Piraeus on 27 Nov. '78: 'The Impact of the Family Environment on Children's Future Development'; in Volos on 29 Nov. '78: 'Children and the Environment'; in Nea Smyrni on 19 Jan. '79: 'Women and Advertising; in Nafplion in 1979: 'The Abused Child'; in Volos in 1980: 'Family Planning and Abortion'; in Yiannina in 1980: 'Legislation and Equality between the Sexes'; in

organisation's strong ideological commitment to the family and to motherhood, as well as its endeavour to ally itself with other political movements in Greek society.

The international dimension:

The EGE has always worked towards linking the Greek feminist movement with progressive feminism in the developing countries. It has also sided firmly with the struggles of peripheral or semi-peripheral nations for national independence or democratic consolidation. EGE's focus on developing countries has largely been the result of Greece's historical legacy of unremitting foreign dependency (particularly the U.S. support of the 1967-74 military junta) and PASOK's political vision of a 'third way to socialism'.¹² In furtherance of these aims the EGE forged links predominantly with women's organisations from the Arab world, from Africa and the Balkans, as well as with feminist organisations in southern Europe and Scandinavia.¹³ Between 1976 and 1981, the EGE participated in national and international conferences, hosted international conferences in Greece, and collaborated closely with the General Secretariat of the Socialist Parties and Progressive Organisations of the

Martino on 27 Feb. '81: 'Relations between the Sexes in the Greek Countryside'; in Katerini on 30 May '81: 'Family Law'; in Lefkáda on 25 July '81: 'The Greek Woman Today'. See 'Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities', *op. cit.*, ref. 7.

¹² The socialist party formulated an ideological platform that questioned '... the essence of the country's orientation since the Second World War, which had been based on strong ties with the United States, active participation in the Atlantic alliance, and integration into Western Europe's political and economic institutions, especially the European Community. Instead PASOK's world view was based on the premise that the bipolar system of the Cold War was a thing of the past and that Greece's international role would be transformed from that of a mere link in NATO's southern flank into a bridge connecting Western Europe with the Balkans, the Arab world, and Africa'. Iatrides, J (1992) 'Papandreou's Foreign Policy', in T. Kariotis (ed.), *The Greek Socialist Experiment: Papandreou's Greece 1981-1989*, (New York, Pella), pp. 127-28.

¹³ The Scandinavian social democratic model was one of the political archetypes of the Greek socialist party.

Mediterranean (PSOM).¹⁴ Its global perspective was also manifested by the organisation's active participation in the United Nations.

Class solidarity:

The organisation has always emphasised that it is not limited to any single class. Nevertheless, one of its prime objectives has been to support 'non-privileged' social groups as well as building an alliance with the labour movement.¹⁵ In this connection, the EGE from 1974 to '81 supported labour strikes, regularly visited companies employing female workers, provided aid to regions struck by earthquakes, protested against employment cuts, and mobilised against gender discrimination in the labour market.¹⁶ It also took part in commemorative events associated with popular

¹⁴ The following are examples of the activities the EGE initiated between 1976 and 1981. The organisation visited the Union of Yugoslav Women in Belgrade (1979); condemned the repression of the Organisation of Progressive Women in Turkey (1979); participated in the Moscow Conference on the occasion of International Child's Year (1979); participated in the 9th Conference of the Federation of Iraqi Women in Baghdad (11- 15 March 1980); also in the International Women's Conference in Copenhagen (14-30 July 1980); met with the women's branch of the Polisario Liberation Movement in Athens (1980); organised the Conference of Progressive Women in the Mediterranean in Athens (10-13 October 1980), and participated in the Athens International Conference on Developments in the Middle East in regard to Nasser's policy (23-24 July 1981). EGE's ideological stance in favour of non-allied countries has at times led to the uncritical support of women's organisations that were merely the tools of authoritarian and highly patriarchal regimes (e.g. Libya, Iraq). See 'Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities', *op. cit.*, ref. 7.

¹⁵ The term 'non-privileged' was used by Andreas Papandreou to describe the social groups the socialist party was targeting politically. It had no clear class reference, but populist connotations encompassing all social groups that identified with a sense of exclusion from the economic and political privileges of Greek society.

¹⁶ Some indicative examples of EGE activities during that period are the following: The organisation supported the workers' 1979 strike at the paper factory Thessaliki; issued resolutions supporting the prolonged strike of Public Power Corporation employees (1979); visited the female workers in the cotton factory in Martino (1980);

struggles - such as against economic exploitation (e.g. the peasants' uprising against the landlords in Kileler); for democracy (e.g. the students' uprising in Nov.1973 against the junta); and for national liberation (e.g. a tribute to the people executed by the German occupation forces in Kalavrita). These commemorations functioned as ideological symbols of the Left, and marked a clear dividing line between the governing conservative party and the anti-right political forces.

Between 1974 and 1981, the EGE occasionally joined other Greek feminist organisations in common campaigns. So the organisation took part in the rallies of the Coordinating Committee of Representatives of Women's Organisations (SEGES), the struggles of the Coordinating Committee of Women's Organisations against the instalment of new missiles in Europe (1979); as well as in 1980 in the Committee of Women's Associations for the five-year plan of women's development.¹⁷ The latter committee directed research projects undertaken by women's organisations

supported the 1980 protest of the workers' wives at Larko against the high incident of industrial accidents; supported the 1980 strike of employees at the infant centre Mitera; protested against the 1980 decision by the government and the administrative council of the National Telecommunication Organisation to exclude women from certain divisions; supported the 1980 hunger strike of employees at the National Organisation of Tourism; protested against the 'terrorist activities' of the American Management towards Greek employees on the American Military Bases (1980); organised mobilisations to help the 1981 earthquake victims in southern and northern Greece (Corinthia and Yiannina); and protested against the dismissal in 1981 of 210 female workers from the 'Pyrgos' company in Salonica. Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE Activities, *ibid*.

¹⁷ The Coordinating Committee of Representatives of Women's Organisations (Syntonistike Epitropé Ginaikón Ekprosopon Syllogón – SEGES) was set up in 1976 specifically to protest against the government's plans to induct women into the armed services, but it soon became the coordinating body for the reform of Family Law. It was a short-lived endeavour, but one of the few examples of coalition building in the history of the post-junta Greek feminist movement. Cacoullou, Ann (1994) 'Women Confronting Party Politics in Greece' in: Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury (eds.) *Women and Politics Worldwide* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press).

concerning the status of Greek women in the sectors of health and education.¹⁸ While there were also isolated instances of co-operation between the EGE and other party-affiliated women's organisations (KDG, OGE), a clear dividing line separated the EGE from the autonomous feminist groups.¹⁹

By the early 1980s the EGE had already become a mass feminist organisation. Its continually growing membership as well as the rise to power of the socialist party in 1981 significantly changed its initial functioning. The new contextual setting meant major organisational changes and a boost in lobbying activities. On 11-13 Dec. 1982 the first Panhellenic conference of the EGE met in Athens.²⁰ It was attended by 90 branches from all over the country and 400 elected representatives. Since the Constitution of 1976 had not provided for the functioning of EGE branches in the countryside, constitutional modifications were needed. The conference decided to establish the organisational autonomy of the branches by setting down their internal function and their relationship vis-à-vis the EGE representative bodies. On 28 Nov. 1983 the EGE General Assembly voted in the new Constitution, embodying the decisions taken at the first Panhellenic conference.

One year later (5-6 May 1984), the second Panhellenic conference was held. It witnessed the organisation's first major crisis, which ended with an overt violation of democratic procedures. The EGE's organisational expansion had rendered the Regional Committee a remarkably powerful body within the Union, and the Executive Board reacted to this by proposing certain changes that would restrict representation of the rural branches at the decision-making centres and thereby curb the power of the

¹⁸ The Committee of Women's Associations for the Five-Year Plan of Women's Development was founded prior to the International Women's Conference in Copenhagen (14-30 June 1980). See Pampouki, Eleni (ed.) (1984) *Agenda*, Athens (in Greek).

¹⁹ For instance, the EGE branch in Trikala collaborated with the OGE on the occasion of a public debate on the Greek National Resistance. Interview with Soula Merentiti, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

²⁰ For a concise overview of the successive EGE Panhellenic conferences see Open Window: Feature 1982-'94, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

Regional Committee.²¹ However, the latter refused to accept the Executive Board's guidelines and proposed organisational changes of its own.²² The conflict ended with the expulsion from the Union of all 12 Committee members, who were not granted the right to defend themselves (but who took the matter to court).

Two years later the third Panhellenic conference took place (21-23 March 1986). Its dominant themes were autonomy, democracy and the promotion of equality. This last issue was especially acute, since the EGE had already achieved significant legal changes, which it wanted to take further by launching nation-wide information campaigns. The representatives of EGE district branches declared themselves dissatisfied with the insufficient representation of the Union's rural members. They were, however, already reduced to a too small minority to carry their point.

The fourth Panhellenic conference (22-24 April 1988) was marked by a further reduction of members from the district branches. The prevailing topics at that meeting reflected the uneasy alliance between EGE and the socialist party. The issue of autonomy from party mechanisms was thoroughly examined, as well as the increasing perception by the new members of the EGE as a job providing mechanism. The meeting also discussed ideological issues such as the impact of the global economic crisis on the status of women, the necessity of women actively participating

²¹ The Regional Committee was responsible for the organisation's branches in the countryside, and the strong presence of the EGE in the rural areas had given the Committee a very strong voice within organisation.

²² According to Anni Pitsiori-Kavadia, the Executive Board feared that the growing power of the district branches would lead to their autonomy, and the conflict centred on procedures for the election of the Executive Board. Until then, it was the Union's branches in the capital that elected it. Now the Board proposed an indirect election of the body by elected representatives from the branches, but excluding the cells, which were numerically predominant in the countryside. The Regional Committee's counterproposal was that all EGE members should elect the Board directly. The Board proposal would mean that the Athens region would obtain the majority, while the Committee's proposal favoured the rural areas. Interview with Anni Pitsiori-Kavadia, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

in the production process, and the incorporation of women in the decision-making centres.

The fifth Panhellenic conference (1989) brought the second significant crisis within the EGE and the beginning of the organisation's gradual decline. From its inception in 1974, the EGE had openly supported the socialist party and prior to elections had always urged women to vote for PASOK.²³ This was the official line of the Executive Board as expressed by Margaret Papandreou, but there was always a minority that opted for a vote of conscience, free from any political commitments. In the period after 1985, the organisation began officially to question the established alliance with the socialists. The main reason for this was the deterioration in the personal relations between Margaret and Andreas Papandreou. The mass media widely publicised the husband's extra-marital affair, while a newspaper under the influence of the socialist party (*Avriani*) launched severe attacks on Margaret Papandreou. The personal tension between these two public figures (Prime Minister: Andreas Papandreou and EGE President: Margaret Papandreou) had irrevocable political repercussions on the highly centralized and personalistic function of the socialist party and the EGE. This intermingling of private and public affairs showed itself at the fifth Panhellenic conference, where the EGE president (Margaret Papandreou) proposed that at the forthcoming national elections members should be encouraged to vote according to their conscience. This sudden turn-about by the previously inflexible majority generated severe internal clashes, which were made worse when the socialist party intervened. The conference ended with the departure of its president, of the members of the Executive Board, and a number of ordinary members, most of them from the Athens area. On 2 July 1989 an ad hoc meeting was called to elect the new Executive Board, which then voted in Constantina Giannopoulou as president of EGE.²⁴ The next regular Panhellenic conference met in Athens 28-29 March 1992, but henceforth the EGE had to face not only internal divisions, but also the steady decline of the Greek feminist movement as a whole.

²³ *Editorials* in the organization's official magazine Open Window.

²⁴ The successive EGE presidents have been: Kakia Gennimata (1976-1980), Kalliopi Bourdara (1980-1982), Margaret Papandreou (1982-1989), Constantina Giannopoulou (1989-1994), Maria Kipriotaki-Perraki (1994-). Margaret Papandreou was vice-president from 1976 to 1982.

Moreover, following the clash of 1989, the EGE lost its privileged status vis-à-vis PASOK, which regained power in the national elections of 1993. While, therefore, the EGE continued after 1989 as a united socialist-feminist organisation, its political authority was greatly diminished.

Between 1981 and 1987 the EGE was successful in introducing a number of legal changes that radically altered the gender status in Greek society. With PASOK's ascent to power in 1981 the EGE had acquired novel resources that facilitated the enactment of legal revisions and the nation-wide dissemination of the feminist discourse. The three most significant legal reforms are briefly set out below.

1) Revision of Family Law:

Under the existing Family Law, the man was the head of family and had exclusive authority to decide on every aspect of marital life (Art. 1387). The wife was confined to 'management of the household' (Art. 1389) and had to obtain her husband's permission for social and economic activities outside the household (for instance, for entering into agreements with third persons, starting a business, even placing her children in school).²⁵ Responsibilities of child-rearing (supervision, education, residence, disciplinary measures, etc.) rested with the head of the household, and it was exclusively the right of the father to decide on matters concerning the child's life (Art. 1500).²⁶ The new Family Law of 1983 abolished the concept of 'head of the family' and introduced that of a 'family founded on equality' for which both spouses had joint responsibility. The dowry system was legally abolished, and for the first time the wife's right was established to part of any property acquired in the course of the marriage. The system of joint ownership was introduced. Civil marriages became as legally binding as religious ones. The no-fault divorce based on mutual consent was introduced. Concerning children, the new law abolished the terms 'true' or 'illegitimate' and replaced them by 'born to married' or 'born to unmarried parents'. Children of unmarried mothers came automatically under their mother's care, no court decision

²⁵ 'Women...', pamphlet published by the Committee of Struggles for the Reform of Family Law. See 'Appendix', *Skoupa*, issue 4, July 1980.

²⁶ 'Women...', *ibid.*

being required. Children born out of wedlock had exactly the same inheritance rights as those born to married parents.²⁷

II) Amendment of penal code:

The former penal code defined rape as a 'crime against morality' and rape was prosecuted only after indictment. This provision often facilitated financial or marital settlements in incidents of rape. The new penal law (1419/1984) classified rape as a 'crime against the sexual freedom of both sexes', while sexual harassment ('any improper actions and propositions that insult another person's sense of dignity') was for the first time defined as a criminal offence.²⁸ Under the new law, rape is prosecuted automatically.

III) Legalisation of abortions:

The old Law determined that obtaining or self-inducing an illegal abortion was punishable by three years' imprisonment. Legal abortions could be obtained only in the case of rape, incest, seduction of girls under 15 years of age, abuse of women incapable of defending themselves, medical evidence showing that the birth would severely damage the health of the mother, and where the foetus was seriously not healthy. In May 1986, the socialist government passed a new law on abortion (Law 1609/86).²⁹ This provided for abortion on demand during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy and in case of rape or for medical reasons, concerning the health of the mother or the foetus, for 24 weeks. Abortion is provided free of charge, being covered by health insurance.³⁰

The principle of equality between the sexes was also applied by law (N. 1414) in the sector of employment.³¹ For the first time in Greek history, demands that had formed the cornerstone of the Greek feminist movement since the turn of the century

²⁷ *National Report of Hellas* (Ministry to the Presidency, Hellenic Council for Equality, 1985)

²⁸ National Report, *ibid.*; Kyriazis, Nota (1995) 'Feminism and the Status of Women in Greece' in D. Conostas and T. Stavrou (eds.) *Greece Prepares for the Twenty-First Century* (Washington D.C. and Baltimore, The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press and the John Hopkins University Press).

²⁹ Kyriazis, *ibid.*

³⁰ Kaplan, Gisela (1992) *Contemporary Western European Feminism* (London, UCL).

³¹ Singh, Rina (1998) *Gender Autonomy in Western Europe: An Imprecise Revolution*, (London and New York, MacMillan Press and St. Martin's Press).

were partially met.³² The establishment of an official service to monitor their implementation backed up the legal provisions. Moreover, the crucial role of the state in promoting gender equality resulted in the unprecedented incorporation of gender issues in official government pronouncements. All the above legal and institutional revisions were the outcome of persistent pressure and lobbying by the EGE that, in most cases, met indifference or open hostility from the socialist party.³³

The Union of Greek Women combined lobbying activities with its own autonomous agenda. Between 1981 and '89 it gave many public talks, focusing primarily on legal amendments; organised meetings with women in industry, hospitals, reformatory institutions, co-operatives, and local councils; participated in demonstrations for peace and mobilisations against the American military bases in Greece; attended international conferences and forged links with other women's organisations at international level.³⁴ It also extended its organisational network, although the peak of its membership had been reached in the period 1981-83.³⁵

³² Cacoullos, *op. cit.*, ref. 17.

³³ The negative and often degrading stance of the socialist party towards the feminist agenda of EGE was a recurrent theme in all the interviews conducted with the former leadership of the Union.

³⁴ For instance, open discussions were held in Salonica, Mytilini, Halkida on the new Family Law; Drama and Corfu on family planning; in Igoumenitsa and Yiannina on the legalization of abortion. The EGE participated in two rallies against the American Bases. One was organised by the Peace Committees (03 March 1983), the second by the General Federation of Workers (28 April 1983). At both of them the EGE slogans stressed national independence, nuclear disarmament of the Balkans, and peace. The EGE also sent delegates to international conferences like: the International Peace Conference in Moscow (10-17 June 1985), the World Conference for the U.N.'s Decade of Women in Nairobi (July 1985), the Meeting of Peace and Amity between Bulgarian and Greek Women in Bulgaria (9-10 May 1986), and the Fourth European Meeting of Women's Organisations in the European Community in London (5-7 Nov. 1987). See Bimonthly Chronicle of EGE's activities, *Open Window*, issues 15-43 and *Agenda*, published by the Union of Greek Women, Athens 1995.

³⁵ Interview with Chrysanthi Laiou Antoniou, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

The feminist movement initially reacted to the legal and institutional reforms by the socialist government with perplexity and inertia, which gradually took the form of two tendencies within the movement. *The first trend* involved a positive stand towards the accomplished reforms, and developed a strategy of promoting gender issues on both, the institutional and the societal level. This positive evaluation of the reforms by the feminist organisations was coupled with severe criticism of the EGE, which was accused of arrogating to itself the place of spokeswoman for the rest of the Greek feminist movement. The charge was based on the EGE persistently employing the state machinery for legitimising its own ideological platform as the only plausible version of feminism. Moreover, it was exclusively women loyal to the socialist party or personally close to Margaret Papandreou, who were chosen to staff the newly founded institutions on women's issues. Other feminist organisations felt excluded from the decision-making process, as well as marginalised ideologically. *The second trend* in the feminist movement denounced the recent reforms as mere modernisations of patriarchy, and developed a decidedly confrontational stance towards the EGE. This section adopted an anti-institutional strategy and focused exclusively on civil society.³⁶

In brief, the 1980s witnessed an unfruitful tension between the EGE and other feminist organisations. The contradiction between EGE's dominance in the public domain and its isolation in the feminist spectrum gradually resolved itself by the decline of the Greek feminist movement as a whole. The withering away of many organisations, combined with gender issues losing much of their urgency in the public discourse, drove the surviving feminist organisations to co-operate in many of their activities. The last organisational endeavour, (as already mentioned), was the re-establishment of SEGES in April 1990.

3.3 Ideology

The discourse formulated by the Union of Greek Women is a blend of several different elements. The aims of the organisation, as stated in its Constitution, originate

³⁶ This current within the Greek feminist movement consisted predominantly of various autonomous feminist groups. Their ideology and political strategy is further elaborated in chapter 4.

in the feminist tradition itself, in socialist humanism, and in dependency theory.³⁷ To quote the Constitution:

‘Aims of the association, within the framework of the feminist-socialist ideology, are:

1. To build a society of equality, justice and freedom for all people, where men and women will have equal opportunities, equal rights, equal responsibilities and obligations in all areas of life.
2. To inform and enlighten women, to make them aware of and to sensitise them to the causes of their oppression, which are patriarchy and capitalism.
3. To achieve equal participation of women in the economic, political, social and cultural sectors of society.
4. To attain the institutionalisation, by the State, of a set of measures that will provide the necessary infrastructure for motherhood and child-rearing. The aim of this struggle is to end motherhood and child-rearing being the source and pretext for the economic, social, political and cultural marginalisation of women.
5. To co-operate with mass movements, especially in matters that concern the workplace, the living environment and education, with the condition that this co-operation furthers the aims of the Association, as well as to participate in the struggles for the advancement of popular institutions.³⁸
6. To become aware of our popular tradition and cultural heritage. To detect and indicate our cultural alienation.
7. To develop women’s creativity and to reclaim women’s product in all its various forms.
8. To develop a relationship of mutual support, confidence and respect among the women of all the world and most particularly women of the Third World.
9. To participate in the effort to secure national independence, to defend democracy, to preserve peace and to bring social liberation’.³⁹

³⁷ ‘Aims of the Association’, Art. 2, Constitution, *op. cit.*, ref. 7.

³⁸ People’s meetings, neighbourhood councils, city councils, prefectural councils, etc. See *Women’s Union of Greece*, EGE pamphlet (in English).

³⁹ Art. 2 (Aims of the Association) of the 1983 EGE Constitution is a revised version of the original formulation in the 1976 Constitution. The differences are the following: (1) The 1976 Constitution included two paragraphs subsequently omitted,

The above aims specify the Union's ideological premises, which can be expressed in three fundamental axioms:

1. Patriarchy is the exclusion of women from a male-dominated society. Feminism is the participation of women in that society. The aim of the organisation is equality of men and women.
2. The role of the state is crucial for bringing about a liberated society.
3. Feminism is a political movement and therefore an integral part of national and international political struggles.

These three theorems form the basis of the organisation's ideological framework that combines elements of political radicalism and social conservatism. The EGE ideological agenda is analysed further in the pages to follow, in terms of first feminist and then socialist orientations.

A) Feminist Identity

The EGE, loyal to the ideological tradition of socialist feminism, has developed its feminist identity around the concept of capitalist patriarchy.⁴⁰

i.e. par 6, 'To confront the exploitation through high prices (inflation), misinformation and poor quality of products and services'; and par 8, 'To mobilise for the improvement of the local environment: schools, health, recreation, etc.'. (2) The statement on motherhood and child-rearing had strong conservative and nationalistic overtones in the initial formulation: par 4: 'To attain the institutionalisation by the State of a set of protective measures for the mother and the child. To recognise officially the mission of motherhood in relation to our nation's future'. (3) The initial wording on international solidarity and understanding amongst women did not mention third-world women, (4) The 1976 Constitution confined EGE membership to Greek citizens, while that of 1983 also provides for the enrolment of non-Greeks, (5) The most significant difference is that in the 1976 Constitution the word patriarchy does not appear at all, thereby illustrating the organisation's initial ideological vagueness. See Art 2, Constitution, *op. cit.*, ref. 2 and Art 2, Constitution, *op. cit.*, ref. 7.

⁴⁰ Zillah Eisenstein was the first to use the term *capitalist patriarchy*. The term illustrates the socialist-feminist belief that the origins of women's oppression lie in the

3.3.1 Capitalist Patriarchy

At the first Panhellenic meeting in 1982 the members voted in favour of declaring the EGE a socialist feminist organisation, thereby acknowledging two distinct origins of women's oppression: patriarchy and capitalism.

'Patriarchy constitutes one of the essential reasons for women's oppression and exploitation, since it predetermines the social roles on the basis of sex'.⁴¹

In other words, gender lies at the root of the unequal distribution of 'human roles, goals, activities, labour, and thereby it also becomes the predominant criterion for the segregation of social functions and individual power'.⁴² Patriarchy, according to the EGE, precedes as a system the class divisions of society. The historical origins of patriarchy are located in men's control over women's reproductive abilities. Hence, human reproduction and its political control by men constitute one site of women's oppression.⁴³ If patriarchy is one face of women's oppression, capitalism is the other.

complex interaction between capitalism and patriarchy. Socialist feminists have rejected both radical feminism, which locates women's oppression predominantly or exclusively in patriarchy, and Marxist feminism, which locates it in capitalism. There have been diverse ideological currents within the framework of socialist-feminism, but they all share the following essential premises: (i) behind the political, social, cultural and psychological phenomena of women's oppression lies a material root, (ii) Marxism has used historical materialism to analyse production; women should use the same methodological tools for exploring the sphere of reproduction; (iii) patriarchy does not constitute an a-historical system, as radical feminists argue, and the concrete connections between patriarchy and the capitalist social reality must be explored. See Fox, Bonnie (1988) 'Conceptualising "Patriarchy"', *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 25, 2, Evans, Judith (1995) *Feminist Theory Today: An Introduction to Second-Wave Feminism*, (London, Sage); and Sargent, Lydia (ed.) (1981) *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Boston, South End Press).

⁴¹ 'The Union of Greek Women: A Feminist-Socialist Organisation', *Central Proposal* distributed at the EGE's First Panhellenic Conference, 26-28 Nov. 1982 in Athens, p.1.

⁴² 'The Union of Greek Women: A Feminist-Socialist Organisation', *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴³ Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

‘Capitalism constitutes the other fundamental reason for women’s oppression and exploitation. Capitalism, of course, exploits the totality of the working people, but especially, from an economic point of view, women. Capitalism keeps women in the margins of society, because women’s domesticity safeguards: (1) the free upbringing of children, who are capitalism’s future labourers, and (2) the free care of men, who are its present labourers. Additionally, capitalism uses women as a cheap reserve labour force, whenever this is economically dictated’.⁴⁴

The organisation emphasises that capitalism and patriarchy are not two independent systems but one complex whole.

‘The awareness that elements of one system are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the other is extremely important for a socialist-feminist political analysis’.⁴⁵

So, by determining every aspect of women’s social life, patriarchy serves capitalism’s interest to have political control over women.⁴⁶ Moreover, by establishing a class system, that is based on profit and involves women’s economic dependency, exploitation and oppression capitalism reinforces patriarchy.⁴⁷ The ideological premise that women’s oppression is due to a combination of patriarchy and capitalism carries with it the belief that women’s liberation can be achieved only by a combination of feminism and socialism. The EGE’s dominant slogan throughout its historical trajectory has therefore been:

‘There is no women’s liberation without social liberation; there is no social liberation without women’s liberation’.⁴⁸

The organisation’s emphasis on the interdependency of capitalism and patriarchy has also had practical implications. If the EGE had adopted the dual-systems theory, which is based on the belief that capitalism and patriarchy each have their source in distinct social systems, the necessity for an independent women’s movement would

⁴⁴ ‘The Union of Greek Women: A Feminist-Socialist Organisation’, *op. cit.*, ref. 41, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁵ ‘The Union of Greek Women: ...’, *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ ‘The Union of Greek Women: ...’, *ibid.*, p.2.

⁴⁷ Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, p. 54.

⁴⁸ Women’s Union of Greece, *op. cit.*, ref. 38.

have been a perfectly reasonable inference.⁴⁹ In fact, the EGE found ideological legitimisation for its alignment with the socialist party by emphasising the elements of interdependency between the two.

To sum up: Initially founded as a general women's organisation, the EGE's original ideological vagueness was eventually succeeded by a clear demarcation of its feminist agenda. While its ideological platform is based on the premises of socialist feminism, the organisation's positions in matters of concrete policy have frequently contradicted them. Let us look at the Union's ideological distinctiveness as expressed in its publications and declarations.

3.3.2 Social Values, Socialisation, Education

The fundamental axiom of socialist-feminism that women's oppression has a material basis is clearly stated in the book *Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation*, the only EGE publication, which gives an extensive account of the organisation's ideological framework. Others texts put out by the EGE have, however, projected a different interpretation of patriarchy. There has been continuous emphasis on gender inequality being caused by the dominant system of social values, which is said to induce social prejudices and generate patterns of behaviour that have led to women's marginalisation and oppression.

'As a women's organisation, our struggle is directed towards two fronts: the capitalist system and the prevalent patriarchal mentalities'.⁵⁰

'Official statistical evidence proves that women, although they constitute half of the country's population, are the most oppressed. Women's problems have

⁴⁹ The dual-systems theory is one ideological strand within the spectrum of socialist-feminism. It conceptualises patriarchy as a system parallel, and with a status similar to capitalism. Since it regards the two systems as separate and self-contained, it tends to locate patriarchy in the family and capitalism in the economy. However, other ideological currents within socialist feminism view patriarchy and capitalism as interdependent, each one permeating the totality of social relations. See Young, Iris (1981) 'Beyond the Unhappy Marriage: A Critique of the Dual Systems Theory', in Sargent, *op. cit.*, ref. 40.

⁵⁰ 'The Participation of Women in Politics and Public Life', *Open Window*, issue 8, Feb.-March 1980, p. 1.

resulted from the myths and prejudices that have been propagated in societies and have denied women access to decision-making centres. Thereby, women have been denied the right to take part in the formation of the society, they live in'.⁵¹

This locates patriarchy in the sphere of social values, yet the argument hardly ever links it to social structures or vested interests. The EGE, therefore, reduces social values to an abstract entity that arbitrarily imposes on society patterns of behaviour beyond or against the interests of both sexes.

'We women are struggling to change not only the relations of production, but also human relations and we know that this can be achieved only if there is a conscious effort to change the system of values that oppresses all of us, women and men'.⁵²

Accordingly, the organisation clarifies in various ideological statements that its struggle is not directed against men but against the dominant patriarchal mentality.

'We do not fight against men. We fight against the mentality of the patriarchal society, which has turned the prejudice against women into an unwritten moral code'.⁵³

What this means is that, by interpreting social values as autonomous from social structures and interests, the organisation has deprived patriarchy of its core dimension, which is the notion of conflicting interests. The socialist-feminist definition of patriarchy as the collective male dominance over the interests of the socially inferior group of women, has given place to considering patriarchy as a mere ideological abstraction. This confinement of patriarchy to the realm of ideology has enabled the Union of Greek Women to criticise patriarchy without ever targeting men as the bearers of patriarchal oppression.⁵⁴ The EGE discourse has consistently eschewed the question of the origins of the prevailing value system, and always confined itself to abstract terms like 'the system', 'society', 'human beings', etc. It has

⁵¹ 'Women's Problems and the Struggle for their Solution within the Context of the forthcoming National Elections', *Open Window*, issue 14, July-Sept. 1981, p. 1.

⁵² '8th March: Day of Struggles for Women', *Open Window*, issue 12, Jan.-March 1981, p. 1.

⁵³ *To the Women*, pamphlet by the Kifissia-Athens branch of the EGE (in Greek).

⁵⁴ 'The Participation of Women in Politics and Public Life', *op. cit.*, ref. 50, p. 1.

limited itself to a merely descriptive account of women's oppression, avoiding any specification of the origins of that oppression. It may have denounced the patriarchal institutions of society, but it has repeatedly called on men to actively support the feminist cause.

'The road to equality and emancipation of women is the road of the common struggles of all the citizens, men and women, for democracy, social progress and liberation'.⁵⁵

The Union has ideologically shielded its alliance with the socialist party by articulating a self-confined feminist discourse, which rarely targeted the beneficiaries of women's oppression. In the few instances when the origins of the prevailing patriarchal mentality were specified, they were located within the capitalist system.

'The fundamental cause of women's oppression should be sought in the *capitalist system* and the *assumptions* it has generated in relation to women's role. These assumptions operate in an *autonomous manner*...'.⁵⁶

An outright attack on men would unavoidably mean a critique of the male-dominated society and political system, and this would generate friction in the organisation's collaboration with the socialist party. The EGE, in contrast to the Movement of Democratic Women (KDG), has avoided any criticism of the patriarchal elements of the socialist party or of the mainstream values of Greek society.⁵⁷

In other words, the EGE has tended to portray patriarchy as a mere cultural phenomenon, while in the rare instances when a material grounding of patriarchy was given; this was placed within the capitalist system.

⁵⁵ '8th March: Day of Struggles for Women', *op. cit.*, ref. 52, p. 1.

⁵⁶ 'The Participation of Women in Politics and Public Life', *op. cit.*, ref. 50, p. 1, (emphasis added).

⁵⁷ The KDG was allied with the Communist Party of Greece of the Interior. A significant section of women in the KDG articulated a severe critique of male culture and the male-dominated public domain. Their aim was to 'feminise' the communist party, hoping to alter its established practices and ideological premises, which were perceived as reproducing the androcentric logic of 'formal politics'. However, the strong reaction to this from the party and from opposing sections within the KDG led many members to resign and form an alliance with the autonomous feminist groups. See chapter 4.

The predominant focus on the sphere of ideology also manifested itself by a strong emphasis on gender-role socialisation and the emancipatory potential of education. The EGE has persistently underlined that children are socialised into specific clearly differentiated roles, and in the process they internalise their society's dominant social values and structures. Their socialisation develops those attributes that are considered appropriate for females and males respectively.

'The myth of ...man's superiority and woman's inferiority has been cultivated by the dominant ideology via its different channels (the family, school, church, media, etc.). This myth of inequality has influenced the relation between the sexes, leading to alienated individuals, women and men, who have developed false hypocritical relations and feelings, instead of aspiring to establish relations grounded on equality and earnestness'.⁵⁸

EGE's publications have again and again stressed the family and schools, the agents of primary socialisation, as the most significant elements in the formation of gendered subjectivities. Numerous articles in *Open Window* (Anichto Parathiro) have been dedicated to child-rearing and the educational system, while a constant claim of the organisation has been the founding of 'Parental Schools', for creating family environments that could take full advantage of children's potential. The organisation's emphasis on socialisation has gone hand and hand with its belief in the emancipatory potential of education.

'A socialist polity's duty is to assist its citizens to become mature, liberated and fulfilled individuals. This can be realised by means of information and further education'.⁵⁹

In this way, the EGE has reproduced the dominant social-constructions belief of the Greek Left (of the 1970s and early '80s) that, if social institutions (family, school, etc.) became agents of democratisation, and objective information and education were provided freely to every citizen, society would cease to be an arena of competition and domination and would instead become a sphere of social awareness and social fellowship. This line of argument has been an integral part of the EGE's broader humanistic discourse.

⁵⁸ 'The Relation between the Sexes is "Predefined"', *Open Window*, issue 14, July-Sept. 1981, p. 16.

⁵⁹ 'The Family in Greece', *Open Window*, issue 7, Dec-Jan 1980, p. 14.

3.3.3 Humanism, Equality, Androgyny

The EGE's ideological discourse has projected equality as inherent part of the broader political project to achieve human liberation.

'The Women's Union of Greece believes that by working initially on the problems of daily life, and trying altogether to solve those problems by collective action, we can achieve our final goal - THE LIBERATION OF THE HUMAN BEING'.⁶⁰

In other words, the EGE would like to see a social order, where all human beings are entitled to universal moral equality simply by virtue of being human. Accordingly, the organisation has grounded its claim for equality on the notion of human rights.

'We believe that true sexual equality is the claim of human rights, since it refers to human relations in society'.⁶¹

Hence, a common humanity forms the moral underpinning of the EGE's feminist platform:

'...The present demands of the women's movement aim at a different way of life, where all human beings will be liberated from exploitation, oppression, domination and the multiple forms of alienation'.⁶²

Throughout, the organisation has emphasised the common humanity of both sexes and has underplayed women's distinctive experiences and social identities, given its implicit assumption that there is no difference between men and women. The EGE has consistently argued that the existing social differences between the sexes are the product of the prevailing patriarchal order. In a society of gender equality, women and men would not only share their common human essence, but would also be free to develop their equal capabilities. Accordingly, the projection of the equal qualities of the two sexes has constituted, for EGE, a fundamental precondition for a uniform treatment of women and men. The Union's emphasis on the sameness of the sexes embodies the idea of gender-neutral human beings or citizens, an 'androgyny'.⁶³ The

⁶⁰ 'Greek Women Forward in Action', in *Greece through new Eyes*, EGE pamphlet (in English).

⁶¹ 'The Woman's Question in Greece', *Open Window*, issue 7, Dec-Jan 1980, p.8

⁶² Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, p. 18.

⁶³ The term 'androgyny' refers to the premise that between the sexes there is an absence of differences and therefore they are both entitled to equality. Thus,

EGE's feminist vision of an egalitarian society in which women and men will have equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal responsibilities presupposes a society of 'androgyny' individuals with qualities in no way different from those of his or her fellow citizens, and therefore entitled to exactly the same rights.⁶⁴ This association of equality and androgyny was much reinforced during the rule of the socialist party, since the incorporation of gender issues into the national policy agenda led to a gender-neutral state discourse.⁶⁵

The ideological foundations of the EGE (humanism-equality-sameness) came under severe attack from other groups of the Greek feminist movement. The autonomous feminists and the KDG charged that the Union by emphasising women's equality with men was encouraging women to take part in and become integrated into the patriarchal system. Moreover, they argued that any gender-neutral discourse in a patriarchal society obscures the existence of inequality by placing both sexes on the same level, although one of them holds power over the other. Their own feminist discourse denounced women's integration into the existing patriarchal society and

'androgyny' is a descriptive term for the gender-neutral perception of human beings.

The opposite of androgyny is gynocentrism, which latter term is associated with cultural feminism that emphasises the differences between women and men. Cultural feminism ascribes a positive value to those differences, and celebrates women's qualities as superior to men's. The first feminist perspective (equality, androgyny) endorses social constructionism, while the latter (cultural feminism, gynocentrism) is based on essentialism or biological determinism. On the international level, the association of equality with sameness and androgyny has been a common feature of second-wave socialist-feminist organisations. Cott, Nancy (1986) 'Feminist Theory and Feminist Movements: The Past Before Us', in Juliet Mitchell, Ann Oakley (eds.) *What is Feminism?* (Oxford, Blackwell); and Evans, *op. cit.*, ref. 40.

⁶⁴ 'General Aims', in *Greece through New Eyes*, *op. cit.*, ref. 60.

⁶⁵ Sweden has been representative of the correlation between the bureaucratisation of issues related to sex equality and a gender-neutral state discourse. See in Elman, Amy (1995) 'The State's Equality for Women: Sweden's Equality Ombudsman', in Dorothy McBride Stetson, Amy G. Mazur (eds.) *Comparative State Feminism*, (London, Sage).

emphasised the differences between women and men. In Greece, therefore, the controversy of sexual equality versus difference, which has been a major feature of the international feminist movement, was manifested in the ideological conflict between the Union of Greek Women, which pursued 'equality through sameness', and the bloc of the autonomous feminist groups allied with the KDG, which struggled for 'equality through difference'. However, even the latter groups, have persistently argued against any positive evaluation of women's existing attributes. There has been a strong consensus throughout the Greek feminist spectrum that qualities born out of oppression should not be celebrated.

3.3.4 Men, Family, Motherhood, Sexuality

The EGE's humanistic discourse has embraced both women and men as alienated individuals, oppressed by the double burden of patriarchy and capitalism. It has on many occasions called on men to become comrades in the women's struggle. In view of that, the EGE has severely attacked the radical feminist organisations' confrontational stance towards men.

'We want men to become comrades in our struggle, because only women and men together, hand in hand, equal, ...will make the dream of a better life come true'.⁶⁶

'In nearly all countries the progressive political parties have not persuaded women of their positive disposition to gender issues. This has led to the disorientation of women, who have started adopting increasingly extremist positions'.⁶⁷

According to the EGE, the number of women who consider patriarchy to be the prime opponent and so disregard the significance of the political regime has proliferated significantly. This has led to a separatist struggle carried out by women only and in permanent conflict with men.

'This apolitical feminism has failed to provide a solution. Men are equally trapped with women in the networks of society. It is totally unrealistic to argue that our father, brother, husband or professional associate is competing with us

⁶⁶ 'Legally Equal', *Open Window*, issue 20, Jan.-April 1983, p. 1.

⁶⁷ 'Woman and the European Community', *Open Window*, issue 6, Sept.-Oct.- Nov. 1979, p. 8.

because of his nature. We must realise that emancipation comes into direct conflict with the fundamental needs of capitalism and of any other system based on oppression'.⁶⁸

While officially the organisation, both on the practical and the ideological level, has persistently sought an alliance with men, it was divided on the issue internally. The younger members took a more confrontational stance vis-à-vis men than did the older generation. The latter was reluctant to endorse ideological tenets that pointed to men as the beneficiaries of patriarchy. Their viewpoint clearly expressed itself at the first Panhellenic conference. The older members, who considered the feminist label as too radical and extremist, objected to the specification of the organisation's ideological identity as 'socialist feminist'.⁶⁹ Although the official EGE pronouncements have usually accommodated both tendencies, they have favoured the projection of the feminist cause as conjoint to the men's struggle for socialism.

In the mid-1980s the EGE, which previously had rejected radical feminism as apolitical and elitist, began to adopt its premises and language.⁷⁰ It now attacked the political system as male-dominated, and identified male culture with power, domination, competitiveness, and war. It also started praising women as superior to men.

'Every country's political system reflects predominantly the male point of view...This is valid for all societies, since there is nowhere in the world any society that is not patriarchal and male dominated. What form would society

⁶⁸ 'Woman and the European Community', *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁹ 'Chronicle of the First Panhellenic Meeting', *Open Window*, issue 20, Jan.-April 1983, p. 17.

⁷⁰ The EGE's opposition to the autonomous feminist groups temporarily changed to one of reconciliation. So, in 1986 it issued its first invitation to an autonomous group ('Single Mothers'), and the year after, its magazine published an interview with Alice Schwartz. See 'Single Mothers', *Open Window*, issue 32, Jan.-Feb.-March 1986; and Skepers, Amalia 'Justice is Male: Interview with Alice Schwartz', *Open Window*, issue 37, Jan.-Feb. 1987.

have, if its civilisation was based on women's values, meaning the principles of care and nurture, non-violence, non-oppression and non-exploitation?'.⁷¹

And:

'Patriarchy is a value system that involves competition, aggressiveness, hierarchy, denial of emotions and the use of violence'.⁷²

The most obvious reason for this sudden turn-about was the collapse of the marriage of Margaret and Andreas Papandreou. The fact that it was mostly Margaret Papandreou and her supporters who expressed the new EGE orientation proves the personalistic aspect of this ideological rupture. The EGE majority continued to adhere to the organisation's previous humanistic agenda.⁷³ Following Margaret Papandreou's departure, the Union's official discourse once more endorsed the alliance with men and the socialist party.

Aside from the personal element in the EGE's sudden antagonism towards men, there were two subtler reasons behind this ideological discontinuity. The socialist party, before it came to power, had included in its election program a number of feminist demands articulated by the EGE, but later showed itself most reluctant to keep its promises (for instance concerning the legalisation of abortions), fearing their high political cost.⁷⁴ Persistent pressure by the Union, and the continued refusal by the

⁷¹ Speech by Margarita Papandreou at the Conference 'Woman and Local Self-Management', *Open Window*, issue 35, Sept.-Oct. 1986, pp. 9-10.

⁷² 'Together for Peace', (Speech by Margarita Papandreou at EGE's celebration of the 'International Woman's Day' (8/03/86)), *Open Window*, issue 32, Jan.-Feb.-March 1986, p. 6.

⁷³ Illustrative is the statement of the organisation's branch in Argos (08/Mar./1986): 'We believe that men's involvement and support is necessary for the positive outcome of our struggle. We do not regard men as rivals, but as partners in life and our struggles for better interpersonal relations'. 'Woman and Peace', *Open Window*, *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁷⁴ The Minister of Health refused to have abortions legalised, on the grounds that Greek society was too conservative for this. The socialist party arranged a series of meetings with the EGE Executive Board to persuade the organisation to withdraw its demand. In reply, the organization set a deadline for the realization of the reform, and when it had expired, it joined the mobilisations by the autonomous feminist groups

party to satisfy the organisation's demands inevitably created tension in their alliance. Margaret Papandreou was quite explicit when she addressed the conference 'Woman and Mass Media':

'Women's vision of the future society ... is repressed by the traditional patriarchal mentality, which becomes even more apparent whenever policy issues concerning the relation between the two sexes are raised. We have to deal with 'socialist patriarchs' or 'patriarchal socialists', since the perceptions about women's roles are the same in all male-dominated parties'.⁷⁵

The second reason for EGE's change in outlook was conjunctural. It was the 1980s that witnessed the peak of the Greek feminist movement, with particularly the autonomous feminists and the KDG organising frequent demonstration to pressure the government into satisfying long-outstanding feminist claims. The building-up of a grass-roots movement, independent of political parties and the ascendancy of a more radical feminist discourse, forced the EGE to readjust its ideological platform to the new reality in the feminist spectrum.

A marked feature in the organisation's feminist identity has been the continuous and whole-hearted support of the family institution as the most significant agent of socialisation.

'The family environment has an enormous formative power. Morals and customs, tradition and practices are transferred from generation to generation within the family. Thus, the family becomes the regulatory factor of our social life. A democratic structure of the family is going to be reflected also at the level of the community and society'.⁷⁶ 'The focus of contemporary sociology on the institution of the family follows the realisation that the family constitutes society's most effective, stabilising and rejuvenating social group possible'.⁷⁷

and the KDG that eventually forced the government to get the law through in Parliament. Interview with Margaret Papandreou, 07/Nov./ '98, Athens; interview with Constantina Giannopoulou, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

⁷⁵ 'Woman and Mass Media', *Open Window*, issue 31, Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 1985, p. 14.

⁷⁶ 'The Family in Greece', *op. cit.*, ref. 59, p. 13.

⁷⁷ 'The Family in Greece', *ibid.*, p. 13.

The family received high praise not only in terms of societal, but also individual development.⁷⁸ Consequently, in EGE's discourse the oppression within the family is not built-in the institution itself. Since the institution is not inherently patriarchal, oppression is a concomitant of the existing authoritarian structure and function of the institution.⁷⁹ In accordance with this view, the EGE has argued that restructuring the institution along democratic lines would bring out the emancipatory potential of the family.⁸⁰ Therefore, its analysis of the family has centred on the democratic-authoritarian duality. Both notions embrace the humanistic and gender-neutral perspective of the organisation. The fundamental axiom of second-wave feminism that it is above all through heterosexual marriage that men exert control over women's labour and sexuality has been totally absent from the EGE discourse.

‘We want to create a human society that is going to be supportive to the family and to women's new social role. When we analyse women's issues, we must take into consideration that both men and women believe in marriage. Our aim is not to destroy marriage because it oppresses women. Our aim is to reform marriage as an institution’.⁸¹

The organisation's strong pro-family stance has been inseparably linked with its positive attitude to motherhood. Since its founding, the EGE has stated unequivocally that it perceives motherhood as a social good, and one of its constitutional aims has been the official recognition of the social contribution of motherhood.⁸² This perception of motherhood as a valuable social function is coupled with the projection of childbearing as a women's natural role. In the EGE's discourse, motherhood is part of a woman's nature. It is not a matter of choice, but the social function expected of women. Instead of challenging the social construction of

⁷⁸ The organisation has insistently argued that the family is the only environment where people can become ‘psycho-mentally mature’. ‘The Family in Greece’, *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁹ ‘Woman and the European Community’, *op. cit.*, ref. 67, ‘The Family in Greece’, *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Athena Raptou, ‘Beating has not come from Paradise’, *Open Window*, issue 7, Dec.-Jan. 1980, p. 12

⁸¹ ‘Meeting at “Ocean”’, *Open Window*, issue 42, Feb.-Dec., 1988, p.8.

⁸² Article 2, *op. cit.*, ref. 39.

motherhood as the 'biological fate' of women, the EGE has denoted it as women's collective duty, and in relevant discussions frequently associated it with the country's demographic difficulties. The Union has proposed:

'...the provision of incentives for the increase of the birth rate, like social care for working mothers... economic accommodations and allowances... in collaboration with the Ministries of Finance and Coordination'.⁸³

It has not, therefore, tried to dissuade women from bearing children, but has focused instead on the existing social and economic impediments to the social role of motherhood:

'Only the social and economic liberation of women will ensure that women are befitted and worthy of the role of motherhood'.⁸⁴

Demands for the social protection of motherhood have been coupled with the premise that the 'socialisation' of motherhood enables women to break through the boundaries of the household. The organisation has struggled for state provisions and allowances that would socialise the cost of child-rearing and free women for participation in the public domain. Moreover, it has fought against motherhood being used as a pretext for women's marginalisation.

'Feminists are not against motherhood or maternal care; in reality feminists are the best mothers. However, they are against the utilization of motherhood as a means to undermine them'.⁸⁵

In parallel, it has just as fiercely opposed the idea that motherhood is women's exclusive purpose. However, when the organisation's pamphlet on legalisation of abortions asserts a woman's right to decide when to have children, there is no suggestion that she might not have any:

'It is the indefeasible right of every woman to decide *when* and *how* many children she will bring into the world'.⁸⁶

⁸³ 'EGE's positions on Abortion', *Open Window*, issue 5, June-July-Aug. 1979, p. 2.

⁸⁴ Amelia Skepers, 'Day of the Mother', *Open Window*, issue 4, Apr.-March 1979, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Speech by Margaret Papandreou at the Conference Woman and Local Self-Management, *op. cit.*, ref. 71, p. 13.

⁸⁶ *We Say Yes to Legal Abortion*, EGE pamphlet (in Greek - emphasis added).

A noteworthy feature of the organisation's program has been that sexuality did not appear as an issue until 1981, when the EGE's Committee of Young Women drew up the first ideological draft on sexual liberation. The project was assigned to the Union's younger members, given that their seniors had usually more conservative attitudes to family, motherhood, and sexuality. Even so, the ideological positions of the Committee reveal the organisation's deep distrust of the concept of sexual liberation':

'We believe that whoever speaks of women's sexual liberation should first of all aim to develop women's awareness. Every woman must have control of and be aware of her actions ...The contemporary fake sexual liberation is just a veil that conceals the sexual immaturity, conflicts and personal anguish of the people involved. The myth of sexual liberation has assigned to women new duties. Women must now pretend that they experience satisfaction, even though it may not exist. In older times, women could at least out of prudery or fear of an undesired pregnancy, refuse sex ... Nowadays, because of sexual liberation and the contraceptive pill, they are obliged to be available'.⁸⁷

This text is representative of the EGE's critical attitude to 'sexual liberation' as the ideological tool of 'apolitical' and 'extremist' radical feminism. EGE has, therefore, preferred the term 'sexual emancipation'. Moreover, the EGE has denounced the capitalist commodification of sexuality without ever discussing the role of sexuality in the consolidation of patriarchal domination. Thus, the EGE has hardly ever investigated the social and cultural meanings that are bound up with sexuality in a patriarchal society.

'The ...exploitation of human eroticism alters enormously our lives and mentalities. When the press, advertisements and finally Art project only 'suspicious' eroticism, sex, vulgarity and degeneration, human relations lose their quality. The 'erotic dream' becomes merely an object of exploitation, while humans themselves are trapped in a spiritual impasse'.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Committee of Young Women, 'Thoughts and Concerns in regard to Sexual Liberation of Women', *Open Window*, issue 13, Apr.-June 1981, p. 9.

⁸⁸ 'Porno Movies', *Open Window*, issue 10, July-Aug.-Sept. 1980, p.17.

In the Union's pronouncements sexuality has always been associated with family planning and women's health.⁸⁹ Even when considering matters that have constituted the cornerstone of the second-wave's campaign for women's control over their own bodies and sexuality -such as abortion- they were invariably seen as part of the wider questions of women's health and the family institution. The pamphlet demanding the legalisation of abortions states:

'Abortion, the consequences of which are borne predominantly by women, but also by the whole family and society, is a medical act that takes place every day in incredible numbers. Abortions often take place under unacceptable conditions and always in a state of illegality...The legalisation of abortions will help Greek women and their families by providing a realistic solution to this immense social problem. Every woman's inalienable right is the protection of her health and life...We call you altogether in our struggle for our health and our life. We demand the immediate legalisation of abortion'.⁹⁰

All mention of sexuality is notably absent. In EGE's discourse sexuality is reduced to women's reproductive ability. Therefore, it is brought up only to illustrate oppression in the capitalist system or to address women's health. Accordingly, the issue of homosexuality is passed over in complete silence. In brief, the fundamental premise of feminism that women's sexual desire has been defined and categorised by men has been excluded from the organisation's discourse. The socially constructed content of sexuality is never mentioned. Instead, there is the implicit assumption that sexuality is universal and therefore gender-blind. This neutral perception of sexuality by the EGE has ruled out any endeavour to investigate female desire, cleansed from any patriarchal connotations.

⁸⁹ 'Family planning means controlling the out-of-hand birth rates and programming births'. Amelia Skepers, 'Family Planning Centres', *Open Window*, issue 2, p. 12.

⁹⁰ 'We Say Yes to Legal Abortion', *op. cit.*, ref. 86.

3.3.5 Public and Private

The EGE's ideological manifesto states quite clearly:

'Feminist theory has aimed to theorise and politicise the dimension of women's oppression, which the traditional socialist thought has overlooked as personal'.⁹¹

And:

'We believe that the "personal" is "political"'.⁹²

The declaration is in accordance with the feminist assertion that the public/private dichotomy devalues women's experiences. However, the Union's ideological program as well as its political strategy has been founded on the socialist belief that social change can occur only by collective action in the public realm. In view of that, the EGE has emphasised that the marginalisation of women can be overturned only if women's private issues become transformed into collective, public matters. It has consistently argued that integrating women into the public realm is a necessary precondition for elevating their civil status and endowing them with political resources. The participation of women in the decision-making centres has, therefore, been one of the Union's constitutional aims and prime objectives.⁹³ Its political strategy has not been founded on a second-wave positive re-evaluation of the private sphere, but on the contrary on a ceaseless struggle to end the oppression of women by freeing them from the restriction of the private sphere. While, therefore, on the one hand the EGE acknowledged the political oppression of women in the private sphere, on the other it shared the deep distrust of the socialist tradition towards it. As Anne Phillips notes:

⁹¹ Socialism-Feminism: The Route to Social Liberation, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, pp. 40-41.

⁹² The slogan 'The Personal is Political' was coined by Carol Hanisch in 1970 and has since then been identified with second wave feminism; Humm, Maggie (ed.) (1992) *Feminisms: A Reader* (New York and London, Harvester and Wheatsheaf); and Socialism-Feminism: The Route to Social Liberation, *ibid.*, p. 11.

⁹³ Constitution, *op. cit.*, ref. 2 and ref. 7.

‘Where there was a more substantial theoretical partnership of socialism with feminism, it lay in the socialist equation of domesticity with confinement, and the socialist preference for whatever was collective, public and social’.⁹⁴

This negative ideological predisposition towards the private sphere has constituted a clear dividing line between the EGE and the autonomous feminist groups’ attempt to expose the constitution and function of patriarchy in private everyday practices. Additionally, the Union’s adherence to the political primacy of the public sphere over the private one has led to a strategy focused on the traditional institutions of the public realm - namely political parties and the state. The organisation’s emphasis on the significant role of the state apparatus in promoting sexual equality is representative of the political project of state feminism.⁹⁵ The EGE was also clearly opposed to individual initiatives, because they belonged to the country’s tradition of liberal feminism, which was confined to charitable activities.⁹⁶

B) Socialist Identity

Socialism has been defined by the EGE as the only political order able to provide the necessary framework for human liberation:

‘We deeply believe that Socialism is the only socio-political system that originates from and simultaneously aims at the free development of human personality and its elevation into an ethical entity. Therefore we believe that socialism is the only system that can give the Greek people the necessary provisions for their victory’.⁹⁷

The Union has shared with the socialist party the vision of a ‘third way’ to socialism. This was articulated by PASOK on the following premises: (i) since the socialist systems of Eastern Europe have not abolished dependent labour, they are incompatible with true socialism; and (ii) the capitalist system, undergoing a

⁹⁴ Phillips, Anne (1997) ‘What has Socialism to do with Sexual Equality?’, in: Jane Franklin (ed.) *Equality* (London, Institute for Public Policy Research), pp. 104-05.

⁹⁵ The term state feminism describes the political project of utilising the state apparatus, which is considered gender-neutral, for promoting gender equality. See Stetson and Mazur, *op. cit.*, ref. 65.

⁹⁶ Interview with Anne Pitsiori-Kavadia, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

⁹⁷ ‘The Family in Greece’, *op. cit.*, ref. 59, p. 13.

deep economic crisis, facilitates the realisation of 'third way' socialist alternatives at the national level. PASOK considered essential for building a socialist alternative the socialisation of economic sectors, state intervention, and regional decentralisation.⁹⁸ The EGE adopted this ideological framework and used its tools to outline the transition to socialism. The ideological clusters below sum up the EGE's interpretation of the socialist alternative.

3.3.6 Monopoly Capitalism, Imperialism, Peace

From the very beginning, the Union of Greek Women took a strongly anti-capitalist stand, opposing the capitalist system as exploitative of the working class and of women in particular. Moreover, it portrayed the capitalist logic of profit as a mighty force that resulted in the dissolution of social bonds and in alienated individuals. The organisation professed its solidarity with the labour movement, and worked for the protection of workingwomen against the effects of worldwide capitalist crises.⁹⁹ It denounced all international institutions, which it considered to embody the logic of market profitability (e.g. the European Community):

'The European Community is a narrow materialistic scheme that has not yet projected any humanistic agenda. The Europe of the merchants and the multinational corporations is exclusively interested to promote the commercial and industrial interests of its members'.¹⁰⁰

And:

⁹⁸ Kapazoglou, Eni 'The Result of the Transition to Socialism is Eventually Democracy', (Speech by Andreas Papandreou at the International Academic Conference 'Transition to Socialism: The Dimensions of the Structural Change', Athens 30 June-03 July 1980), *Open Window*, issue 10, July-Aug-Sept. 1980, pp. 13-14.

⁹⁹ The EGE demanded social security for all employed women (including piecework at home and unpaid female labour in family businesses), the combating of female unemployment, and social recognition of women's invisible labour. See *Half of the Sky and the Earth is Going to Change the World*, E.G.E pamphlet; and 'Goals for immediate fulfilment' in 'Women's Union of Greece', *op. cit.*, Ref. 38.

¹⁰⁰ 'Woman and the European Community', *op. cit.*, ref. 67, p. 10.

‘The European Community is only interested in opening up new markets for its products. In this process women will be reduced to a cheap labour force’.¹⁰¹

The organisation’s opposition to capitalism went hand in hand with its unwavering stand against imperialism. This was the more acute as Greece had recently been subjected to a seven year military dictatorship with the acquiescence of the United States.

‘...Greece’s participation in the military branch of NATO... has set off the anger of the Greek people, since they cannot forget NATO’s responsibility for the seven-year long dictatorship, induced by the United States, and the treason of Cyprus. Furthermore, Greek people cannot disregard United States’ obvious support to the Turkish claims over the Aegean...The common enemy, which is imperialism, undermines people’s effort for Democracy, Social Liberation and Peace’.¹⁰²

The organisation’s discourse underlined the interrelation between monopoly capitalism and imperialism. In Greece, it was the Communist Party that had first pointed out the unity of the anti-junta, anti-imperialist and anti-monopolistic struggles. This ideological approach was quickly adopted by the socialists and reproduced by the EGE, which thereby demonstrated its adherence to the broader political spectrum of the Centre-Left.

The Union also participated actively in the Greek peace movement, wishing to build an effective mass movement to curb the military power of imperialistic nations. In this connection, it has persistently demanded the abolition of all nuclear power weapons, the reduction of conventional weapons held by the two superpowers, an agreement not to intervene in the Third World, and the withdrawal from Greek soil of all foreign armies and military bases.¹⁰³ The EGE’s opposition to the country’s age-long foreign dependency expressed itself in its mobilisation for peace as well by the articulation of a strongly nationalistic ideology.

¹⁰¹ ‘Women’s Rights on Trial in the European Parliament’, *Open Window*, issue 12, Jan.-March 1981, p. 12.

¹⁰² ‘Peace, Disarmament’, *Open Window*, issue 11, Oct.-Dec. 1980, p. 13.

¹⁰³ *Week of Peace and Disarmament: 24-30 October 1987*, EGE pamphlet, (in Greek).

3.3.7 Nationalism.

A prominent feature of the organisation's ideology has been an identification of the political forces of the Right with the betrayal of national interests. The EGE has reproduced the nationalistic discourse of the socialist party, which has presented itself as the political force that led to the merging of three different generations of democratic struggles: the resistance against the German occupation, the struggle against the monarchy (by the Centre Union in the 1960s) and the fight against the junta (1967-74).¹⁰⁴ All three of these appear in the EGE discourse as struggles against the right-wing forces that functioned as bearers of foreign interests. In other words, the EGE, like the socialist party, has re-interpreted recent Greek history in terms of the Right/anti-Right divide, which it pronounced the chief historical cleavage of the political system.¹⁰⁵

'The foreign powers and their local collaborators substituted the Turks and imposed foreign dependency on Greek society... They have grounded their policy on the triptych: falsification-alienation and finally domination over any economic-social-political change in our homeland. Their policy has resulted in the enslavement of our nation throughout its course of existence'.¹⁰⁶

In parallel with calling for the restoration and defence of Greece's national interests against foreign powers and their national collaborators, the EGE also endeavoured to forge alliances with Third-World countries that had experienced imperialist domination, and sought common objectives with countries of the periphery or semi-periphery against the metropolitan centre as exemplified by Western Europe and the United States.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Christaki, Pepi 'The Role of Greek Woman in the National-Liberation Struggles', *Open Window*, issue 31, p. 7 and Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁵ Moschonas, Gerasimos (1994) 'The "Right-Anti-Right" Divisive Split during the Post-Junta Period (1974-90)', in: Nicos Demertzis (ed.) *The Greek Political Culture Today* (Athens, Odysseus – in Greek).

¹⁰⁶ 'The Family in Greece', *op. cit.*, ref. 59, p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ Margaret Papandreou in her speech at the Pre-Conference of Mediterranean Women, stated: 'We will struggle all together for the national independence of our countries, so that the exploitation of the foreign imperialist powers comes to an end'. See in

Another facet of the EGE activities to safeguard the countries national interests was its pride in the Greek cultural heritage and its denunciation of the West for imposing what it called cultural alienation.

‘The West has undermined our cultural values and traditions to such an extent that women instead of becoming liberated, have become even more dependent. Moreover, women and men have become trapped in predefined roles and ideologies that have served the system. The authoritarian family, the school and the church have been saved in their present form, because they have served the system...They have encumbered us with a decadent and falsified Christian tradition that has no relation to the free spirit of Ancient Greece or with the values of equality and freedom, inherent in the original revolutionary Christian dogma’.¹⁰⁸

For the EGE, therefore, imperialism is associated not only with foreign imposition and economic penetration, but also with cultural imperialism, Americanisation and the consumer culture.

In the EGE creed, nationalism is synonymous with ‘self-determination’. However, ‘nationalism’ is not reduced to a merely relational concept, meaning a reaction to foreign aggression. The organisation has praised the unique attributes of Greek culture as well as its unquestioned historical continuity. Thus, the organisation’s anti-western stand is coupled with a celebration of authentic Greek culture and the true national interests of the Greek people.¹⁰⁹ The EGE, critical of the dominant political discourse of the conservative forces, declaring the Left a traitor to the national interests, juxtaposed to it a different nationalistic discourse, which proclaimed the Left as the only true bearer of national interests because of its opposition to foreign penetration. In other words, the nationalistic duality in the

Nikolaidou, Eleftheria ‘Women and the Mediterranean’, *Open Window*, issue 4, Apr.-March 1979, p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ ‘Women in Education’ (speech by the EGE representative at the Conference of Mediterranean Women). See in Papayannaki, Marina (1981) ‘The voice of their master’, *Skoupa*, issue 5, p. 69.

¹⁰⁹ A very popular political slogan of the Socialist Party has been: ‘Greece belongs to the Greeks’.

country's political culture (patriots/anti-patriots) became part of the organisation's identity.

3.3.8 The State, Social Engineering, Decentralisation, Community

As we have seen, the EGE adopted the socialist party's strong ideological adherence to the state as an effective means to promote social liberation. By stressing that the existing capitalist and patriarchal institutions create alienated individuals who are not only unequal in terms of gender but also victims in terms of market profitability, it made it a duty of the state to inform its citizens of their true and objective interests and provide intellectual and moral training.

'A socialist polity's duty is to assist its citizens in becoming mature, liberated and fulfilled. This can be achieved by information and further education'.¹¹⁰

The role of the state as educator presupposes a large state apparatus extending into the heart of the private sphere where consciousness and ideology are moulded. This means that for the EGE traditionally private issues have become public matters and subject to state regulation:

'The upbringing of children is not a private issue. It is the polity's duty to establish consulting centres in every town, neighbourhood in order to instruct young parents'.¹¹¹

Hence, the organisation has cherished the collective objective, as morally superior to individual choices or personal strategies. Accordingly, it has endorsed social engineering, as a socialist polity's duty, while it has overlooked the hierarchical elements inherent in the process.

The organisation's discourse has outlined the necessity of extensive state intervention, but it has also argued for the institutionalisation of local self-management. Its ideology comprises both state intervention and decentralisation. This discrepancy arises from the EGE's dual commitment: to social engineering by the state, and to decentralisation for the revitalization of the country's rural areas. The EGE has loudly demanded institutions of popular participation and the transfer of power to the country's regional districts to counteract the highly centralised state apparatus. It has constantly monitored the welfare of agricultural communities,

¹¹⁰ 'The Family in Greece', *op. cit.*, ref. 59, p. 14.

¹¹¹ Skepers, *op. cit.*, ref. 84, p. 3.

emphasising that it is the existing economic marginalisation that has brought these communities to the verge of extinction. It directed so much of its attention to the countryside also because gender inequalities are far more powerful there than in the cities. In consequence, the EGE formulated a series of demands to raise the social and economic status of woman peasants, and organised many campaigns to reach the patriarchal communities of the Greek countryside.

The organisation's commitment to forward social change in the regional districts has been in accord with its ideological appraisal of the community as superior to society. It considers that:

'The consolidation of industrial society led to the deification of society and an aversion to community. This process ensured the greater economic dependency of human beings accompanied by a rise in production and profit.

However, this whole process has led to a terrible social impasse'.¹¹²

For the EGE 'society' is synonymous with the dissolution of social bonds, since individuals become alienated from each other, keeping together only because of economic dependency.

'The social bond in the community is stronger than the one in society. It is a bond originating from the personal participation of individuals in common affairs. This social bond reflects individuals, who are internally liberated and mature'.¹¹³

The organisation's analysis of 'community' manifests its strong ideological commitment to the concept of collectivity. Thus, the organisation's agenda has taken over the two fundamental axioms of socialism: community and equality.¹¹⁴

Generally speaking, the ideological identity of the EGE has in many instances been dissimilar to the premises articulated by second-wave feminist movements abroad. While there the second wave established a new body of feminism centred on the notions of reproduction, experience and difference, the EGE adhered to the first-wave tenets concerning institutional restriction of women's capacities. It has remained convinced of the fundamental premise of the first-wave that if institutions (such as the family) were reformed, women would be able to unfold their potential to

¹¹² 'The Family in Greece', *op. cit.*, ref. 59, p.14.

¹¹³ 'The Family in Greece, *ibid.*, p. 14.

¹¹⁴ Cohen, G.A. (1997) 'Back to Socialist Basics', in: Jane Franklin, *op. cit.*, ref. 94.

the full, and has made, therefore, women's full participation in the existing social institutions a point of priority. Equality as the ideological cornerstone of the EGE was severely attacked by the autonomous feminist groups, which argued that such equality presumes women's compliance with and participation in the structures of the existing patriarchal society.

The organisation's positive evaluation of the state also contradicted the second wave's defiance of the traditional meaning of politics (as consisting of the state, political parties etc.), and its slogan 'The personal is political'. To a certain extent the EGE's focus on legal equality and socio-economic distribution reflected the absence of conventional reforms in Greek society, as well as the limited scope of the welfare state. Moreover, the Union originally created its ideological framework with the ideological tools of a newly arrived political force (the socialists). This means that its ideological aims, which incorporated socialist theorems and axioms of dependency theory as well long stated feminist claims, challenged the established social morals and political norms associated with the then-ruling conservative party. Even so, its discourse was limited in the sense that it persistently avoided challenging men as the beneficiaries of patriarchy. While focusing on the right of women's full participation in all areas of the social spectrum, it made sure that men would not become the target of the organisation's struggle.

The EGE's ideology is concerned with both the internal organisation of the nation-state and the international community. It sees these two realms as interdependent, and any feminist or socialist struggle as inseparably linked with a restructuring of the country's position in the international community. In consequence, feminism and socialism are considered possible only after Greece has become self-reliant within the world order. For the EGE, 'self-determination' always has two points of reference: the internal organisation of the Greek polity and the international community

3.4 Organisational Structure

The party-aligned women's organisations that emerged after the fall of the junta modelled their organisation on that of the existing left-wing political parties, which consisted of a constitution, centralized and hierarchical leadership, work in

committees, an electoral system and a spreading network of branches.¹¹⁵ All of these were features of the EGE structure. Its Constitution (of 29 Nov. 1983) sets out the duties of its representative bodies. These bodies are:

- *Panhellenic Conference*: The Panhellenic conference, as the organisation's most prominent organ, elects and has the right to expel the members of the Executive Board and the Disciplinary Committee; defines ideological guidelines; approves the budget; and may make changes in the Constitution. It is also empowered to dissolve the organisation or to change its legal status.¹¹⁶ Attendance at the Conference, which meets every two years, consists of members of the Executive Board and the elected representatives of the local branches.
- *Executive Board*: This is the EGE's second most important body and consists of 15 regular and 5 alternate members. It elects the president of the organisation; has the right to inspect the functioning of the other organs; defines the discussion topics at the Panhellenic Conferences; and decides the creation of new branches. The Board holds sessions twice a month, with an absolute majority necessary for its decisions.¹¹⁷
- *Panhellenic Council*: This defines the organisation's annual program; works out the ideological themes to be discussed at the Panhellenic Conference; calls *ad hoc* meetings of the Panhellenic Conference; and appoints the members of the Regional Meeting (see below). The Council is made up of the members of the Executive Board, plus one elected representative from each branch. The representatives must be elected members of the administrative committee of their branch. The Executive Board calls the Panhellenic Council into session twice a year.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Stamiris, Eleni (1986) 'The Women's Movement in Greece', *New Left Review*, issue 158, p. 107.

¹¹⁶ Other competencies of the Panhellenic Conference are: to approve reports by the departing Executive Board, to elect the members of the Supervisory Committee of the Panhellenic Conference, to discuss topics specified by the Executive Board, to elect honorary members to the organisation, and to elect its nine-member chairing committee. *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art. 12, *op. cit.*, ref. 7.

¹¹⁷ *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art. 16 & 17, *ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art. 19, *ibid.*

The Constitution defines also the function of the regional bodies of the organisation (i.e. the Regional Meeting, the Regional Council) and local branches. The *Regional Meeting* consists of members appointed by the Panhellenic Council but elects its own president.¹¹⁹ The *Regional Council* is made up of two members of each branch, one of whom must be a branch representative at the Panhellenic Council; the other must be an elected member of the branch's administrative committee.¹²⁰ Both these bodies draw up programmatic guidelines on issues pertaining to the rural areas. The establishment of new branches is, however, a competency of the Panhellenic Council, which will suggest it at the Panhellenic Conference to the Executive Board. The local branches of the organisation are structured like the national ones. Each has an administrative and disciplinary committee, with the general assembly of its members the most superior body of the branch.¹²¹ It is the general assembly that elects members of the administrative committee and the representatives to Panhellenic Conference meetings. Absolute majority takes decisions at the general assembly. The administrative committee consists of 9 regular and 2 alternate members, who serve for two years.

The smallest organisational unit is *the cell*. Since the Constitution does not include provisions for cells, the function and representation of cells are regulated according to the stipulations of the Internal Regulation.

To summarise, the organisational structure of EGE according to the hierarchical ladder is the following:

At *national* level:

1. The Panhellenic Conference
2. The Executive Board
3. The Panhellenic Council

At *regional* level:

1. The Regional Meeting
2. The Regional Council

At *local* level:

1. The Branches

¹¹⁹ *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art. 20, *ibid*.

¹²⁰ *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art., 21, *ibid*.

¹²¹ *Constitution*, Chapter 4, Art. 22, 23, 24, *ibid*.

2. The Cells

A striking feature of EGE's organisational structure is the lack of any representation of the cell members at higher levels of the organisation. The cells are not represented even in the largest of the organisation's organs, the Panhellenic Conference. Their exclusion from all decisions-making, as well as the fact that representatives at the Regional Meeting are appointed by the Panhellenic Council, and that the latter needs the authority of the Executive Board to decide on the upgrading of a cell to a branch, all clearly manifests the leadership's determination to retain full control over the organisation in the countryside.¹²² This situation actually violates the principle of representation at the expense of the cells in the countryside and in favour of the Union's branches in the larger cities. Therefore, at the second Panhellenic conference in 1983, as already mentioned, the clash between the rural representatives and the leadership led finally to the expulsion of all 12 members of the Regional Committee from the Union. While, therefore, the organisational structure of the EGE is based on the principle of representation, it has strong centralised tendencies, and the leadership has repeatedly made use of the organisational set-up to impose its political imperatives.

The EGE has also set up a number of committees dealing with specific issues: the Committee of Working Woman, Financial Committee, Neighbourhood Committee, Seminar Committee, Press Committee, Committee of International Relations, Peace Committee, Regional Committee, Committee of Peasant Women, Committee of Young Women, Syndicalist Committee, etc. The broad range of these bodies reflects the EGE's belief that the women's movement is inseparably linked to the political struggles in Greek society and the international community.

The ideological manifesto of the Union of Greek Women declares its organisational autonomy, and although the EGE has been aligned with the socialist party, there have been no formal links between the two. Membership of the EGE has

¹²² According to the *Constitution* cell members have the right to attend branch meetings as visitors, but are not included in the numeric assessment of the branch. This of course affects the number of representatives the specific branch may elect for the Panhellenic Conference. Moreover, if the Regional Council proposes the upgrading of a cell to the Executive Board, and the Board declines the proposal, then the cell is obliged to dissolve itself. *Constitution*, Chapter 2, Article 5, *ibid*.

not automatically been translated into membership of the socialist party. In fact, however, nearly all EGE members were registered members of PASOK. The question of autonomy has created a rift within the Union, because certain factions (always a minority) have attempted to change the organisation's formal autonomy from the socialist party to a substantive one.

The organisational structure of the EGE has many of the salient features of that of the socialist party. After the fall of the junta, in 1974, PASOK introduced a significant change in the established tradition of political organisation by becoming the first non-communist party to set up an extensive network across the country.¹²³ The EGE, likewise, was the first non-communist women's group to have an extensive network of branches and cells penetrating into even the remotest regions of Greece. PASOK and EGE's introduction of an organisational scheme with a constitution, specific election procedures, and mass participation was in direct opposition to the personalistic /particularistic politics of the pre-junta clientelistic parties.¹²⁴ However, they both developed informally a highly centralised pattern of decision-making, where the opinions expressed at district level had no or little bearing on decisions by the leadership of the party or the Union respectively.¹²⁵ The formally democratic organisation was in practice highly centralised and personalistic, and to a large extent lacking in intra-party or intra-Union democracy.

The organisational structure of the EGE is closely linked up with its political strategy. A recurrent theme in new social movement literature is whether 'the adoption of strategies emphasising institutionalised politics necessarily lead to increasingly formal organisation. In short, does the internal

¹²³ Mouzelis, Nicos (1995) 'Greece in the Twenty-First Century: Institutions and Political Culture', in: D. Conostas and T. Stavrou (eds) *Greece Prepares for the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C., Baltimore and London, The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press and the John Hopkins Press).

¹²⁴ Mouzelis, *ibid.*, p. 19.

¹²⁵ C. Lyrantzis, Il. Nicolakopoulos, D. Sotiropoulos (1999) 'Introduction' in C. Lyrantzis, Il. Nicolakopoulos, D. Sotiropoulos (eds.) *Society and Politics: Facets of the Third Greek Democracy (1974-1994)* (Athens, Themelio-in Greek).

organisational structure of a movement bear any necessary relationship to its strategy of contending power?'.¹²⁶

The two distinct expressions of the Greek feminist movement, the EGE and the autonomous feminist groups, demonstrate that the organisational set-up does vary with the strategies employed. The EGE, which set out to forge an effective mass organisation for women that could deliver policy success, adopted a centralised and bureaucratised organisation. The autonomous feminist groups, on the other hand, which focused on women's self-actualisation, adopted an organisational form of small, informal, non-hierarchical groups.

3.5 Social Base

The Union of Greek Women has persistently stressed its objective of building a trans-class organisation.

'There are real differences in the everyday life of women, however there are also issues of convergence that provide possibilities for a trans-class organisation'.¹²⁷

EGE emphasised that a trans-class character is a precondition for building a mass organisation. While its strategy, therefore, targeted several social strata, the social composition of its membership has been predominantly middle-class.

The social base of the EGE corresponds to that of the socialist party. In the post-junta years there was a gradual increase of middle strata, whose economic activities were rooted in small-size family enterprises, redistribution of state resources, the underground economy and various lucrative secondary activities.¹²⁸ The socialist party addressed itself politically to those strata, when it coined the political term of 'non-privileged'. Influenced by the writings of Samir Amin, the socialist party asserted that in semi-peripheral countries, like Greece, the working

¹²⁶ Aminzade, R. (1995) 'Between Movement and Party: The transformation of Mid-Nineteenth Century French Republicanism', in C. Jenkins and B. Klandermans (eds) *The Politics of Social Protest*, (London, UCL Press), p. 40.

¹²⁷ Feminism-Socialism: The Route to Social Liberation, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, p. 55.

¹²⁸ Panagiotopoulou, Roi ' "Rational" Individualistic Practices in the Context of an "Irrational" Political System', in: Lyrintzis, Nicolakopoulos, Sotiropoulos, *op. cit.* ref. 125.

class actually comprises several social strata. The political bearer of social change cannot, therefore, be a single class (the working class), but 'a broad alliance of popular forces'.¹²⁹ So PASOK's social base was formed by the middle strata, which have likewise dominated in the EGE membership. For all that, the organisation also targeted working-class women and peasants, and was active in visiting labour unions, expressing its solidarity with labour strikes, and mobilising against economic exploitation of the female labour force.¹³⁰ These initiatives did not, however, translate into an increased membership of working class women, since they have traditionally been represented by the women's organisation of the communist party (OGE). The EGE activities in remote agricultural communities also failed to change the social composition of its membership.¹³¹ The highly patriarchal conditions of the villages minimised the possibility of local women becoming involved in a feminist organisation.

The majority of the organisation's members were middle-aged, married and had no prior experience of political involvement. The small number of younger unmarried women did not affect the ideological stand of the organisation. The majority of the members had developed their social and personal identity in accord with the institutions of marriage and motherhood. They perceived, therefore, any radical questioning of these institutions as a questioning of their own status. Thus, they gave their uncritical support to those institutions and demanded social recognition for their contribution to society (such as their role as mothers). Since most of the members had no record of prior political involvement and were unfamiliar with feminist objectives, the EGE initially functioned as a 'training school' for introducing women to collective decision-making, organisational planning, political activism, and

¹²⁹ Kapazoglou, *op. cit.*, ref. 98.

¹³⁰ The EGE has consistently opposed the introduction of part-time employment schemes, on the basis that it would make women in particular a marginalised mobile labour force, stripped of any social protection and vulnerable to economic crises. See Interviews with Constantina Giannopoulou, Soula Merentiti, Anni Pitsiori-Kavadia, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

¹³¹ For instance, the EGE organised many information campaigns to introduce the smear test in the countryside, since in many villages women refused to undress in the presence of a doctor, considering it immoral.

the feminist discourse.¹³² At first, the members' lack of any concrete political identity had a positive effect by making the organisation heterogeneous. As one member said: 'We moulded our identities in the course of the organisation's development'.¹³³ However, it also limited the EGE's potential for articulating a rigid feminist discourse critical of the ideological premises in the existing political tradition.

The EGE acquired many of its members in the wake of their husbands joining PASOK. This meant that these women saw the feminist cause as complementary to their husbands' political involvement in the socialist party. Moreover, the EGE leadership frequently legitimised its activities by referring to the husbands' status in the socialist party. This meant that the organisation limited its feminist agenda to a self-confined discourse, which deliberately avoided labelling men as the bearers of patriarchy. Promotion of well-known politicians' wives to the EGE leadership was part of the organisation's broader strategy to create a legitimate non-confrontational profile that would allow the building-up of a mass organisation, capable of penetrating even into social areas hostile to feminist issues.

In summary, the EGE's social base consisted mostly of middle-class, middle-aged women. This, in combination with its strong presence in the countryside, became a decisive factor in the moulding of its moderate feminist agenda, suitable for social strata and regions not receptive to feminism.¹³⁴ As one EGE member noted: 'Any discussion of personal issues, about our marriage or sex life for instance, was inconceivable in our branch. We were living in a small provincial town, where any personal revelation would have enormous costs in terms of our personal and social life'.¹³⁵

In terms of social movement theory, the social base of the EGE refutes the premises of both the classical model and resource mobilisation. The members

¹³² Interview with Margaret Papandreou, *op. cit.*, ref. 74.

¹³³ Interview with Anni Pitsiori Kavadia, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

¹³⁴ Another example of the EGE's extended activities in the countryside was the mobilisation of the Trikala branch against the custom in the surrounding rural villages to marry off girls at the age of 14. The autonomous feminist groups, on the other hand, denounced the institution of heterosexual marriage altogether. Interview with Soula Merentiti, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

¹³⁵ Interview with Soula Merentiti, *ibid.*

were neither isolated nor marginal individuals; on the contrary, they belonged to the middle strata, but most of them had no previous history of political involvement. For them, the EGE became the agent of their introduction to the procedures and rules of politics. These middle-class women cannot also be identified with the middle classes that give their support to new social movements. They were too dependent on party cadres, accepted and supported the expansion of state intervention and the development of a full-blown welfare state, and their demands were for institutional reforms and material prosperity. New social movements' social base consists of middle classes that are already part of a fully developed Keynesian welfare state, which they criticise heavily. They, therefore, voice post-materialist demands and focus on civil society. The social base of the EGE can be understood best by looking at the new scenarios of conflict, which the socialist party and the EGE convey.

3.6 Strategy

The political strategy of the organisation has been deployed in three ways: (i) building up a mass organisation with effective lobbying capacities; (ii) linking the feminist movement to other mass movements on the national and international level and (iii) productive use of the resources provided by the socialist party. The EGE relied heavily on its alliance with PASOK and the potential of its machinery for the effective implementation of political projects. The organisation's political strategy was almost exclusively based on the vast control exerted by Greek political parties over civil society and the state administration. From 1981 onwards the EGE was engaged in a process of social engineering that would closely link state expansion and intervention with its own and the party's objectives. State intervention and party control became the two cornerstones of its strategy. It was only in the beginning that the EGE saw civil society as an effective means to put pressure on the existing decision-making centres, while as soon as the socialist party gained power, it became the object of increased state intervention and party control. Cases in point were the newly established women's bureaus. These new agencies did not function as a mechanism for channelling communication with feminists active outside the organisation. On the contrary, they persistently blocked any direct connection with feminists not within the political orbit of the socialist party. In brief, the EGE's political strategy concerned itself primarily with the established institutions in the public sphere.

The organisation, after gaining access to governmental resources in 1981, developed a diversified strategy that significantly altered the gender status in Greek society. It promoted legal changes, provided much-needed social infrastructure and services, institutionalised the question of gender issues and changed social values. As already discussed in some detail (section 3.2), the EGE effectively promoted the reform of Family Law, the Penal Code in respect of sexual violence and rape, the law on abortion, and introduced legal provisions for the practical implementation of the principle of equality in labour relations. Additionally, it succeeded in rescinding the legal provisions restricting women's participation in co-operative organisations,¹³⁶ ratifying the decisions taken at international conventions, and abolishing sex discrimination for entrance to tertiary education.¹³⁷

Concerning the state's infrastructure and social services, the Union was able to provide: 1) new day-care and pre-school centres and the country's first infant day-care centres; 2) the first health advisory centres for women and children with free

¹³⁶ Under Law 1257/82 all married women, regardless of whether they owned land used for agricultural production or whether they assisted in the production process, now had the right to participate in agricultural co-operatives, with the same rights and obligations as men. See in National Report, *op. cit.*, ref. 27; Kyriazis, *op. cit.*, ref. 28.

¹³⁵ In 1983, the U.N. convention on the eradication of discrimination against women, and the International Convention (103) on the protection of motherhood were ratified. In 1984, the International Labour Agreement on discrimination in employment and work, as well as the International Labour Agreement (122) on employment policy were ratified. Legal provisions concerning the admittance of only one sex for particular institutions, or of a quota for men and women were abolished. See National Report of Hellas, *ibid.*, 'Greece: Hellenic Republic', *op. cit.*, ref. 2; and Singh, *op. cit.*, ref. 31.

¹³⁶ The Greek Council for Equality (Law 1288/82) was an independent department within the Ministry to the Prime Minister's Office, by whose budget it was covered, and its function was to counsel the Prime Minister. It: 1) collaborated with the various Ministries in the drafting of bills for Parliament on matters concerning the equality of the sexes; 2) formulated the programs for the promotion of equality to be included in the government's Five-Year Development Plan; 3) arranged seminars and lectures; 4) advised the relevant authorities and organisations for the solution of day-to-day instances of discrimination that had been brought to its notice;

health-laboratory tests for low-income women, who also became eligible for free childbirth and hospitalisation services at state maternity hospitals; 3) family-planning centres nation-wide; 4) social insurance, pensions paid to women farmers and farmers' wives at the same level as men's, 5) policies adapted to interrupted working patterns (i.e. part-time workers' entitlements to unemployment benefits and pension benefit arrangements to enable women to combine child-raising with labour market participation). In parallel, the EGE pressured the government to institutionalise gender issues as part of the state's competencies. Thus, an extensive network was developed consisting of Committees for the Equality of the Sexes and Equality Bureaus in every single prefecture. A sex equality section was set up in the Ministry of Labour to deal with cases of discrimination and most important of all, the Council for Equality was established in 1982.¹³⁸ It was the first governmental body on gender issues ever established in Greece. All during the socialist government, the EGE kept emphasising that legal reforms and institutional changes were a prerequisite for bringing about social change, but not in themselves sufficient.

'Even if we achieve full-scale legal equality, the women's question will continue to exist until we succeed bringing about genuine and actual equality. Therefore, there is the need for vigilance and practice on the level of the family, school, working place, so that women's demands, which at the moment are chiefly articulated by the women's organisations, expand into a general popular demand for a better quality of life'.¹³⁹

5) produced a series of publications explaining the law on the equality of the sexes; and 6) collaborated with the Ministry of the Interior for the implementation of the government policy for decentralization with respect to sexual equality

In 1985 (Law 1558/85) the Council was upgraded to General Secretariat for Equality between the sexes. The Secretariat is an independent office of the Ministry of the Presidency, and has its own budget. Its competencies are identical with those of the Council. See in *Greek Council for Equality*, and *General Secretariat of Equality*, both of them information pamphlets by the General Secretariat (in English).

¹³⁹ 'The Woman's Question in Greece', *Open Window*, issue 7, Dec-Jan 1980, p. 8.

To this end, the Union focused on moulding a new collective consciousness and engaged in a series of activities to put an end to the existing patriarchal constructions of femininity and masculinity. Between 1981 and '89 school books were rewritten to express the principle of equality; domestic science at schools was extended to boys; physical education at schools was taught to girls and boys together; local extra-mural programs on gender issues were arranged; state-run programs were introduced to train women for traditionally 'male' jobs; a number of co-operative projects were promoted run by women in agrotourism, handicrafts, wool dying and poultry raising.¹⁴⁰

The reforms and policies instigated by the EGE radically altered the 'gender-regime' of Greek society.¹⁴¹ The new gender-regime, which was gradually consolidated, is usually described in the feminist literature as 'state patriarchy' or 'state feminism'.¹⁴² The two terms are not interchangeable. The first refers to the reproduction and perpetuation of patriarchy by means of the state apparatus, while the latter perceives the state as a positive asset for reducing the effect of patriarchy in society. Both of them refer to changes in the gender order that historically had already taken place in many countries of Western Europe. So state patriarchy and state feminism refer to the gender-regime that was inaugurated with the development of the Keynesian welfare state after World War II. Before the expansion of state services, the gender regime is usually labelled as 'private patriarchy', meaning that patriarchy was personified by the male heads of the household. It was they who gained directly from the sexual division of labour and the oppression of female sexuality. With the growth of the Keynesian welfare state, regulation of the division of labour and issues of sexuality became the responsibility of the state. This new gender-regime has transferred significant power from the individual male to the state. The feminist literature places this new regime historically within late monopoly-capitalism.¹⁴³ The policies, which

¹³⁸ 'Excerpts from a Statement by Margaret Papandreou', *Atlantis*, 12 (2), 1987.

¹³⁹ According to R. W., Connell, 'Each empirical state has a definable "gender regime" that is the precipitate of social struggles and is linked to - though not a simple reflection of - the wider gender order of the society'. See in R. W. Connell (1990) 'The State, Gender, and Sexual Politics: Theory and Appraisal', *Theory and Society*, 19, 5, p. 523.

¹⁴² Carol Brown, 'Mothers, Fathers and Children: From Private to Public Patriarchy', in Sargent, *op. cit.*, ref. 40; Stetson and Mazur, *op. cit.*, ref. 65; and Connell, *ibid.*

¹⁴³ Brown, *ibid.*

EGE promoted, led to an unprecedented expansion of state competencies and rendered equality of the sexes a public issue. Relations between individual men and women ceased to belong exclusively into the private sphere and became instead an official policy of the state. When the EGE decided to use the machinery of the governing party for promoting gender equality, it based itself on the fundamental premise of state-feminism that the state is not inherently sexist. The organisation has, therefore, identified state feminism with social policies that improve women's status and undermine patriarchy. The autonomous feminist groups, on the other hand, see the state as the embodiment of patriarchy and an indispensable instrument for consolidating male power. In their discourse, state feminism has no positive connotations and is identified with state patriarchy. In fact, they have accused the EGE of 'modernising' and playing down patriarchy, by rendering the recipients of women's oppression more impersonal. In general terms, the EGE policies have constituted a definite rupture in the gender-regime of Greek society. Regardless of whether the new regime is defined as state-feminism or state-patriarchy, it means a significant change in the traditional male-headed family that is increasingly becoming the subject of state policies.

3.7 New Scenarios of Conflict

The relevant literature associates the emergence of new social movements with the institutionalisation of corporatism and the expansion of the Keynesian welfare state into the private realms of the life-world. It depicts the rise of new social movements as a manifestation of the new social conflicts prevailing in post-industrial or late-capitalist society. The EGE, however, is associated with a totally different scenario of conflict, that of the process of social and political modernisation. What is novel in the case of this feminist organisation is that it is related to the previous political tradition of clientelism and political exclusionism. Until the rise to power of the socialist party, the EGE was representative of the conflict between a model of development articulated by the conservative political forces (clientelism, political exclusion, foreign aid), and one articulated by the socialist party (political mass-organisations, popular participation, economic autarky and political autonomy). Moreover, the Union of Greek Women challenged the established conservative tradition that associated women with domesticity, and juxtaposed to it a model of political and economic development in which women were active participants. The two models were founded on different visions about the internal organisation of the

Greek nation-state and the country's integration in the international community.

After 1981, the socialist rule and EGE policy gave rise to a new scenario of conflict. PASOK, instead of empowering civil society, developed a strategy of controlling the system of interest representation. To this end it established party cadres that became mighty centres of power in various sectors of society, and exercised control over the public administration, the judiciary, and the federations of workers, peasants and civil servants. The Union of Greek Women also used the party and state apparatus to control the articulation of collective interests. Although it brought women into the policy-making arenas, the women's agencies it built were highly partisan and staffed by feminists loyal to the organisation and the socialist party. It encouraged the creation of a new neo-corporatist women's movement, where a patron-client relationship developed between the EGE and the women's policy machinery. This meant that from 1981 onwards, the expansion of the state apparatus, coupled with increased control over collective interests, became a new scene of conflict. The protagonists of that conflict were the Union of Greek Women, as embodying state feminism, and the allied block of the autonomous feminist groups and the KDG that aimed to mobilise civil society.

The EGE in the course of its history has, therefore, experienced two different conflicts. The first was predominantly related to Greece's internal social and political order and its position in the global world order. The second was linked to a newly established regime of interest representation, which was characterised by increased state intervention and party control. The common denominator of these two conflicts was the issue of autonomy and self-determination. In the first conflict, the EGE functioned as a bearer of this political premise; in the second it was accused of consolidating a regime of party dependency.

3.8 Summary

Any overall review of the Union of Greek Women should take into account not only the reforms promoted by the organisation, but also its impact on the formation of a new collective consciousness. As Joyce Gelb notes:

'Because feminism is a movement as well as an ideology, its impact must be judged both in terms of specific reforms and in terms of the development of a collective consciousness...among supporters, allies and/or the general public.

Such a collective consciousness refers to a transforming set of ideas related to new norms, roles, institutions, and/or redistribution of resources'.¹⁴⁴

The EGE has substantially alleviated gender inequalities and incorporated gender issues into the official state discourse, thereby achieving the nation-wide dissemination of the principle of equality.

The Union has played a decisive role in the second-wave feminist movement of Greece, and has been representative of the strong presence of party-aligned women's mass organisations. In this way, it has manifested a set of properties that diverge markedly from the usual attributes associated with new social movements. It has articulated a feminist discourse with striking conservative connotations. Its organisational structure has formally intensified the oligarchic tendencies of representative democracy, while informally it has rendered the leadership immensely powerful. The EGE's social base was composed predominantly of middle-aged women with no prior political involvement, and the organisation's strategy has favoured restriction of the private sphere and expansion of state intervention. All these qualities contradict the political project of new social movements. The latter have produced new cultural codes, experimented with participatory forms of democracy and defended civil society against state intervention. Their members or sympathizers have been young, politically active, and espousing post-material values. The EGE was not, however, an isolated case in the Greek feminist movement, but on the contrary a decisive force and representative example of second-wave feminism. The development of the Greek feminist movement was linked, during the 1970s and '80s, with the strong presence of the left-wing political parties as the exclusive challengers to the established political regime. The historical tradition of foreign dependency, coupled with political exclusionism, lack of socio-economic distribution, and the nation-wide function of the state as an extensive patronage-recruitment mechanism, gave rise to political projects focusing on the empowerment and democratisation of Greek society as a whole. In this way parties became the key holders in the political conflict concerning the nation's course of development. In consequence, the social movements that emerged during the post-junta period relied

¹⁴⁴ Gelb, Joyce (1990) 'Feminism and Political Action', in: R. Dalton, M. Kuechler (eds.), *Challenging the Political Order*, (Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press), p.152.

heavily on the political parties of the Left as the main bearers of the broader struggle of political change and national self-determination. Illustrative of the dominant political culture of the post-junta period is the following statement by EGE:

‘Let’s not forget...that the participation of women in the anti-imperialistic, anti-reactionary, anti-dictatorial and syndicalist struggles is imperative. However, the realisation of these primary objectives could never put an end to the participation of women in the social processes’.¹⁴⁵

The case of EGE also illustrates the strong statocratic and patrocratic elements in Greece, where the large state apparatus and firm party control over civil society have led most second-wave feminist organisations to rely on political parties. This meant that the EGE confronted a series of strategic problems that are best delineated by the resource-mobilisation model. It had to deal with a political system with limited openness to political institutions, no divisions within the elite, and the absence of an autonomous social movement sector. The organisation took advantage of the political opportunity structure by relying heavily on the presence of influential allies (the socialist party). The EGE represents a typical case study for resource-mobilisation theory, since it constituted a collectivity that was able to participate in the elite versus non-elite conflict, and increased its chance of success by forming a highly institutionalised formal organisation. By exploiting the opportunity structure and mobilising resources it achieved its successful integration into mainstream politics.

The strategy of the EGE vis-à-vis the structural elements of its political environment has been entirely different from that adopted by the autonomous feminist groups. The latter rejected and denounced any notion of instrumental rationality (e.g. the effective relation between means and ends) and political opportunity structure. Instead of aiming to seize power at some future time by means of an effective, centralised organisation, they focused on realising feminist principles in the present by means of small, non-hierarchical consciousness-raising groups. They therefore directed their struggles from the international and national level to the local and the personal. Chapter 4 explores the political project of the autonomous feminist groups further.

¹⁴⁵ ‘Let’s not forget...’, *Agenda, op. cit.*, ref. 34.

CHAPTER 4

THE AUTONOMOUS FEMINIST GROUPS

4.1 Introduction

In the mid 1970s a new feminist response emerged in Greece, modelling itself on radical feminism abroad. In 1975 the Movement for Women's Liberation (*Kínisi gia tin Apelefterosi ton Ginaikón* - KAG) was founded. This was the beginning of a process of feminists disengaging themselves from the political parties of the Left. The autonomous feminist groups never constituted a homogeneous entity. Their ideological range stretched from anarchist feminism to socialist feminism. The denominator, common to them all, was their declared commitment to autonomy - from men, from political parties, and from the state. In Western Europe and Northern America second-wave feminism has been seen as identical with the flowering of an autonomous feminist movement, and autonomy from the state and the political parties was taken for granted. In Greece, as already mentioned, second-wave feminism took mainly the form of party-affiliated women's organisations. The issue of autonomy, therefore, became the dividing line between the core mass-organisations with various degrees of party dependency, and the smaller autonomous groups that denounced general politics as male-centred and male-dominated. The post-junta feminist movement witnessed many ideological clashes between these two sides.

4.2 1975-1990: The Construction of an Autonomous Feminist Culture

The first autonomous feminist body, the Movement for Women's Liberation – KAG, consisted of two separate groups of about thirty women each.¹ The KAG members had two distinctive characteristics: they came from the political Left, and some of them had experienced second-wave feminism abroad. The discourse articulated by the KAG was closer to socialist feminism than to radical feminism.² Its

¹ Varika, Eleni (1992) 'Facing Institutional Modernisation: A difficult Feminism', in: E., Leontidou and R. Ammer (eds) *Women's Greece* (Athens, Alternative Publications - in Greek).

² *Radical Feminism* has been the most militant ideological current of the second-wave feminist movement. Socialists feminists' analysis of the relation between patriarchy and capitalism perceives the link between the family and the economy as the theoretical key to women's oppression. Radical feminists, on the other hand, arguing that patriarchy is the oldest and prime conflict in human society, view patriarchy as a trans-historical and universal system of domination, in the context of which other secondary social

analysis of patriarchy was coupled with its struggle against capitalism, but its vision of women's liberation was based on the dissociation of women from the male culture.

'We do not ask to surpass or even to draw level with men, because the patriarchal civilisation has led men to neurosis, hostility and castration'.³

The KAG was the first Greek women's group to proclaim the need to formulate an alternative feminist discourse, one that is based on women's experiences. The development of women's consciousness presupposed the autonomy of the feminist movement: 'From now on, we women will fight ourselves for our rights'.⁴

The pursuit of autonomy went hand in hand with the introduction of issues of sexual politics (abortion, sexuality, contraception, sexual violence, rape, etc.). During the period 1975-79, the KAG was active in various ways - for instance with a publicity venture on contraception (July 1976), opposition to government plans for inducting women into the army (October 1976), bringing out the newspaper *For the Liberation of Women*, (February 1978) and opposition to the government bill on terrorism (September 1978).⁵

These were the years when the KAG dominated the autonomous feminist spectrum.⁶ After 1979, several other autonomous feminist groups were established, mainly at University level - for instance: Women of the School of Commerce (1979), Women of the School of Philosophy (1980) - and some based on neighbourhood residence - e.g. Women's Group of Piraeus (1980), Women's Group of Ampelokipi; others united women who shared some personal characteristics: Group of Homosexual

conflicts develop (class conflicts, racial and ethnic problems, etc.).

³ *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, No. 1, February 1978, Athens.

⁴ Avdela, Efi, Papayannaki, Marina and Sklavenitis, Costoula 'Abortion 1976-86: A Retrospective Account of a Feminist Issue (the Greek Experience)', *Dini*, No. 1, December 1986.

⁵ Pampouki, Eleni (ed) (1984), *Agenda*, Athens (in Greek); and Avdela, Papayannaki, Sklavenitis, *ibid*.

⁶ During the time that the KAG was dominant some other autonomous feminist groups had begun to appear, for instance the Women's Group of the Law School (1976), the Group of Medical Students (1978), The Revolutionary Struggle of Women (1978), the Women's Groups of the School of Biology (1978). See in 'Autonomous Women's Groups', *Sfigga*, No. 1, July 1980.

Women, Group of Foreign Women, Group of Single Mothers; or who were in the same profession: e.g. Group of Women of the Greek Organisation of Telecommunication; or in publishing activities: Group of Women in Publishing (*Ekdotiki Omada Ginaikon* – EOG, 1979), Broom (*Skoupa* - 1978) and Wasp (*Sfigga* - 1980). More than 50 groups were set up in the Athens area between 1975 and 1983, but they were not constricted to the capital.⁷ Autonomous groups in Salonica were equally active, and groups were formed also in Patras, Yiannina Vólos, Zakynthos, Veria, Xanthi, Kefalonia, etc.⁸ Many of these groups lasted only a short time, were dissolved, and succeeded by new ones. There was great horizontal mobility in the autonomous feminist spectrum, which led to a relative fluidity concerning specific characteristics of the groups.⁹

The establishment of more and more autonomous feminist groups was coupled with the increased publishing activities. Magazines, newspapers, periodicals, bulletins, pamphlets and declarations came out hard and fast, and their format reflected their ideological premises.¹⁰ So, the refusal by some publishing groups to set up an editorial

⁷ 'Invitation to a Meeting of Women in autumn '83', *Poli ton Ginaikon*, No. 10, Oct 1983.

⁸ There are very few references in the autonomous feminist press to the peripheral groups and it is difficult to obtain information about their activities.

⁹ Interviews with Vicky Kotsovelou, former member of the feminist group of the Communist Party of the Interior and co-founder of *Diotima* (Centre of Women's Studies and Research), 3 March 1998, 15 March 1998, Athens.

¹⁰ Some of the magazines, newspapers and bulletins published were: *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon* (1978) by the KAG; *Epanastatiki Pali Ginaikon* (1978) by the Revolutionary Struggle of Women; *Skoupa* (1979); *Deltio* (1979) by the Women's Group of the Law School; *Sfigga* (1980) by ex-members of the KAG and the Women's Group of the Law School; *Kathreftis* (1980) by the Women's Group of the School of Biology; *Poli Ginaikon* (1981); *Lavrys* (1982) by the Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women; *To Milo kai to Fidi apo ti Skopia tis Evas* (1982) by the Women's Group of the Law School; *Gaia* (1983) by the Women's House of Salonica; *Medousa* (1983) by autonomous women's groups in Salonica; *Thravsmata* (1984) by the Women's Group of Kypseli; *Phoni Ginaikas* (1984); *Mousidora* (1984) by The Witches; *Dini* (1986); *Newspaper* of the Unaligned Movement of Women (1986);

board illustrated their opposition to any hierarchical scheme whatsoever.¹¹ The magazines *Broom* and *Wasp* became the main voices for the theoretical elaboration of feminist issues. The autonomous feminist literature concerned itself with, above all, the social construction of female nature, the relation of patriarchy to capitalism, the androcentric character of existing political institutions, the delusion of the discourse of 'equality', the debate on matriarchy, women's domestic labour, and also the history of women's mobilisations in Greece, translations of foreign feminist texts, reports of feminist activities abroad, etc. The subjects that defined the distinctiveness of the autonomous feminist press were those that opened up the intimately personal sphere of women: abortion, contraception, sexuality, sexist violence, rape, the family, prostitution child-bearing and child-rearing, homosexuality - all these became common themes in the women's press.¹² The objective of these diverse publications was to

Katina (1987) by the Autonomous Group of Women of Salonica; *Telesilla* (1988) by Telesilla: Greek Feminist Network of Information, Solidarity and Mobilisation; *Koutitis Pandoras* (1990) by the Women's Group of Volos; *Ginaikii Psithiri* by the Women's Group of Elefsina; *Agenda* by Eleni Pampouki; and *Logia, Nefeli*. Academic or literary bulletins were also published, such as *Psapfa* (1982). See Kotsovelou, Vicky and Repousi, Maria, 'Feminist Magazines 1978-'85: A First Interpretation', *Diavazo*, No. 198, 14 Sept. 1988.

¹¹ In the autonomous feminist press it is common for the authors to leave articles anonymous, stressing thereby the collective dimension of the women's struggle.

¹² The autonomous feminist groups addressed multiple times the issue of homosexuality and organised many common activities with lesbian activists (e.g. on the occasion of the International Day of Contraception). The Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women, which was established by lesbian activists of KAG and the Liberation Movement of Greek Homosexuals (*Apeleftherotiko Kinima Omofilofilon Elladas* - AKOE) in autumn 1979, played a central role in the lesbian movement. The Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women participated in the Coordinating Committee of Women's Struggles and was co-founder of the Athens Women's House. Although, both (the homosexual and the autonomous feminist groups) aspired to eradicate sexism in all its manifestations, lesbians often complained about being excluded by the autonomous feminist groups. This led to temporal schemes of cooperation either with the autonomous feminist groups or the official organ of the

make women visible, and to break the silence concerning women's experiences, feelings, and desires. By their publishing activities the groups attempted to link together the different aspects of oppression in order to allow a collective feminist consciousness to form. The focus on the creation of a culture of radical feminism was also expressed through the consciousness-raising groups. These were not restricted to only making individual women aware of the specific nature of their oppression, but reached out in their work to the wider public.¹³ Such consciousness-raising groups proliferated during the first period of the autonomous feminist movement (1979-81). In the years thereafter, a shift occurred towards groups for the study of specific topics.

The late 1970s/early '80s were the most vigorous and dynamic for the autonomous feminist spectrum. The groups kept increasing, all kinds of publications multiplied, and the first mass-demonstrations were held. On 7 March 1980, the Committee of Struggles for the Reform of Family Law organised a big rally on the occasion of International Woman's Day. The rally was intended to put pressure on the government for the abolition of the articles of Family Law that buttressed the role of men as the heads of family. A popular slogan at the demonstration was 'I don't belong to my father, I don't belong to my husband, I want to be myself'.¹⁴ That day demonstrations took place also in Salonica and Patras.¹⁵ Many more demonstrations were held in the years to come. All through 1980 the demonstrations urged the reform of Family Law, from 1981 to '83 they concentrated on sexist violence. These were demonstrations calling for the reform of the law on rape (e.g. on 7 December 1982 in Athens), expressing solidarity with rape victims (e.g. December 1981 in Athens and 14 June 1982 in Salonica), and denouncing the ever-present threat of rape (e.g. on 25 June 1981, 'Reclaim the Night' demonstration in Athens, and on 11 March 1982

homosexual movement in Greece, the AKOE. See Pseudonymou, Charoula (1992) 'Cries and Whispers: On the Lesbian Issue in Greece', in Leontidou, Ammer, *op. cit.*, ref. 1 and *Lavris*, magazine published by the Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women.

¹³ 'Women's Groups', *To Milo kai to Fidi apo ti Skopia tis Evas*, No. 1, 1982.

¹⁴ 'The 8th of March', *Sfigga*, No. 1, July 1980.

¹⁵ Vicky Kotsovelou, *Indicative Chronology of Groups/Publications/Mobilisations of the Greek Feminist Movement during the decade 1975-1985*, Diotima, Athens.

'Reclaim the Night' demonstration in Salonica).¹⁶ In April 1983, the autonomous feminist groups began a national campaign on the issues of sexuality, contraception and abortion. Then, 1983-1986, the autonomous feminist groups demanded reform of the law on abortions, and free abortions on demand (e.g. 25 January 1985 in Athens, April 1986 in Athens).

The proliferation of the autonomous feminist groups and the organisation of the first mass-demonstrations gave rise to the idea of coordination. In 1980, the Committee of Struggles for the Reform of Family Law was established, and its rally on International Woman's Day in time led to the founding of the Coordinating Committee of Women's Struggles. This new organisational body became the largest coordinative body the Greek autonomous feminist movement has known. It consisted of more than 15 autonomous feminist groups as well as individual woman members.¹⁷ The KDG was the only party-affiliated women's organisation to participate in this coordinating organ. What all the participating groups shared was their advocacy of autonomy.¹⁸ The Coordinating Committee set up working groups on topics like motherhood, the family, sexuality, sexist violence, rape and autonomy, which became part of a more general project for a two-day women's festival in September of the same year.¹⁹ The festival never took place, and in October the Coordinating Committee was dissolved as a result of escalating conflict among its constituent groups. The disagreements concerned autonomy, the question of men-participants and how the festival was to be organised.

The Committee's dissolution deprived the autonomous feminists of organisational cohesion, during a period when the groups continually stressed the need

¹⁶ Other slogans at the demonstration in Athens were: 'No to violence and rape. It is a woman's right to walk safe at night. The city is ours too'; 'Every woman can be raped. Women charge the rapists'; 'The press rapes us daily'. See in Alevizou, Fofi, Korassidou, Maria and Samiou, Dimitra 'Feature: Violence and Rape', *Dini*, No. 2, October 1987; and *Rape/Press/Rape by the Press*, publication by the Mass Media Group of the Women's House of Athens.

¹⁷ 'Recent Activities in the Feminist Spectrum', *Skoupa*, No. 4, July 1980; Kotsovelou, *op. cit.*, ref. 15 and *pamphlet* by the Committee of the Struggle for the Reform of Family Law, *Skoupa*, No. 4, July 1980.

¹⁸ 'Recent Activities in the Feminist Spectrum', *ibid.*

¹⁹ 'Chronicle', *Skoupa*, No. 5, July 1981.

for co-operation. To fill the vacuum, a number of Athens autonomous feminist groups in 1980 proceeded to establish the Women's House.²⁰ Several study groups were set up, for elaborating especially issues related to sexuality. In 1982, the Mass Media group was formed, introducing for the first time an extensive analysis of the sexist role of the press.²¹ In 1981, the second Woman's House was founded in Salonica, with associated working groups on contraception, abortion, consciousness-raising, violence and rape, family labour, and self-expression.²² Consciousness-raising groups were beginning to give place to study groups for specific issues.

In the early years of the autonomous feminist movement (the 1970s), the dividing line between the ideology of the party-affiliated women's organisations and that of the autonomous feminists was straightforward. The former, as we have seen (Ch. 3) were working for *emancipation* and/or *equality*, and emphasised that the conflict between the sexes could be resolved in the context of the existing society. To this end they had a positive attitude towards legal and institutional reforms. The autonomous feminist groups, on the other hand, stressed *women's liberation*, a concept based on the premise that abolition of women's oppression required overturning the existing patriarchal society. Theirs was a revolutionary outlook that aimed to wholly recreate society. The autonomous feminist groups introduced issues of sexual politics in a more radical way than the party-affiliated women's organisations, which emphasised equal employment opportunities, improved social services by the state, the social value of motherhood, and the advancement of peace and democracy. Towards the end of the 1970s the 'traditional' organisations began to incorporate issues previously stressed only by the autonomous groups, which led to a blurring of the dividing line between them. This was accentuated by the rise to power of the socialist party in 1981.

²⁰ The Women's House was founded in Athens by the Group of Autonomy, the Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women, Women's Group of Nea Smyrni, *Skoupa*, and a number of individuals. See in 'Chronicle', *ibid*.

²¹ The Mass Media Group explored the representation of feminism in the press, the relation of the autonomous feminist groups with the press, and particularly the ideology disseminated by the press representation of sexist violence and rapes. See in 'Rape/Press/The Rape by the Press', *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

²² 'The Magazine', *Gaia*, No. 1, June 1983

The previous exclusion of feminism from the dominant party-political discourse now gave way to propagating the discourse of equality as articulated by the EGE. Incorporating the claim for sexual equality into the dominant political agenda, the socialist party's promise of legal reforms, and increasing references by political parties and the mass media to women's issues, resulted in the ideological ascendancy of a feminist project that focused on political and social reforms for women's emancipation. The dissemination of this discourse by state institutions, political parties and the mass media ideologically undermined the autonomous feminist groups' vision of women's liberation. Moreover, the eventual adoption by the EGE of specific demands that had long been voiced by the autonomous feminist groups clouded the ideological premises underlying those demands in the context of the autonomous feminist discourse. In these circumstances the autonomous feminists angrily denounced the appropriation and distortion of their discourse by the EGE and the state institutions.

1982 and '83 were a period of growing predicament for the autonomous feminist movement. In September 1983, the Group of Women's Studies began to function at the University of Salonica, founded by academic women wishing to introduce a new feminist reading of science, and constituting the first inter-departmental project to bring a feminist discourse into the academic community.²³ In October 1983, the Women's Bookstore was established in Athens, which also collected feminist texts together and created an archive on women's issues.²⁴ The women's groups that were formed at this time were short-lived.

From 1984 onwards, the difficulties experienced by the autonomous feminist groups kept growing. The consciousness-raising groups were no longer effective, and the study groups had run out of subjects. The legal reforms by the socialist party put a stop to agitation by the autonomous feminists concerning reform of Family Law and the Penal Code. The absence of new groups and new campaign topics, coupled with the ideological ascendancy of the ideological discourse of the party-affiliated women's organisations, did not help to reverse the decline of the autonomous feminist groups. Their demonstrations continued for a number of years, and in 1985 and '86 the autonomous groups were quite active on the subject of abortion.

²³ 'Women's Studies at the Universities', Athens daily newspaper *Eleftherotytia*, 24 Oct. 1993.

²⁴ 'Women's Bookstore in Athens', *Gaia*, No. 2, 1984.

In October 1984, a Panhellenic meeting of autonomous feminists took place in Salonica.²⁵ Its objective was to find a way of reanimating the movement, perhaps by some scheme of cooperation. While the participants at the meeting acknowledged the crisis in the autonomous feminist spectrum and realised the need for redefining objectives and how to obtain them, their views remained too diverse to be reconciled. The meeting ended without any prospects for further cooperation. It was the last major collective event within the autonomous feminist movement.

In two years to come, mobilisations by autonomous feminist groups focused on the campaign for free abortion on demand, on violence and rape. An illustration of their endeavour to broaden the movement's agenda was the 1986 mobilisation in connection with the trial of a woman accused of killing her husband.²⁶ Declarations and publications followed in the years thereafter. However, 1987 saw the end of mobilisations by the autonomous feminist groups, and the ascendancy of theoretical debates in forums that functioned as centres of a women's community (e.g. House of Women, Women's Bookstore, Bookstore *Selana*).

In time, the difficulties experienced by the autonomous feminists led to a significant change of direction. The criticism expressed at the Panhellenic meeting was not forgotten. Many feminists were against the introspective attitudes of consciousness-raising groups and wanted the movement to be associated with general political issues. In this context, active alliances with other social movements were considered. The autonomous feminist press began more and more to mention practical objectives held in common with other social minorities. An exception to this was the group formed around the magazine *Whirl (Dini)*, the first issue of which came out in December 1986, at a time when the movement had already shrunk and was kept going mainly by the efforts of committed older members. The group around *Dini* articulated the purest form of radical feminism in Greece, and the magazine represented the return

²⁵ 'Feature: Panhellenic Meeting of Women', *Gaia*, No. 2, 1984.

²⁶ The husband's continual physical abuse of the accused, her denomination by the mass media, and her physical battering by the police provoked a campaign by the autonomous feminist groups, denouncing the misogyny of Greek society and the sexism permeating the state apparatus and the judicial system. See *pamphlets*: 'Women Present at the Trial of Kolitsopoulou' by the Women's House and Women's Bookstore (Athens) in *Dini*, No. 1, December 1986.

of a significant section of autonomous feminists to theoretical issues. Another response to the difficulties of the autonomous feminist movement was the initiative to establish institutions of solidarity with rape victims or women physically abused.

In brief: the impasse in the affairs of the autonomous feminist movement was never positively resolved. Three different tendencies developed: (i) an effort to associate feminism with more general socio-political issues, (ii) to focus on the construction of a female identity and the elaboration of theoretical issues, and (iii) to set up alternative institutions in civil society (SOS-lines, shelters for raped women, etc.).²⁷ By the 1990s the number of the autonomous feminist groups still functioning was extremely small.

The course of the autonomous feminist movement can be divided into four phases. The first phase was dominated by the formation of consciousness-raising groups; the second was marked by the rise of feminist activism and the formation of the Coordinating Committee; during the third phase the dissolution of the Coordinating Committee was followed by the proliferation of study groups and the founding of Women's Houses; in the fourth phase, when the difficulties began, the Women's Bookstores were set up.²⁸

The autonomous feminist movement lived for more than a decade. It strove to develop a new body of feminism based on the politics reproduction. It started from zero, aiming to reconceptualise knowledge and construct a positive female subjectivity.²⁹

²⁷ Indicative is the founding of the group 'SOS-Line - First Aid Group to Abused and Raped Women of Salonica'. See also Gouliarou, Theodora 'Some thoughts about the past and the present of the women's movement', *Katina*, No. 3, June 1988, Salonica.

²⁸ Interviews with Vicky Kotsovelou, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

²⁹ This has been a painful process for many women, who have described in the autonomous feminist press the long periods of solitude they have suffered. '...the course of liberation leads with a mathematical precision to solitude and disappointment. The most important is that it leads to the exclusion from a community, which a woman needs...', in EOG (1979) 'Introduction' in Alice Schwartz, *The Small Difference and its Great Consequences* (EOG publication, Athens), p. 16.

4.3 Ideology

The autonomous feminist movement founded its struggle for women's liberation on the fundamental axioms of collectivity and autonomy.

4.3.1 Collectivity

The autonomous feminist discourse emphasised that the universality of women's oppression under patriarchy led to the formation of the collective subject of 'woman'. Throughout history, woman was the collective or individual property of men. Women's deprivation of control over themselves has split society into two separate categories: the collective subject 'woman' and the collective subject 'man'. Power relations between those two categories has permeated all forms of social and personal life, and so rendered patriarchy ubiquitous. It is this shared oppression suffered by women throughout history in different societies and distinct classes that constitutes the basis of the collective character of the female subject.

The autonomous feminist movement's emphasis on the collective dimension was coupled with emphasis on its own class-transcendent character.³⁰ Although the autonomous feminist groups frequently incorporated class elements into their discourse and elaborated the relationship of capitalism to patriarchy, they never applied class considerations to the development of the feminist movement. On the contrary, they stressed the common nature of the struggle against patriarchy and the need for women's solidarity. Exceptions to the class-transcendent character of the feminist movement were the Revolutionary Struggle of Women (*Epanastatiki Pali Ginaikon*) and the KAG. The latter declared outright: 'The autonomous feminist movement is not only a social but also a class movement'.³¹ Both of these organisations were founded not long after the fall of the junta, and reflected the ideological ascension of the political Left and its projection of class conflict as the major conflict of Greek society. In the years thereafter, several autonomous feminist groups took class elements into their analyses, but never questioned the classlessness of the feminist movement as a whole.

The strong embedment in the autonomous feminist discourse of the collective essence of the female subject was also reflected on the marginal influence of the

³⁰ Interviews with Vicky Kotsovelou, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

³¹ *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, No. 4, December 1978.

discourse of 'difference'. The subject 'woman' was never broken up into the study of different identities and dissimilar experiences. The right to differ within the context of a pluralistic culture is stated or implied in all autonomous feminist writings, but by never fragmenting the category 'woman', the collective dimension of the women's struggle to overturn patriarchy was kept intact. The discourse of difference was attacked by the feminist groups associated with the magazine *Skoupa*, one of the most influential in theoretical feminism. The group argued that promotion of women's issues on the basis of 'difference' constituted an ideological trap for the feminist movement, because it led to a glorification of women's characteristics while concealing that they were the historical products of a long period of oppression and exclusion. They argued that the much-valued difference was never the end product of choice, but a forced outcome.³²

Since it was the collective subject of women that formed the foundation for the belief that women's united and conscious struggle can overthrow patriarchy, the concept of collectivity was never questioned, not even during the most difficult times for the autonomous feminist movement, when many of its goals and means were challenged.

'...In face of the impasses and the tension originating from the crisis, there are two things we must save no matter what: the minimal collectivity, which is necessary for the reproduction of our vital space and the communication of our ideas'.³³

This belief led to a strong subjectivism in the autonomous feminist culture, where the abilities of the collective subject woman were constantly praised.

'The new feminist movement has provided a neglected, but crucial component to revolution, ... the conscious character of the revolution, ...meaning the irreplaceable role of the human-Subject that intervenes and transforms history, changing simultaneously her (his) own self'.³⁴

Collectivity was one of the preconditions for women's liberation. The second one was autonomy.

³² *Skoupa*, No. 3, December 1979.

³³ Avdela, Efi 'About the crisis', *Dini*, No. 4, June 1989, p. 9.

³⁴ 'Group of Women in Publishing', EOG *Pamphlet*, 1979, p.2.

4.3.2 Autonomy

A decisive rupture in the previous tradition of feminist politics in Greece came with the autonomous feminist groups breaking all ties with the state, political parties, and men generally. The quest for autonomy was perceived as an absolute necessity for the self-definition and determination of women. The autonomous feminists denounced traditional politics as male-centred and proclaimed their belief in the right of an oppressed group to define its own needs and goals.

i) *Autonomy and formal politics*

The strong influence exerted by political parties over the Greek feminist movement led the autonomous feminist groups to proclaim their autonomy principally in relation to the political parties. However, the terms 'formal politics' or 'traditional politics' that often appeared in their writings, referred to all social institutions, political subjects and ideological apparatuses (the mass media, labour unions, the church, the judicial system, the police, medical science) that were perceived as reproducing the patriarchal structures. The autonomous feminists denounced not only the agents of formal politics but also the concomitant practices and ideological premises (e.g. mass organisations, leadership, planning for the acquisition of power, hierarchy, competitiveness, dominative logic, instrumental rationality, division between intellectual and manual labour). The refusal to have anything to do with formal politics constituted a rejection of their patriarchal nature, hierarchical structures, and their dominative practices as well as of the entire value system on which it rests. This rejection of formal politics was an inevitable corollary of the ideological vision of women's liberation. The autonomous feminists' goal of women's liberation was a revolutionary one that could not be achieved through the existing political system and its institutions. These were regarded as expressing the power relations between the sexes. For the autonomous feminists the political system was a bulwark of sexism, thereby negating any possibility for women's liberation without challenging the very foundations of this system. The political objective of overturning the existing patriarchal society could hardly be achieved through institutional reforms in the realm of formal politics. The autonomous feminist groups, therefore, denounced women's equality in a male-centred political order, and did not deviate from their aspiration to abolish patriarchy, as a system endlessly reproducing relations of oppression,

subjection and exploitation. 'A political proposal means the articulation of a project for a different model of society'.³⁵

Autonomy from formal politics was a basic element in the feminist struggle for self-determination. The autonomous groups endeavoured to formulate a feminist discourse based on women's experiences, needs, and desires. This process of self-determination presupposed the creation of groups that were independent from formal politics, where women could analyse collectively what they had experienced individually. It was this knowledge shared between them that became the basis of a feminist identity. The feminist groups considered the many consciousness-raising groups as a project of self-definition, feasible only in a context of autonomy.³⁶ They created their own social arenas, where they proceeded to a feminist reading of social reality, so minimising the influence of the masculine language of formal politics. In this way, autonomy helped to create feminist alternatives to the existing (male-dominated) social representation of women; it epitomised the women's exploration of their social and personal identity, and reflected their belief that patriarchal power is not only visibly, but also invisibly sexist.

Rejection of formal politics by the autonomous feminist groups was coupled with a redefinition of the subject of politics generally. For one thing, they challenged the universality of formal politics, demonstrated against the exclusion of women from formal politics, and strove to redefine politics on the basis of the women's life-world. The point of such a reconceptualisation of politics was to make women more visible by introducing them into history as a political subject. For the autonomous feminists, politics ceased to be limited to the public space of male supremacy and extended to the social spheres associated with women's activities. In other words, the radical denial by the autonomous feminist groups of formal politics as a male-dominated sphere was coupled with their projection of an alternative conceptualisation of politics – one that made women a major actor in politics and a motivating force of social change.

³⁵ Gouliarou, Theodora and Kavka, Meri, 'Women's alliance or what does the fox look for in the bazaar?', *Katina*, No. 2, December 1987.

³⁶ Gouliarou, *op. cit.*, ref. 27, p. 43.

ii) *Autonomy and men*

One of the autonomous feminist canons was the need to break women's emotional and intellectual dependency on men.³⁷ In the declaration of the Movement for Women's Liberation it is clearly stated:

'We need our own organisation separate from men because their presence suspends our ability to express ourselves and to develop initiatives. Because their privileged position in society renders them advocates of their position vis-à-vis us'.³⁸

The exclusion of men from the women's groups was considered absolutely necessary for constructing a feminist identity: only women could apprehend women's particular experiences as gendered beings, and articulate a discourse that defied the patriarchal ideology. The construction of a women's language through the process of consciousness-raising did not permit the participation of men. The ultimate aim of the autonomous feminists was to build a collective feminist consciousness that would assist in the struggle for liberation. In brief, the exclusion of men was part of the project of self-definition. Men were perceived as either adversaries, profiting from patriarchy and acting as advocates of their privileged position, or as representatives of a distorted patriarchal image of women's particular social experience.

The women's shared belief in autonomy from men was also of decisive importance for the discussions in the study groups. The focus on personal emotions, experiences and issues referring to the private sphere (sexuality, abortions etc.) presupposed a social environment receptive to the expression of private thoughts and desires. The absence of men made it easier to overcome ingrained habits of concealment and psychological repression. Another reason for the exclusion of men was that it was thought that their presence would undermine the bonds created by women among themselves in a community of sisterhood. Many groups argued that women's emotional entrapment in relation to men hindered the development of women's solidarity and therefore the formation of a collectivity.

³⁷ Despite the universal application of this, the issue could become a source of conflict. For example, one of the clashes that led to the dissolution of the Coordinating Committee concerned the exclusion of men.

³⁸ Kotsovelou, Repousi, *op. cit.*, ref. 10, p. 54.

iii) *Autonomy and double militancy*³⁹

Autonomy was a principle unequivocally adhered to in the autonomous feminist spectrum. There were, however, two diametrically opposed interpretations of autonomy. The one held that autonomy excluded all and any participation by feminists in political parties or other political formations; the other argued that autonomy does not conflict with the participation in additional political formations. In time, double militancy became the dominant conflict in the autonomous feminist spectrum. The two interpretations reflected a profound disagreement over the ideological conception of feminism.

Some of the autonomous feminists considered feminism a holistic concept, with women the dominant subject of political struggles. It was they who represented the purest version of radical feminism in Greece.⁴⁰ Advocates of the holistic character of feminism rejected any definition of the feminist struggle as a partial struggle that can coexist with the political struggles of other oppressed groups. They asserted that not considering the feminist struggle as of singular priority meant to reproduce the patriarchal marginalisation of the women's movement as a fragmentary struggle of a particular segment of society. For the radical feminists, it was the conflict of the sexes that was the chief social conflict. With patriarchy defined as a separate political system of women's oppression, the feminist movement a priori had to dissociate itself from all

³⁹ *Double militancy* refers to new social movements' members, who combine their participation in the social movement sector with their membership in political parties or other political organisations outside the social movement sector. Double militancy in the Greek case refers chiefly to the social movements' participants, who are also party members. The phenomenon of double militancy has been extensive not only in Greece, but also in Latin America (e.g. Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Chile), and signifies the strong presence of the state and the political parties in the public life of the two countries respectively. Double militancy became a major issue of the feminist movement during the '70s and '80s. This was illustrated by the ideological clash between the feminists, who demanded complete autonomy of the feminist movement and the double militants, who combined their struggle in civil society with their struggle in party politics. During the '90s it has subsided as an issue. Hellman, Judith Adler (1990), 'Latin American Feminism', Review Article, *Socialist Review*, 90/3.

⁴⁰ These were mainly the groups formed around the magazines *Skoupa* and *Dini*.

other political movements.

‘A disengagement from the male-centred trap and a feminist perception of politics would mean that women would become the centres of the struggle for a new world. The patriarchal structure of society, the hierarchical relation between the sexes causes our problems. This patriarchal structure pre-existed capitalism and follows capitalism. It will follow any social change and will perpetuate itself, unless we define the oppression of one sex by the other as our central problem’.⁴¹

Feminists who advocated this belief saw as a main reason for the difficulties their movement was experiencing, the strong influence of the Left and its enforcement of a political tradition that divided struggles into general and particular. The holistic vision of feminism was opposed to the entrenched political tradition in the Greek feminist movement that admitted the existence of two conflicts: one of them general and concerning all the progressive forces in Greek society, and one of them partial, concerning women in their specific struggle for liberation.

A large number of feminists in the autonomous feminist spectrum did not share this holistic vision. They argued that the conflict between the sexes is only one among many others, and that in consequence women do not constitute the overriding political subject. They did not contest the political vision of transforming society in its entirety. All autonomous feminists shared the belief that there are no social relations that are not affected by the conflict between the sexes, and that the feminist challenge of the prevailing values presupposes a total recreation of the existing social order. However, the less radical segment of the autonomous feminists saw feminism coupled with a multiplicity of other social conflicts. For them, feminism challenging the universality of male-centeredness demonstrated the fallacy of a single universal subject. Therefore, they argued in favour of the principle of diversity. In their view, society must not be reduced to the conflict between the sexes, but be allowed diverse social arenas, where different social subjects construct their collective identities. They juxtaposed to the holistic vision of feminism, based on the men/women dichotomy, a discourse founded on exploring the various sites of social oppression. The autonomous feminists, who proposed this alternative, were usually women taking part in other political formations and seeking political alliances with other social movements.

⁴¹ Papayannaki, Marina and Fragoudaki, Anna ‘Which policy for Feminism?’, *Dini*, No. 3, July 1988, p. 10.

To summarise: autonomy 'emerged as an inviolable principle and was entwined with the very existence of the feminist movement'.⁴² Autonomy became the principle that differentiated the autonomous feminist groups from the party-affiliated women's organisations, and was perceived by the former as the indispensable precondition for women's self-definition and self-determination.

Additional basic tenets in the ideology of the autonomous feminists were the political dimension of the private sphere, an anti-hierarchical stand, the strong presence of class analysis, and the articulation of a humanistic discourse.

4.3.3 The Personal is Political

The autonomous feminist movement went beyond the agenda set by the party-affiliated women's organisations when it introduced issues referring to areas of social life previously treated as private and personal. They did so for three reasons: because (i) the internalised social constructs of femininity can be recognised and overcome only by exploring the dynamic of women's daily lives; (ii) the origins of patriarchy lie in the private domain; (iii) the personal reflections of the individual are valueless.

The autonomous feminist movement aimed to explore and liberate women's consciousness.

'Women's liberation presupposes not only the abolition of the material conditions that enforce it, but also a deep transformation of consciousness and human relations'.⁴³

Such a transformation of women's consciousness was recognised as being very difficult, given that patriarchal power becomes less visible as a collective practice in the personal domain. It was important, therefore, to initiate processes to get women to talk about personal experiences in light of the oppression they were enduring because of their gender. These accounts were then collectively analysed to show that many other women had similar experiences, and thereby to point to their political character. Sexuality, women's control over their own bodies, abortion, contraception, domestic violence, rape, psychological repression, the sexual objectification of women, and motherhood - all were thoroughly examined. The focus on the private sphere was meant to reveal the social grounding of interpersonal relations. In this way, the private

⁴² Kotsovelou, Vicky and Repousi, Maria 'Some Thoughts about the Political Identity of Feminism in Greece', *Dini*, No. 4, June 1989.

⁴³ 'Group of Women in Publishing', *op. cit.*, ref. 34, p. 7.

sphere became the locus for the formulation of a new feminism that revealed the 'invisible' politics of reproduction. Productive rights were replaced by the focus on reproductive rights, which grounded women's ability to liberate themselves from a socially constructed 'biological fate'.

By exploring women's daily reality in the private domain, the autonomous feminist groups exposed the political foundations of sexism in its daily manifestations. For the first time in the history of the Greek feminist movement it was proposed that there is no single private issue of a person's life that is not political. The autonomous feminists opposed the private/public dichotomy, underlying formal politics, with a discourse of 'sexual politics' that established the personal domain as a site of political struggles. The slogan 'The personal is political' redefined the spectrum of politics, and introduced women as a political subject in an infinitely expansive political domain.

While the party-affiliated women's organisations focused primarily on issues such as women's participation in the labour process, educational opportunities, legal reforms, or domestic labour, the autonomous groups redirected the focus from the material conditions of women's oppression to the private domain as the linchpin of male power. There was, however, no consensus amongst the autonomous feminists on the origins and nature of patriarchy. It was explained in three not mutually exclusive ways: as an ubiquitous structure of hierarchical sexual relations, as male control over women's reproductive capacity, and as male control over women's labour power (in both the industrial mode of production and the domestic sphere). There was unanimous agreement in the autonomous feminist press that the second and third are the two most fundamental functions of patriarchy, but the emphasis varied with the political orientations of each group. Opposition to hierarchical structures and power relations usually went hand in hand with extensive analysis of the role of socialisation. Groups closer to radical feminism stressed the significance of men's control over women's sexuality, whereas autonomous feminists ideologically linked to the political Left studied the allocation of labour power and the partnership between patriarchy and capitalism. There were no clear dividing lines in the analysis of patriarchy, and all three dimensions were usually present in the discourse of the autonomous groups. But, contrary to the ideological tradition of the party-affiliated women's organisations that stressed the material conditions of women's oppression, the different interpretations of patriarchy by the autonomous feminists always incorporated the decisive role of

sexuality in the reproduction of patriarchy.

The dictum 'The personal is political' also signified a positive apprehension of individuality. The autonomous feminists stressed the infinitive richness of the individual constitution of women and the variations among them. This positive value bestowed on individuality meant a critical stance towards domineering collectivities:

' "Politics" does not care for the individual as a distinct, unique and irreplaceable personality. The aim of "politics" is to conquer and lead the masses. Feminism, on the contrary, has caused the downfall of the concept "masses", because feminism has as a starting point the needs of the individual and the personal dimension'.⁴⁴

The autonomous feminists accused the political parties of suppressing individuality and creating docile masses. They themselves celebrated individuality by focusing on personal reflections and emphasising the neglected role of subjectivity. The consciousness-raising groups, which focused on individual liberation, were an organisational index of the positive apprehension of individuality.

The autonomous feminists strove to re-establish the dialectic unity between individuality and collectivity. They argued that the feminist struggle develops simultaneously on two levels: it is linked on the one level to 'an impersonal but omnipotent mechanism constituted by institutions, laws and repressive structures'; and on the other to 'an oppression more immediate and personal' relating to daily life in the private domain.⁴⁵ Therefore, feminism

'...has a better chance to proceed more easily to this dialectic unity of the subjective and objective, particularly because the practical rebellion of women induces women to confront both levels of reality'.⁴⁶

Thus, the autonomous feminists strove to reintroduce the individual as a valuable and decisive factor of politics, and thereby to restore the dialectic unity between individuality and collectivity.

4.3.4 Hierarchism, Science, Capitalism, Humanism

All of the autonomous groups, without exception, took a clear stand against hierarchical relations and structures of domination. The small consciousness-raising

⁴⁴ '...Continuation of a presaged death', *Gaia*, No. 2, 1984, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁵ 'Group of Women in Publishing', *op. cit.*, ref. 34, p. 7.

⁴⁶ 'Group of Women in Publishing', *ibid.*, p.7.

groups that functioned organisationally on the basis of unanimity expressed this. Hierarchical relations and dominative practices were identified with the male culture based on competitiveness, aggression, and authoritarianism. Patriarchal ideology was denounced for promoting male domination and violence both in daily life and on the level of institutional structures. When autonomous feminists who perceived women's liberation as an integral part of a broader political project examined issues referring to the construction of social hierarchies, they extended the analysis of sexual hierarchies to the study of power relations underlying the institutionalised forms of social inequalities. A case in point is the pamphlet (dated 28 April 1980) distributed in solidarity with women prisoners who staged a revolt to demand better living conditions:

'Put an end to prisons, reformatory institutions, psychiatric clinics and to all the supposedly humanistic institutions that perpetuate sexual and racial relations. We women support the struggle of our sister prisoners as well as the struggles of all the minorities, believing firmly that our problems are related to the same repressive power mechanisms'.⁴⁷

In this context the judicial, penal, medical and educational system, the army, the police, the alienating labour process, and finally the institution of the family were attacked for creating hierarchical relations of domination.

'From the student halls to the displacement of homosexuals, the police control penetrates every aspect of public and private life'.⁴⁸

The formation of submissive individuals through the socialisation process, and the existing repressive institutions (prisons, psychiatric institutions, etc.) were passionately criticised.⁴⁹ For many autonomous feminists, hierarchism, exploitation, domination and repression, aside from being part of women's personal experience, extended to the

⁴⁷ The Women's Group, Women's Group of the Law School, EOG, Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women, Initiative Group of Women of Piraeus, Women's Group of the Committee of Lawyer's Struggle, Women's Group of *Sfigga*, and the Revolutionary Struggle of Women signed the pamphlet. Pampouki, *op. cit.*, ref. 5.

⁴⁸ *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, No. 1, Feb. 1978, p.13.

⁴⁹ The anarchist feminists argued that behind patriarchy, capital and the state lies the common principle of power. See the magazine *Poli ton Ginaikon*, which approaches feminist issues from an anti-authoritarian perspective.

broader context of society. This, they argued, united women with other social minorities in the common struggle for the humanisation of social relations.

‘One of the most fundamental claims of women’s uprising is the abolition of any system that integrates and accommodates humans to hierarchical castes that prohibit their free and autonomous development’.⁵⁰

The opposition to hierarchical relations illustrated the ideological influence of the tradition of May ‘68 on the autonomous feminists’ political vision. Another element in the autonomous feminist discourse associated with the tradition of May ‘68 was the critical stand over science and rationality.

It was specifically rationality and science, which the autonomous feminists denounced for creating hierarchical divisions founded on the supremacy of men. They challenged the claim by the scientific discourse to universalism, objectivity and rationality. They strove to unmask scientific concepts that were supposedly universal and gender-neutral as mere constructs of a particular male bias. The autonomous feminists emphasised that science relegated women to the role of the ‘other’, as a ‘lesser’ adjunct to the ‘superior’ male. They questioned the validity of associating science/mind/reason with men, and emotion/nature/body with women. They rejected the dichotomies projected by the patriarchal ideology (such as public/private, culture/nature, mind/body, reason/emotions) and denounced what were considered peculiarly female aspects as social constructs of patriarchy. The identification of theoretical work with male privilege and science with male domination, oriented many groups to a personalistic, subjectivist, expressive language. This became the norm in the autonomous feminist groups, where frequently theoretical generalisations were eschewed in favour of an immediate reflection on personal experiences.

‘Because feminism, besides its aim of the total political overthrowing of society, pays attention also to that which is not political; to that zone of experiences, which cannot be regulated, measured or organised. It is the area of emotions, fantasy, sexuality’.⁵¹

⁵⁰ EOG, *op. cit.*, ref. 29, p. 15.

⁵¹ ‘Women’s liberation and class struggle’, *Gaia*, No. 1, June 1983. The focus on personal emotions and desires was often associated with a humanistic discourse: ‘...because sensitivity, sentimentality and any human element is what feminism tries to give to every individual, male or female, as human attributes’. ‘...Continuation of a presaged death’, *op. cit.*, ref. 44, p.30.

A marked feature of the autonomous feminist movement was the strong influence of the Left, which had provided a considerable number of the members. In Greece, contrary to the experience abroad, there was no mass exodus of feminists from the left-wing parties. This dual commitment meant dual militancy, with many women working simultaneously in the political parties or the extra-parliamentary Left as well as in autonomous feminist groups. These women (as already mentioned) rejected the fundamental premise of radical feminism that the principal oppression is patriarchal sex oppression, and strove to elaborate the partnership of capitalism with patriarchy and applied class-analysis. The issues they addressed included the globalisation of capitalism, the consumerist ideology of advanced capitalism, state patriarchy and advanced capitalism, economic crisis and neo-conservatism, private property and patriarchy, differentiation of women's oppressions in diverse classes, the potentiality of a classless society, capitalism's capability to survive without women's oppression, the anti-capitalist elements of the feminists discourse, women's domestic labour and capitalism, the legal reforms postulated by the capitalist modernisation of Greek society, and the deterioration of position of women due to neo-liberal economic policies.

The class element and anti-capitalist stand were especially marked in the early publications by the autonomous feminist movement, which appeared at a time when the groups often adopted a vigorously defensive attitude to criticism from the Left that they were both apolitical and imitators of foreign patterns.⁵² This was partially due to the ideological hegemony of the Left during the early period of democratic reconstruction after 1974. Overall, the autonomous feminists made no clear theoretical elaboration of the relations of capitalism to patriarchy. The two systems were presented as having basically the same interests, and most analyses attacked capitalist patriarchy as a single non-conflictual whole. The existing social and political institutions (family, state, church, school, etc.) were seen as serving the functions of both systems and were attacked on both fronts simultaneously, without specifying their role in each of the two systems separately. All assessments of capitalism by the autonomous feminists were as hostile as those of patriarchy, expressing their dual

⁵² For example in the newspaper *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, published by the KAG, some articles defensively counter criticism from the Left that feminism is divisive of the working class. Kotsovelou, Repousi, *op. cit.*, ref. 42; Varika, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

commitment to the abolition of both.

A premise implicitly shared by the autonomous feminists was the limited analytical power of Marxism for the examination of sexism, and the groups did not apply class analysis to provide insights into sexual oppression.⁵³ On the contrary, the autonomous feminists found that it was women's personal knowledge of sexual power-relations that provided a new explanation of socially constructed hierarchies and a new radical perspective. In addition, class analysis was not coupled with a strictly materialist analysis. The accent was predominantly on civil society and the institutionalised methods of maintaining the political hegemony of capitalism and patriarchy.

The strong ideological influence of the Left was manifested also by the formulation of a humanistic discourse. While all autonomous feminists agreed that women must search for their personal autonomy through acknowledging and expressing their inner needs, a section of them emphasised the common struggle of both sexes to re-establish their pre-existing, pre-social human identities. This humanistic discourse exemplified the political origins of a significant number of autonomous feminists from the left political forces.

Contrary to the tradition of radical feminism abroad, many autonomous Greek feminists perceived the movement as a project for human liberation and therefore intrinsically linked to the political struggle of other oppressed groups. The women associated with the extra-parliamentary Left emphasised the common struggle against the existing power relations and structures of domination, while those with Marxist origins emphasised the common struggle against capitalism. Both of these ideological currents expressed a firm belief in humanity as one unitary whole, in the dictum that human nature is formed by historical determinants, and consequently in people's ability to reconstruct society by collective action. The belief that humanity is unitary differentiated this section of feminists from the more radical ones who founded their discourse exclusively on the opposition of men and women. Generally speaking, many of the autonomous feminists shared the premise that women's struggle for liberation is part of a broader political project to re-establish the lost humanitarian nature of social

⁵³ The only exception was the group Revolutionary Struggle of Women, which concluded that the origins of women's oppression lie in capitalism. *Epanastatiki Pali Ginaikon*, bulletin published by the Revolutionary Struggle of Women, 1978.

relations.

‘The ultimate goal is the creation of a new form of structures and relations in a liberated society, relieved from relations of power, poverty and any other form of alienation, where the roles of men and women will have been replaced by the humanisation of the two sexes’.⁵⁴

4.3.5 Family, Sexuality, Male Violence

The autonomous feminist groups took the lead in mobilisations for abortion on demand, the reform of Family Law, and of the Penal Code concerning rape. Their campaign went beyond the issue of legal reforms as such and was intended to expose the real content of women’s oppression, freed from the camouflage of patriarchal mystification. Their analysis of the institution of the family, women’s sexuality, and male violence utterly contradicted the conservative tone of the party-affiliated women’s discourse.

The campaign was launched by the KAG on 1 May 1976, when it issued and distributed a manifesto demanding free abortion on demand, sexual education at schools, workplaces, and neighbourhoods, and free distribution of contraceptive devices.⁵⁵ In April 1983, the Autonomous Movement of Women initiated a national campaign about abortion contraception and sexuality. Their pamphlet stated:

‘We start this campaign because we believe that the natural reproductive ability of women, meaning the body that gives birth, has become historically the cause, the excuse and the object of the multiple oppression of women’.⁵⁶

The autonomous feminist groups approached the issue of abortion and sexuality from a perspective different from that of the party-affiliated women’s organisation. The traditional discourse associated sexuality with women’s health, family planning and a positive attitude to motherhood. The autonomous feminist groups denounced this conjunction and stressed that sexual oppression is a fundamental aspect in the reproduction of patriarchy. They also pointed out that childbearing is different from

⁵⁴ Self-presentation by the Initiative Group of Women of Piraeus in ‘Autonomous Women’s Groups’, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁵ Avdela, Papayannaki, Sklaveniti, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

⁵⁶ Campaign for the Right to Abortion, Contraception, Sexuality, *pamphlet* by ‘Autonomous Movement of Women’. Avdela, Papayannaki, Sklaveniti, *ibid.*

child-rearing. The identification of those two functions in the patriarchal ideology served to put women into a socially constructed 'biological fate'. Restricting women to the role of motherhood had the ideological support of the social construction of female attributes (emotion, compassion, caring, etc.) that were projected as innate in a woman as such and in harmony with the 'motherly instinct'. The autonomous feminists set out to liberate women from their 'biological fate' and to make motherhood a matter of conscious choice.

The questioning of motherhood as a predestined fate was coupled with questioning the institution of the family.

'Family is the space that prohibits the autonomy of the will and the existence of women ...It is the sphere that forces women to assimilate and internalise their subjection as their "nature" and thereby negates any possibility for women to revolt'.⁵⁷

The autonomous feminists kept repeating that in the context of the family women were reduced to sexual objects for the service and satisfaction of men and became limited to the role of motherhood. They argued that sexuality transcends the institution of the family and the function of procreation. They considered that women's familiarisation with their own bodies and sexuality is a precondition for women's self-definition, and thereby a means of empowerment. It is indicative that only the autonomous feminist groups addressed the issue of homosexuality and organised many joint activities with lesbian activists. In the context of women's control over their own lives, the autonomous feminists called for free abortions on demand, sexual education in schools, information centres at workplaces and neighbourhoods run exclusively by women, free distribution of contraceptives, research on male contraception, and sexual information centres at public hospitals under the direct control of women. They also denounced the state, the medical system, and the church as hypocritical for spreading fears about contraception, continuing the profitable system of illegal abortions, and consolidating patriarchal power.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ 'Women ...', *pamphlet* by autonomous feminist groups (6 October 1980). Pampouki, *op. cit.*, ref. 5.

⁵⁸ In May 1986 the socialist government passed the new law on abortion (Law 1609/86) After ratification of the bill in parliament, the autonomous feminist groups continued their mobilisation, demanding abolition of the Articles of the new law referring to: parental consent being required for under-age girls, the time restriction of

The autonomous feminist groups were the first to tackle the issue of male violence and rape. In 1978 an article entitled 'Violence and Rape' in the newspaper published by the KAG linked rape to sexist violence.⁵⁹ In October 1979, the Women's Group of the Law School distributed a pamphlet entitled 'Violence against Women' and organised a public debate from which men were excluded.⁶⁰ Male violence became a central theme of the autonomous feminist activities from 1980 onwards. The campaign took several forms. 'Reclaim the Night' demonstrations were organised, the names of rapists were widely publicised, there were study groups on rape and public discussions, demonstrations were held at the trials of rapists, solidarity groups with rape victims were formed, and pamphlets were distributed. In 1982 the Women's Group of the School of Philosophy organised a demonstration at the Ministry of Justice. The proclamation they distributed was the first to state the need to reform the legal status of rape. The concrete demands of the autonomous feminist groups concerning the reform of the Penal Code were as follows:

- 1. Rape, which Art.336 of the Penal Code defined as a crime 'against morality', should be reclassified as a 'crime against personal freedom and the individual's self-disposition'.
- 2. In the existing Penal Code rape was prosecuted only after indictment. The autonomous feminists pointed out that this facilitated financial or marital settlements in cases of rape and demanded that rape be prosecuted directly, the same as murder or manslaughter. Moreover, the autonomous feminists denounced 'the "covering" provisions of the penal code, whereby rapists could be exonerated and cases ruled out of court on the grounds that the prosecution would involve psychological and public damage to the victim', and demanded the irrevocability of the rape charge.⁶¹

twelve weeks, the practical exclusion of under-age girls and uninsured women from free abortions, and the restriction of information on contraception only to family planning centres.

⁵⁹ Alevizou, Korassidou, Samiou, *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

⁶⁰ Alevizou, Korassidou, Samiou, *ibid.*

⁶¹ Cacoullos, Ann (1994) 'Women confronting party politics in Greece', in B., Nelson and N. Chowdhury (eds) *Women and Politics World-wide* (New Haven, and London, Yale University Press), p. 319.

— 3. The law defined as rape only sexual acts involving penis penetration of the vagina. The autonomous feminists demanded that any other form of sexual assault should also be treated as rape, a crime, instead of as a misdemeanour.

— 4. They also demanded the legal recognition and punishment of marital rape.

Besides matters concerning the legal framework of rape, the autonomous feminists took up many other issues in connection with the interrogatory and judicial procedures a woman had to face from the moment she charged a rapist. They asked the right of representatives from women's organisations to attend rape trials as civil plaintiffs, if the victim was in agreement. Moreover, they stressed the need for a non-sexist composition of the court, demanding that it should consist of an equal number of men and women, all of whom should have had special training in this context. They called for the abolition of the requirement for technical corroborative proof, and the prohibition of any inquiry into the previous sexual history of the claimant, both of these processes being humiliating to the rape-victim's personality and dignity.

The autonomous feminists did not limit themselves to legal reforms concerning rape but wanted to publicise male violence generally. As the pamphlet of the Women's Group of the School of Philosophy said:

'We know that the essential solution to the problem of violence by men at the expense of women (which is generated in the spheres of family, education, mass media, in the whole "patriarchal society") is not going to be given solely by some laws'.⁶²

Rape was seen as strongly embedded in the social relations of the two sexes.

'Rape is the extreme reconstruction of daily life, which is marked by male aggression at the expense of women on the physical and mental level. On the contrary, women's sexual behaviour has been shaped by the threat that surrounds her. That fear can persist without the need to be justified every moment. It is sufficient that it is kept up. Rape is there to remind women that freedom is utopian'.⁶³

In this way, the autonomous feminists strove to demystify rape as a pathological phenomenon. They declared that it was founded on masculine social power, and associated it with the social mechanisms of the patriarchal society that continue to produce men as sacrificers and women as victims. Rape in the autonomous feminist

⁶² Alevizou, Korassidou, Samiou, *op. cit.*, ref. 16, p.9.

⁶³ 'Rape: Myth and Content', publication by Women's House of Athens, 4 December 1982.

discourse became the act that linked socially constructed male aggression to patriarchy. It essentially constituted a violent act of degradation and possession that reflected the patriarchal perception of women as the private property of men (fathers, husbands). The autonomous feminists pointed out that in the existing patriarchal penal code rape is considered as the theft of one man's property by another. They incorporated the issue of rape into the whole complex of sexist violence women were experiencing daily. Their own definition of rape extended to the entire network of social relations between the two sexes. The proclamation Women's Initiative against Violence and Rape (dated 25 June 1981) stated that rape happens daily, because rape is not limited to the sexual act but extends to women's upbringing and their objectification by the mass media and pornography, to sexual harassment at workplaces and in the streets, etc.⁶⁴. They stressed that individual instances of rape afflict all women, because the threat of rape functions as a social mechanism of control and repression and subverts the women's struggle for liberation.

The autonomous feminists' deep belief that women's sexuality is a major terrain of their oppression was a reflection of their belief that the personal is political. They therefore aimed to build a collective feminist consciousness that would be strong enough to resist and fight the patriarchal structures and strictures of everyday life.

4.4 Organisational Structure

Dissatisfied with and opposed to the political tradition of organisational patterns as exemplified by the political parties and the party-affiliated women's organisations, the autonomous feminist movement created a new organisational form. This was not ruled by any constitutional declaration, but emerged out of the political practices of the groups and their adherence to a common ideological framework.

The autonomous feminists were organised in many small anti-hierarchical groups with a fluid membership. Although some of the groups focused on some specific issue, most of them combined various elements. The process of consciousness-raising was associated with work on theoretical issues, and the organisation of mobilisations. This many-sidedness differentiated the autonomous feminists in Greece from similar groups abroad.⁶⁵ There, consciousness-raising groups, for instance,

⁶⁴ Alevizou, Korassidou, Samiou, *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

⁶⁵ 'Women's Groups', *op. cit.*, ref. 13.

focused exclusively on the development of a feminist consciousness, and after a while were dissolved again. In Greece on the other hand, concern with several objectives extended the life period of the group. In fact, it was the stress resulting from these multiple responsibilities that was often presented in the autonomous feminist press as a major reason for the groups not always being able to fulfil the objectives they had set themselves.

The size of the groups varied. The largest of them was the Movement for Women's Liberation, the first autonomous feminist organisation to be set up.⁶⁶ Overall, the size of the autonomous Greek groups (usually more than 12 members) was greater than second-wave feminist groups abroad (8 to 12 members).⁶⁷ The groups were formed on a non-hierarchical basis, promoting direct democracy and challenging the principle of representation.⁶⁸ The members of a group took collective decisions on the principle of unanimity. The internal organisation rested on the premise of autonomy. These feminist groups strove not only for their own autonomy from the political parties, the state, and men, but also for the autonomy of the organised individual woman vis-à-vis the group. This was an expression of their objection to any dominative collectivities and honoured the uniqueness of the individual. It meant that members always had the right to their own point of view within the group.

'... the formation of a new feminist consciousness and the quest for different terms of existence presupposes internal informal procedures without hierarchical structures and the acceptance of the conflicts and the diverseness of opinions it may generate'.⁶⁹

The organisational scheme of the autonomous feminist movement was part of the endeavour to create a women's community that would facilitate the attainment of personal liberation. The autonomous feminists argued that the prevailing social conceptions set women apart and circumscribed their activities, isolating them socially

⁶⁶ 'Women's Groups', *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Indicative is the size of the Women's Group of the Law School, which for a time had around 30 members. Self-Presentation by the Women's Group of the Law School in 'Autonomous Women's Groups', *op. cit.*, ref. 6; 'Women's Groups', *ibid.*

⁶⁸ Avdela, *op. cit.*, ref. 33

⁶⁹ ' "House of Women": A proposal open to discussion', *To Milo kai to Fidi apo ti Skopia tis Evas*, No. 4, April 1982, p.3.

and usually restricting their lives within the institution of the family. Moreover, it was argued that women are socialised into a competitive mentality towards other women, which increases their subjective sense as well as their objective isolation: this prevents them from developing the consciousness of belonging to a social collectivity. Organisation into small, anti-hierarchical groups aimed to encourage women to speak out about their sense of isolation, and to express their personal experiences as gendered beings. The topics discussed included sexuality and rape, subjects about which women felt especially vulnerable. In that respect the small size of the groups encouraged its members to talk about difficult experiences, and the group's feelings of solidarity reassured the individual women that they were no longer alone and socially isolated. The objective of the autonomous feminist groups was to transform women's personal discontent into knowledge of the social conditions of their existence, by means of sharing what they had experienced internally and analysing it collectively. The personal autonomy of the group members was the basis on which to proceed from self-consciousness to a collective feminist consciousness. The small size of the autonomous groups was well suited to enhance the personal transformation of the individuals and to develop a broader collective feminist consciousness.

Generally speaking, the small size of the groups was usually coupled with an introspective orientation. The discussion of sensitive issues and the focus on personal liberation did not invite the development of open groups. The latter were primarily defined by developments on a societal level, whereas the orientation of the small groups towards issues related to micro-level behaviour resulted in their political intervention on the micro-level of everyday life - in the neighbourhood, the school, etc. The small size and introspective orientation of the autonomous feminist groups differed in terms of political function from that of the party-affiliated women's organisations. The autonomous feminists never set themselves the development of political support as a primary goal; whereas the party-affiliated women's organisations based their political strategy on how best to enlarge their political audience.

The organisational structure of the autonomous feminists aimed to produce communities of solidarity that would enhance intersubjectivity. However, many of the women questioned the political viability of this organisational scheme in several respects. The most common criticism was that this type of organisational structure meant a fragmentation that was harmful to the movement's ideological and political

vitality. The small groups having very little intercommunication and co-operation led on the ideological level to the absence of a common theoretical framework. For instance, study groups of certain topics (e.g. rape, abortion, the family) did not collaborate, which resulted in duplication of the analysis and inability to build on a common body of knowledge. Moreover, isolation and introspection meant greater reliance on empirical findings based on personal reflections. The request for co-ordination amongst the groups often expressed the desire to obtain a holistic perspective that would encompass the broader societal developments.

There was also some criticism of the existing organisational structure for generating informal hierarchical relations and dominative practices. A common complaint was that certain women tended to monopolise the group discussions and in some cases dogmatism developed that prevented the expression of different opinions.⁷⁰ The closed nature of the groups also created problems for bringing in new members, who might be cold-shouldered by the older ones.⁷¹ The subject of recruitment became a growing preoccupation when the difficulties of the movement came to a head. There was a quest for change during the last years of the autonomous feminist movement, when increasing stagnation led to demands for new organisational solutions:

‘Our small groups have reached their limits. We must try to achieve a form of co-ordination and co-operation’.⁷²

The largest co-operative scheme in the life of the autonomous feminist movement was the Co-ordinating Committee of Women’s Struggles. It lasted for only a very short time (approximately 7 months), revealing the movement’s inability to overcome problems involving broader co-operation.

Many autonomous feminists were additionally members of political formations, but there were never any organisational links between those and the autonomous groups. Such participation in the political struggles of other political schemes remained a matter of individual commitment. Even those of the autonomous feminists, who strove for alliances with other political forces, never questioned the organisational autonomy of their own movement.

⁷⁰ ‘Report from the Panhellenic Meeting of Women in Salonica’, *Gaia*, No. 2, October 1984.

⁷¹ Report, *ibid.*

⁷² Report, *ibid.*, p. 6.

To summarise: the organisational structure of the autonomous feminist movement was based on autonomous single groups. This organisational segmentation was meant to avoid hierarchical structures and dominative practices amongst the various groups, but in fact generated practices of discontinuance that could not be resolved by the formation of an enduring co-ordinating scheme.

4.5 Social Base

Information about the social base of the autonomous feminist movement is very limited. The only available data are unofficial mentions by the group members, from which we know that the social base of the autonomous feminist movement was far more homogeneous than that of the party-affiliated organisations. From start to finish it was chiefly young, middle-class women from the larger urban centres who comprised its membership.

Broadly speaking, the Greek feminist movement was urban-based, with a circumscribed participation of rural women.⁷³ A distinguishing feature of the autonomous feminist groups was that they developed in urban centres exclusively. The majority of the activists were in the two largest cities (Athens, Salonica), and women in smaller cities usually followed their lead. The restriction of the movement to urban centres was reflected in the thematic of the autonomous feminist press, which included no analysis of gender relations in agricultural communities.

The autonomous feminist movement consisted mostly of students and young women employed in the tertiary sector or self-employed, which is to say that the movement attracted predominantly women of the middle classes.⁷⁴ Since young students and intellectuals dominated, the university community was the hub of the movement's activities. Two significant social categories the autonomous feminists never managed to penetrate were: housewives and working-class women. Part of the reason for this was perhaps that the radical spirit of the university communities contrasted too sharply with the conservative family community of housewives. There were occasions when the strong presence of students and intellectuals promoting a radical agenda put the few housewives, who were willing to take a look at feminism,

⁷³ Cacoullos, *op. cit.*, ref. 61.

⁷⁴ Varika, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

on the defensive.⁷⁵ With respect to working-class women, the early writings were extensively concerned with the living conditions of working-class women, and autonomous feminists participated actively in mobilisations against discrimination and exploitation of female workers (telephone operators, midwives, etc.).⁷⁶ However, this was largely a concomitant of the strong anti-capitalist stand of the autonomous feminists in the early years of democratic reconstruction. If on the one hand the autonomous movement had a very limited appeal to working-class women, on the other, its overruling focus on sexual politics indicates that the production process did not play much of a part in the lives of the activists.⁷⁷

Most of the members in the autonomous feminist movement were young, as explicitly stated in is the self-presentation of the Women's Group of Piraeus in the magazine *Sfigga*.

'In February 1980 a company of young women in Piraeus decided to found a women's group. A direct aspiration of ours is to found our own space, that will become the meeting point of young women'.⁷⁸

Many of these young women were still unmarried and had not yet faced the issues of motherhood and family. Some of them said later that their subsequent socialisation as wives and mothers strongly influenced and in some cases changed some of the theoretical perceptions they had had when they entered the movement.⁷⁹

The early, generationally homogeneous composition of the autonomous feminists was followed during the years of stagnation by an increased generational heterogeneity and inter-generational conflicts. The older activists had experienced feminism as the discovery of women's identity, the newer members had experienced

⁷⁵ Report, *op. cit.*, ref. 70

⁷⁶ Varika, *op. cit.*, ref. 1; and *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, No. 1, February 1978.

⁷⁷ For instance, the groups in the Athens Women's House consisted entirely of students and intellectuals. There was no participation of working class women. Interviews with Gianna Athanassatou, ex-member of the editorial board of *Dini* and member of the Athens Women's House, 15 Feb. 1998 and 24 March 1998, Athens.

⁷⁸ Self-presentation by the Women's Group of Piraeus, in 'Autonomous Women's Groups', *op. cit.*, ref. 6, p. 21.

⁷⁹ Gouliarou, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

feminism in crisis.⁸⁰ The women's press mentioned many functional problems associated with inter-generational conflicts in the groups.

Some of the members of the core groups of the autonomous feminist movement had participated in the second-wave feminist movement abroad (England, France, Italy), and had already been politically active before joining the autonomous feminists in Greece.⁸¹ Also, as already mentioned, the overwhelming majority of the autonomous feminists were active in the political formations of the Left. For instance, all members on the editorial board of *Skoupa*, the magazine with the broadest circulation, had taken part in the political struggles of their time - either as members of the pre-dictatorial Left (e.g. the Youth of Lambraki) or the post-junta euro-communist Left (e.g. EKON Rigas Feraios)).⁸² In this regard, the autonomous feminist movement confirms one of the basic premises of resource-mobilisation theory: that the potential participants of social movements are individuals who exhibit an active engagement in social networks and secondary organisations.

Compared to the party-affiliated women's organisations the social base of the autonomous feminists was remarkably narrow. To begin with, this did not become an issue, since it agreed well with their emphasis on consciousness-raising and personal liberation. It was only during the later phase of the movement, when the difficulties were already all too apparent, that many of them criticised the movement's closed nature and introspective orientation. At the Panhellenic Meeting of Women in Salonica (1984), it was charged that the limited social base militated against any hope to open up the movement to a wider spectrum of social forces. For instance, the movement was prevented from becoming the political voice of working-class women because it had always under-represented them. To enlarge the role of the autonomous feminist movement required a different composition of social forces in the individual groups.⁸³

⁸⁰ Gouliarou, *ibid.*

⁸¹ Athens interview with Martha Kaloudaki, former member of the Administrative Council of the EGE, co-founder of Unaligned Movement of Women, co-founder of the feminist network Telesilla, 26 Feb. 1998; and Interviews with Vicky Kotsovelou, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

⁸² Mihopoulou, Anna 'The first steps of feminist theory in Greece and the journal *Skoupa*: The Women's Case (1979-81)', *Dini*, No. 8, 1995-96.

⁸³ N., P., 'Panhellenic Meeting of Women in Salonica', *Rupture*, No. 16, autumn 1984.

While, therefore, the autonomous feminists stressed the classless character of their movement and addressed all of the women in Greek society, the social base of their movement was restricted to only the middle strata. In practice, their aspiration to give a voice to the collective subject 'women' was impeded by the narrow range of social origins of their members.

4.6 Strategy

The autonomous feminist movement applied a political strategy that was well in line with the tradition of new social movements. It rejected institutional representation and party affiliation in favour of forming a grass-roots movement in the sphere of civil society. While frequently divided in regard to its strategy in the context of current political affairs, concerning the long-term objective there was a unanimous agreement: the dominant male culture must be challenged by means of anti-institutional politics and by consciousness-raising among women.

The autonomous feminist movement introduced a new repertoire of direct political action in civil society. Since it owed its origins and support to forces outside of party politics; its political activism was quite different from the tradition of electioneering and institutional penetration, practised by political parties and the party-affiliated women's organisations. Instead, the autonomous feminists endorsed 'disorderly politics' as did second-wave feminism abroad.⁸⁴ The principle underlying disorderly politics is civil disobedience. So, the autonomous feminists organised marches, sit-ins outside government buildings, 'Reclaim the Night' demonstrations with candles and torches, made public admissions of having illegally aborted, staged public exhibitions at central points in the cities, printed pamphlets publicising the names of rapists, gave press conferences, distributed contraceptives, etc.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Cacoullos, *op. cit.*, ref. 61.

⁸⁵ 500 women supporting the national campaign by the Autonomous Movement of Women for the legalisation of abortion signed a petition in 1983 stating that at one time or another they had illegally aborted. In January 1985, a district attorney proceeded to the legal prosecution of seven of them. Demonstrations by the autonomous feminists supported the defendants. Finally, the Minister of Health and Social Insurance gave in to the growing social pressure and withdrew the charges. See in Avdela, Papayannaki, Sklavenitis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

Disorderly politics centres on the organisation of unconventional forms of political expression, thereby attracting public attention and facilitating the dissemination of the organising actors' ideology. The role of the mass media is fundamental in this process. The autonomous feminists were handicapped in this respect, however, because the media's attitude towards them was extremely negative, which meant constant distortion and caricaturing of activities by the groups. The mainstream media referred to them in such derogatory terms as ugly, celibates, lesbians, failures, hysterical, etc.⁸⁶ The hostility was mutual. The autonomous feminists often attacked the media for reproducing dangerous sexist attitudes, even in sensitive cases like rape, and consolidating the patriarchal ideology. All in all, no other social movement in Greece was ever so negatively portrayed in the mass media as the autonomous feminists.

The decision to engage in direct political action by the autonomous feminists stemmed from their belief in direct democracy, and their refusal to participate in any organisational structure that reproduced hierarchical relations and dominative practices. Although their anti-institutional stand was quite clear, the appropriate political strategy was often a matter of intensive debate.

In the early years of the autonomous women's movement (the 1970s and early '80s), participation in official political institutions was unanimously rejected. This complete rejection of official political institutions went hand in hand with the attempt to build a grass-roots feminist movement that would defend its autonomy from the male-dominated and male-centred world of politics. The strategy of the autonomous feminists was to mobilise civil society in order to undermine and finally overthrow the patriarchal order.

'The old feminist movement had as a central aim the equality of women in the context of the male world, while the new feminist movement aims to liberate women, discard

⁸⁶ '... The media response was a caricature of both the issues and the activism of women, prompting a homophobia hitherto unexpressed in Greece. Women's demands were characterised by the media and in Parliament as the sexual frustration of ugly women and, worse, lesbian women'. Cacoullou, *op. cit.*, ref. 61, p. 321; Chronaki, Zogia, 'The need for a new feminist movement: Thoughts and agonies of a feminist', *Alpha*, No. 1, February 1995; and 'Rape/Press/Rape by the Press', *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

and overturn the male world'.⁸⁷

Since, the autonomous feminists stressed the decisive role of the private domain in the reproduction of patriarchy, the way to women's liberation required the women to revolt against the institutions and social practices of the private sphere. Thus, the first target of the autonomous feminists was not to conquer the state and the political institutions, but to overthrow the powerful institution of the family and revolutionise everyday life. This attitude meant that the traditional forms of political struggle, which targeted the political authority, were useless for the realisation of the feminist objective:

'One of the fundamental political principles of feminism is that any social change, in order to lead to a fundamental changeover of society must contain the transformation of the subjective personal relations. Politics, for us feminists, is our own life; therefore any logic founded on the administrative policies as a means of liberation is expelled'.⁸⁸

There was consensus among the autonomous feminist groups concerning the limited capacity of administrative policies and legal reforms as a means of political intervention. Nevertheless, the persistence of obsolete, traditional patriarchal institutions in Greek society (such as the dowry system) made mobilisation for legal reforms imperative. While, therefore, legal reforms were considered necessary, they were seen as only one resource among others for the radical restructuring of relations between the two sexes. Moreover, legal reforms were never regarded as an end in themselves but simply a means for raising women's consciousness, and mobilisations to that end aimed principally at publicising the autonomous feminists' views about the underlying patriarchal premises of the existing legal framework. So, for instance the struggle for the reform of Family Law was coupled with a campaign that questioned the very institution of the family.⁸⁹ The final purpose was always to generate a debate that would reach as many women as possible and initiate their feminist awakening.⁹⁰

The promulgation by the socialist government of a number of legal reforms created confusion and friction among the autonomous feminists. One of the

⁸⁷ 'For our autonomy...', *Sfigga*, No. 1, July 1980.

⁸⁸ 'Municipal elections', *Adesmevti Kinisi Ginaikon*, 1986, p.1.

⁸⁹ Interviews with Vicky Kotsovelou, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

⁹⁰ 'Feminist groups discuss about feminist politics', *Dini*, No. 3, July 1988.

contradictions of the autonomous feminist movement was that it acted against the state and party institutions, while at the same time demanding that the state should produce specific legal reforms (Family Law, on abortion, rape).⁹¹ The perplexity and inertia that was caused by the partial satisfaction of these demands meant endless discussions about whether or not feminists ought to participate in the institutions.⁹² In time, two different reactions crystallised within the autonomous feminist movement as to what was the appropriate strategy.

A significant number of autonomous feminists took a totally negative stand towards the recent legal and institutional reforms. They argued that the socialist government and its women's organisation (the EGE) had appropriated and distorted the autonomous feminists' discourse in an attempt to modernise and create a new 'soft' image of patriarchy. They charged that the socialist party and EGE had taken over the autonomous feminists' demands and deprived them of their radical and confrontational dimension to make them applicable to their own goal of modernising patriarchy. The opposition of autonomous feminists to the new reforms was opposition to any institutional or legal reform as a strategical option for their movement.

'The deductive reduction of feminism to institutional politics deprives feminism of its conflictual dimension. This reduction is on the expense of feminism and its autonomy'.⁹³

And:

'Our intervention in the institutions for social change leads to their improvement, instead of leading to our liberation. It gives one more alibi to the state for its supposed liberalism'.⁹⁴

The reforms confused a section of autonomous feminists also because they took place at a time when the movement was already in severe difficulties.

'Because of the absence of a movement, it is easy to promote a technocratic political perception of the feminist movement and its objectives'.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Varika, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

⁹² Avdela, *op. cit.*, ref. 33.

⁹³ Kondyli, Marianna, 'Nostalgic Inertia', *Dini*, No. 3, July 1988, p. 8.

⁹⁴ 'Classness', *Gaia*, No. 2, 1984.

⁹⁵ 'A feminist claim or a process of assimilation?' *Adesmevti Kinisi Ginaikon*, April 1989, p.3.

In consequence, a segment of the autonomous feminists excluded from the movement's strategic options the approval of any legal and institutional reforms.

Another section of the autonomous feminist movement formulated a different strategy appropriate for the movement. These women argued that the legal and institutional reforms had not been the brainchild of the existing political authorities but owed a very great deal to the dynamic of the feminist movement and the transformations in social consciousness and social relations it had brought about. The reforms should, therefore, be regarded as a positive victory for the feminist movement, instead of being denounced as the end-result of appropriation and distortion.⁹⁶

'The approbation by the state discourse of the principle of equality between the sexes as a means for the democratisation and the expansion of freedom to whole society, is a very positive phenomenon'.⁹⁷

Moreover, they pointed out that any process of appropriation functions simultaneously as a process of dissemination. The incorporation of feminist demands in the discourse of political actors should, therefore, be evaluated positively.⁹⁸ Institutional structures and legal frameworks, they argued, define the everyday reality of women, and any movement that ignores these structures and frameworks disregards the actual living conditions of women in society.⁹⁹ Given that any political strategy that excludes reforms in expectation of the moment of revolutionary change remains trapped in an utopian objective, intervention in political institutions should certainly be part of the autonomous feminist movement's strategy - on condition that feminists strive for the transformation of women's consciousness and the creation of bonds of women's solidarity. This section of autonomous feminists also emphasised that unification of the private and the public domain can be achieved only by a strategy incorporating intervention on the level of the political institutions. The private/public dichotomy can, they said, be overcome by a strategy that combines intervention in the private sphere, where social identities are constructed, with intervention in the public sphere, where official power structures are consolidated.

⁹⁶ N., P., *op. cit.*, ref. 83.

⁹⁷ Papayannaki, Marina and Fragoudaki, Anna 'Does our new room have a balcony with a view towards the cliff?', *Dini*, No. 4, June 1989.

⁹⁸ 'Feminist groups discuss about feminist politics', *op. cit.*, ref. 90.

⁹⁹ Kotsovelou, Repousi, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

Certain divisions in the autonomous feminist spectrum were generated also by the elaboration of specific issues. For instance, analysis of the subject of rape and sexist violence by the Mass Media Group gave rise to a great number of conflicting opinions. Was it better to take the law into one's own hands or seek legal redress? Should one demand exemplary punishment of rapists or denounce the reformatory system altogether? etc.¹⁰⁰ However, these divisions never led to any great clashes or ruptures. This can be attributed to the pluralistic culture within the autonomous feminist movement, the deep commitment to collectivity and autonomy, and finally the strong dividing line between the autonomous feminist groups and the party-affiliated women's organisations.

To recapitulate: the strategy of the autonomous feminist movement focused above all on the formation of a collective feminist consciousness. It targeted civil society because it wished to create a grass-roots movement for overturning the patriarchal order. It adopted disorderly politics as its repertoire of action, thereby manifesting its extra-parliamentary and anti-institutional character. However, the strong anti-institutional stand of the early years was followed by debate within the movement of whether or not to participate in the existing political institutions. Nevertheless, an abiding common denominator of all autonomous feminist groups was the belief that women's liberation can never be achieved through government policies. This ideological component decisively marked the difference between the autonomous feminist groups and the party-affiliated women's organisations.

4.7 New Scenarios of Conflict

The autonomous feminist movement developed in correlation with the rapid modernisation of Greek society and the consolidation of state feminism.

The years 1974-'86 were a period of intense economic development, institutional reforms, and legislative changes. The rapid process of modernisation led to the relation between the sexes being incorporated into government policy. The wide range of internal developments in Greek society dictated the legal revision of a number of obsolete institutions. Women had increased their participation in the wage economy, and in education and were registered as a decisive electoral force. At this time, a vibrant feminist mass-movement developed that targeted the state for legal reforms and

¹⁰⁰ 'Rape/Press/Rape by the Press', *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

for socialisation of the cost of reproduction. Moreover, the process of democratic reconstruction, after the 1974 fall of the junta, favoured democratic revisions in areas of social life that manifested strong inequalities. Thus, the Constitution of 1975 promised the revision and amendment within the next seven years of any legislation that violated the principle of equality between the sexes. Such internal developments were paralleled by external pressure for legal reforms. As a member of the European Community, Greece was obliged to comply with its directives on equal opportunities for men and women. In addition, in 1983 Greece ratified the United Nations convention for the elimination of all discrimination against women.¹⁰¹ Thus, partly in response to the Greek women's movement, partly to Greece's membership in the European Community and partly to domestic socio-economic changes, successive governments promoted a series of legal and institutional reforms.¹⁰² The autonomous feminist movement reacted to the new legal provisions for relations between the sexes with a discourse that dissociated gender inequalities from the process of modernisation. It opposed the idea that patriarchy is a characteristic of backward societies and that modernisation gradually erodes the conflict between the sexes.¹⁰³ The autonomous feminists sought to undermine the modernising discourse by pointing out that modernising patriarchy does nothing to remove it. The project of women's liberation, they argued, presupposed not the revision but the abolition of the existing social relations.

Modernisation took a new form when PASOK came to power and with the subsequent consolidation of state feminism. As mentioned earlier (Ch.3), the legal reforms and the creation of a new women's policy apparatus brought the Union of Greek Women and the autonomous feminists into conflict. The latter argued that while the new social policies may benefit some women, in the end the state was the new tool

¹⁰¹ Kyriazis, Nota (1995) 'Feminism and the Status of Women in Greece' in D. Conostas and T. Stavrou (eds) *Greece Prepares for the Twenty First Century*, (Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press and the John Hopkins University Press).

¹⁰² Pollis, Adamantia (1992) 'Gender and Social Change in Greece: the Role of Women', in T. Kariotis (ed.) *The Greek Socialist Experiment: Papandreou's Greece 1981-89*, (New York, Pella Publishing).

¹⁰³ Varika, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

of maintaining women's dependency. Moreover, they drew attention to the fact that welfare intervention, together with the rise of consumer capitalism, facilitated new forms of social regulation in social and private life. They accordingly denounced expansion of the state competencies as a new gender regime imposed by the state patriarchy, which served for the co-ordination and control of social relations right across society.

'The state integrates everything and renders it part of its machinery. Through the labour unions, local management, political parties and youth organisations, massive information and controlled women's organisations, it penetrates every area, like the neighbourhood, the block of flats, the individual houses, and consciousness. Therefore the issue of autonomy annexes an additional dimension'.¹⁰⁴

And:

'...The growth of the welfare state has as a result its greater intervention in the family life'.¹⁰⁵

In brief, therefore, the autonomous feminist movement developed during a historical conjuncture characterised by rapid modernisation. In the first stage the autonomous feminists endeavoured to dissociate the process of modernisation from the annihilation of 'patriarchy'. In the second stage, they denounced the new gender regime in Greek society, and underlined that expansion of state control and social engineering endangered the autonomy of the life-world.

4.8 Summary

The autonomous feminist movement in Greece shared many elements with the second-wave feminist movement abroad. In Sommerville's words:

'The "second wave" feminist movement was characterised by grassroots activity, a loose, democratic structure and information network based on personal contacts; the adoption of a multi-targeted strategy to include personal life and direct action modes of political operation; an over-riding ideology of Utopian liberationism; the adoption of personalist, subjectivist and expressive forms of relating; a self-determined sexuality, not confined by conventional morality'.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ 'Feature: Panhellenic Meeting of Women', *op. cit.*, ref. 25, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵ 'Women, Reforms and Political Change', *Gaia*, No. 1, June 1983, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ Sommerville, Jennifer 'Social Movement Theory, Women and the Question of

Correspondingly, the movement developed multiple autonomous local groups with minimum national co-ordination, no permanent bureaucracies, and an organisation based on networks. In this way and within the groups everything was done to avoid the consolidation of hierarchical relations. The strategy of the autonomous feminist movement combined consciousness-raising centred on personal liberation with mobilisations to obtain a social arena for the discussion of the collective subject 'woman'. It applied 'disorderly' politics and adopted a personalistic, subjectivist language, which challenged the established traditions of male politics. In other words, the autonomous feminist movement had a number of features that were in accordance with the ideal type of new social movements. Moreover, its social base consisted of young urban women with a high educational profile, who also scored high on socio-economic indicators - categories that are typical supporters of new social movements.

Another feature of the autonomous feminist groups was the introduction of 'identity politics' in post-dictatorship Greece. In the definition of Taylor and Nancy Whitter, a collective identity consists:

'of three interrelated processes: the construction of group boundaries that establish differences between a challenging group and dominant groups; consciousness, or interpretative frameworks that emerge out of a challenging group's struggle to define and realise its interests; and the politicisation of everyday life through the use of symbols and everyday actions to resist and restructure existing systems of domination'.¹⁰⁷

The autonomous feminist movement embodied this theory by its collective efforts for social change in the realms of culture, women's personal identity, and everyday life, as well as in direct engagement with the political system. It, thereby, constructed for itself a collective identity that included new understandings of consciousness and a new terminology. Although, all social movements in varying degrees create some form of culture, the autonomous feminists were the first and only movement in post-1974 Greece to stress the need of cultural autonomy for the rise of a social movement. This focus on the significance of an autonomous alternative culture as well as on the

Interests', *Sociology*, 31, 4, November 1997, p. 679.

¹⁰⁷ Taylor, Verta and Whittier, Nancy (1995) 'Analytical Approaches to Social Movement Culture: The Culture of the Women's Movement' in H. Johnston, B. Klandermans (eds) *Social Movements and Culture* (London, UCL Press), p.173.

subjective, discursive dimension of collective action made the movement a generator of 'identity politics' in the Greek context.

Social movements embody not only oppositional values that emerge in the course of their development, but also pre-existing principles and insights. They are not homogeneous empirical actors but always comprised of both synchronic and diachronic elements. The autonomous feminist movement was no exception to this. It introduced many innovative elements but also reproduced components of the left-wing political tradition specific to the Greek context. The strong influence of the Left showed very clearly in the movement's adherence to a social-constructionist position concerning the origins of women's attributes, and the movement's consistent opposition to the essentialist view that identifies the female attributes with biological functions. This undermined the future development in Greece of any eco-feminist theoretical current.¹⁰⁸ Another illustration of the strong influence of the Left was the autonomous feminists' unanimous belief in collectivity. Writings about new social movements usually associate the emergence of such movements with the fragmentation of post-modernist societies. However, the autonomous feminist movement not only exhibited a strong sense of collectivity, but also formulated a holistic vision that aimed to change society in its entirety. Its project of women's liberation reveals the deep roots of a political tradition linking oppositional political forces with the goal of totally reconstituting society. In consequence, the autonomous feminist movement can be seen as an extension of the libertarian tradition of the Left, and its life cycle was not so very different from that of the radical Left.

The autonomous feminist movement began to decline when its revolutionary

¹⁰⁸ According to eco-feminism women are more likely to have an affinity with the non-human world, due to their nurturing role, which derives from their reproductive abilities. This role provides women with a set of values (caring, compassion, etc.), which are more compatible with and conducive to identification with the natural world. Eco-feminism criticises and exposes the consequences and impact of the patriarchal culture on both women and non-human nature. Ecofeminism is in direct opposition with the dominant social constructionist position of the Greek feminist movement. See also Ch. 6; Garner, R (1996) *Environmental Politics*, (London, Harvester Wheatsheaf); and Eckersley, R. (1992) *Environmentalism and Political Theory: Towards an Ecocentric Approach* (London, University College London).

vision of society showed itself to be utopian. Excluded from the official political agenda for a radical restructuring of society the autonomous feminist movement became marginal, in terms of both the social-democratic hegemony and the opposition's more liberal discourse. Its demise was followed by the creation of small democratic arenas in civil society, where individual women's communities; alternative institutions (e.g. SOS-Line) or academic research programs took over where the autonomous feminist movement had left off.

The two case studies - the Union of Greek Women and the autonomous feminist groups – represented two conflicting ideological frameworks and two sets of political strategy. The Union adopted ideological and organisational tools that took full advantage of the existing social and political order. The autonomous groups, on the other hand, constituted the purest form of new social movement politics in the Greek context. The former accomplished their integration into the political system; the latter remained marginal throughout their existence. The case study of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations, which follows, illustrates a third strategy. This aimed at applying new social movement ideological axioms while making the most of the existing political opportunity structure. This strategy was built on the experience of the feminist movement, but proved to be unsuccessful.

CHAPTER 5

THE GREEK ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT: **SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of the Greek ecological movement follows the same structure as that of the feminist movement: an account of the contextual setting and a short historical review are succeeded by the findings of the case study of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (ch.6). First, however, we need to decide the theoretical implications of the word 'ecological'. How does it differ from 'environmental'? This work follows Dobson's definition of the two terms:

'Environmentalism argues for a managerial approach to environmental problems, secure in the belief that they can be solved without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production and consumption, while ecologism holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world, and in our mode of social and political life'.¹

Environmentalism can be limited to finding methods of production and consumption that are in harmony with sustainable development. Ecologism on the other hand is an emancipatory political vision. Hence the term environmental will here be used as a broad category that encompasses all activities aiming at the protection of the non-human natural world. The term ecological, on the other hand, will denote those phases of environmental politics that are characterised by the elaboration of a political vision.

The section on the social background of the ecological movement considers five major factors that have conditioned its development: (i) the impact of socio-economic variables, (ii) the nature of environmental problems, (iii) the state's administrative response to environmental issues, (iv) the political opportunity structure, and (v) the dynamic of environmental consciousness. The contextual analysis begins by looking at Greece's post-war economic development and the environmental problems this has generated.

5.2 Rapid Economic Growth and Regional Imbalances

The environmental problems in Greece are the result of the specific course of the country's post-war economic development. Greece being less industrialised than most

¹Dobson, A. (1990) *Green Political Thought* (London and New York, Routledge), p. 1.

other European countries has not so far experienced severe environmental damages due to extensive or heavy industry. Also, Greece still has no nuclear-power plants. In the absence of environmental problems resulting from high levels of industrial development, the problems that have dominated are mainly connected with the lack of infrastructural modernisation and effective state regulation.² Greek industrial establishments are mostly small. In 1980 establishments with fewer than 100 employees represented 70% of the manufacturing labour force.³ For all that, Greek factories are a significant source of environmental pollution, since most have old-fashioned and fuel-inefficient machinery. The actors contributing to the process of environmental degradation are the state, industrial actors and ordinary citizens, while the role of the European Community remains controversial.

The late industrialisation brought the consolidation of major structural weaknesses of the Greek economy, set up earlier in the twentieth century. The civil war was followed after 1949 by a burst of intensive economic development, aided significantly by multinational capital and funds from the Marshal Plan. The energy sector, transportation, mining and the traditional sectors of weaving, clothing, and beverages, as well as shipping and tourism, became the main areas to attract economic investments.⁴ In the mid-1960s the value of industrial production for the first time surpassed that of agriculture.⁵ From a predominantly rural society, Greece had gradually become an urban industrial one. The high rate of economic growth continued during the 1970s. From 1974 to 1979, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) went up by more than 5% per annum, approximating double the

² Demertzis, N. (1995) 'Greece: Greens at the periphery' in D. Richardson, C. Rootes (eds) *The Green Challenge: The Development of Green Parties in Europe*, (London and New York, Routledge).

³ Lavdas, K. (1997) *The Europeanisation of Greece: Interest Politics and the Crises of Integration* (London, Macmillan).

⁴ Papaspiliopoulos, S. (1996) 'New Organisational Formations' in S. Papaspiliopoulos, Th. Papagiannis, S. Kouvelis (eds) *The Environment in Greece, 1991-1996* (Athens, Bodosaki Foundation - in Greek), p. 94.

⁵ Papaspiliopoulos, *ibid*.

rate of most OECD countries.⁶ A striking feature of this economic growth was the role of housing construction: in 1977 it absorbed 45% of capital investment.⁷ This housing boom resulted from increased demand generated by the mass emigration from the countryside to the urban centres, which was accompanied by land speculation. The high foreign demand for land, the insecurity in respect of other economic investments, the relative low taxation on property, and the lax state control over building regulations made construction one of the country's main economic activities.

The post-war modernisation of the economy helped the industrial sector increase its share of the GDP from 22.8 to 27.8 % in the period 1960-80.⁸ The sector was highly uneven, however, consisting of a few very large capitalist enterprises employing a significant part of wage earners, and a plethora of small, family-oriented units of low productivity.⁹ The economic growth that had begun in the 1950s was largely in small manufacturing and middle-range enterprises, where capital and property were much fragmented. This meant that the improved economic indicators concealed the structural weakness and imbalances of the Greek economy.¹⁰ At the same time a large number of economic activities flourished illegally in the black economy.

The fact that the early structural weakness of the Greek economy was never corrected, later constituted an impediment for the application of environmental policies. The internationalisation of the market put Greek enterprises on the defensive, confronting them with problems of survival in a highly competitive world. Greek enterprises lack qualified personnel and face a shortage of capital for technological innovations of the production process. Moreover, they have to compete with economies of scale.¹¹ The state,

⁶ OECD (1983) *Environmental Politics in Greece* (Paris, OECD).

⁷ OECD, *ibid.*

⁸ OECD, *ibid.*

⁹ Kousis, M. (1994) 'Environment and the State in the EU Periphery: The Case of Greece' in S. Baker, K. Milton, S. Yearly (eds) *Protecting the Periphery: Environmental Policy in Peripheral Regions of the European Union* (London, Frank Cass).

¹⁰ Papaspiliopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

¹¹ Lavdas, *op. cit.*, ref. 3.

not wishing to add to the survival difficulties of the enterprises, has become reluctant to introduce strict and costly environmental regulations, and has therefore assumed environmental costs itself. The industrialists are using the infirm industrial structure of the Greek economy as a strong argument against the imposition of environmental costs. This subject will be discussed further, in section 5.4.2 when the environmental policies of the Greek state are presented.

Economic growth between the 1950s and 1970s was intense and became the source of many environmental problems. As an OECD report notes,

‘the growth of GDP is an approximate but still relevant indicator of pressures on natural resources and the environment ... Moreover, industrial production in Greece has increased even more rapidly than GDP’.¹²

A major factor that contributed to environmental degradation was that industrial production increased mainly in sectors that were potentially heavy polluters (textiles, chemicals, and non-metallic minerals).¹³ The environmental problems created by the economic development were magnified by the rapid pace and concentrated pattern of expansion. In Greece, industrial installations and activities are strongly concentrated near the major cities of Athens and Salonica. In 1981, the urban industrial axis of Kalamata-Patras-Athens-Volos-Salonica-Alexandroupolis concentrated 76.6 % of the workforce in the secondary sector and 75,9 % in the service sector.¹⁴ This was the result of the extensive urbanisation of the post-war period. The country’s two largest urban centres are Athens and Salonica, but cities like Volos, Larissa, Patras and Iraklion also became important locations of economic activities. The most heavily populated area still remains the capital. In the 1960s and the ‘70s, the Greater-Athens region accounted for over 85 % of the country’s demographic growth.¹⁵ In 1981, it was inhabited by nearly one-third of the Greek population. Such a concentration of economic growth in only a few areas

¹² OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6, p.11.

¹³ OECD, *ibid.*

¹⁴ Pelekasi, K., Skourtos, M. ‘Air Pollution in Greece: An Overview’, *Ekistics*, 348 (1991).

¹⁵ OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

exacerbated its negative impact on the environment. Relatively moderate amounts of pollution had major environmental consequences because of their concentration.

In brief, the Greek ecological movement has had to deal with a number of structural features that were the result of late capitalist industrialisation. The state's weak extractive capabilities, the weak capital-goods sector, the dominance of small firms in manufacturing, the considerable role of the illegal economy and the restricted extent of the welfare state were the main structural features, differentiating the contextual setting of the Greek ecological movement from the historical framework provided by new social movement theory. In Greece, the ecological movement is not a factor of the transition from an industrial to post-industrial or advanced capitalist society, but developed in the context of a semi-peripheral economy. It calls in question the desirability of full-grown modernisation and the path to advanced capitalism.

5.3 Environmental Problems

Because of its geographical position as the meeting point of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, and due to its relatively large range in terms of latitude as well as altitude, Greece has a very rich flora and fauna.¹⁶ Its climate and geomorphology, favour the existence of a large number of different ecosystems. However, the rapid and concentrated economic growth of the post-war years has had very harmful consequences for the environment. The resulting problems and their sources are outlined below.

- *Atmospheric Conditions*: The most serious environmental problem in Greece, and one that is widely publicised in the mass media, is air pollution. The grey cloud that hangs over Athens most days is referred to familiarly as the *nefos* (*smog*). The geographical position of Athens reinforces the symptom since Athens lies in a basin encircled by mountains that hinder the dispersal of the *nefos*, which is the result of repeated emission of photochemical smog in recent years. In the Greater-Athens area, air pollutants are generated by industrial sources (factories and power stations), car exhausts, and space heating equipment.¹⁷ In

¹⁶ Kinisi Politon, *Evaluation of the Environmental Status of Greece in 1990*, Athens: Kinisi Politon, May 1991.

¹⁷ OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

1982, the Greek government declared that air pollution in the capital had reached the level of an environmental crisis. Measures introduced to combat air pollution have included restrictions on the use of private cars, control of industrial emissions, and improvements in central-heating systems. Most of the smog comes from the southwestern edge of the Athens basin (Drapetsona) and the Thriasian Plain, shipyards and refineries in Skaramangas, Aspropyrgos, Elefsina.¹⁸ Although air pollution is a problem that is chiefly associated with Athens, it has become a growing concern also in the cities of Salonica, Patras, Volos, Kavala and Iraklion.

- *Marine Environment*: The excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture and industrial waste as well as domestic sewage, are the main sources of sea pollution in the marine environment. Intensification of cultivation methods in agriculture and the increased efficiency through extensive use of fertilisers and pesticides has led to a significant proportion of these chemicals leaching into sweet-water supplies as well as the marine environment. Industrial activities too have contributed much to poisoning the seas. About 80% of the country's industrial establishments are concentrated in coastal regions, and a large number of them (36%) discharge their industrial waste without any biological processing.¹⁹ Raw domestic sewage is also a common problem. A 1992 survey by the Ministry of Commercial Shipping found that 68% of 111 domestic sewage systems discharged their waste directly into the sea without any previous waste management.²⁰ Another threat for the marine environment is the transportation of petroleum products and toxic substances.

Environmental protection requires strong protective measures in areas of intensive shipping, or offshore oil and gas exploration. Tourist development too has contributed significantly to post-war economic growth, and in the coastal regions to the pollution of the marine environment.²¹ In some cases, it has threatened the habitats of endangered

¹⁸ Pelekasi, Skourtos, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

¹⁹ Karavellas, Dimitris, Pateras, Christos (1996) 'The Marine Environment' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papayannis, Kouvelis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4 and Pelekasi, Skourtos, *ibid.*

²⁰ Karavellas, Pateras, *ibid.*

²¹ Karavellas, Pateras, *ibid.*

species (like that of the widely publicised case of the Mediterranean turtle *caretta-caretta* in Zakynthos). Damage to the marine environment can also result from stepping up its economic exploitation. European Community subsidies for the development of fish farms and the like have raised their number from 12 in 1993, to 190 in 1996. This has led to not only the local deterioration of the marine environment, but also to clashes between people economically involved in tourism and fishing.²² In general terms, the pollution of the sea is worse in closed-in gulfs and in the proximity of urban centres (eg. in the Saronic Gulf).

- *Sweet-Water Supplies*: In the course of recent years, Greece has had serious difficulties to meet the demand for fresh water, although it is one of the Mediterranean countries richest in water supply. Water shortages, together with periods of drought (especially 1989 and 1990) alternating with floods, are an indicator that the hydrological cycle has been seriously disrupted.²³ The demand for water comes from three types of consumer: from agriculture, urban and domestic needs, and industry. Of these, agriculture requires the most – in 1991, irrigation was responsible for 83% of the total water consumption.²⁴ This is due partly to the dry climate, but has been exacerbated by the extension of the irrigation system due to structural funds of the European Community.

- *Forest Regions*: Half of Greece's land-area is covered by forests and scrubland. The forestal ecosystems have the important function of maintaining the balance of the hydrological cycle, preventing soil erosion, contributing to climatic and atmospheric conditions, and preserving the biological diversity of the Greek flora and fauna as well as being economically productive (wood, resin, etc.). The major problems facing the forests come from stock farming, hunting, large infrastructural public works, and lack of an organised institutional framework for forest management. The biggest danger of all, threatening mainly in summer, is fire. Approximately 59,344 acres of woodland were

²² Karavellas, Pateras, *ibid.*

²³ Kouvelis, S. (1996) 'Water Supplies' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papagiannis, Kouvelis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

²⁴ Beopoulos, N. (1996) 'The Impact of Agricultural Activities' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papagiannis, Kouvelis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4

burned down in 1991 by 1,041 separate outbreaks of fire.²⁵ While many of the burned areas become scheduled for reforestation, uncontrolled stock farming and illegal building-constructions often destroy them altogether. Deforestation and soil erosion have become persistent environmental problems in Greece.²⁶

- *Environmental Pollution and Agriculture*: Greece is using ever-increasing amounts of chemical fertilisers. This is due to the intensification of agricultural production mainly in the broad plains of Thessaly, in Western Macedonia, in Crete, etc., where fertiliser consumption is particularly high. In the mountainous regions, where there has been no restructuring of agricultural production, the use of fertilisers remains very much lower. Overall, Greece's per-acre consumption of fertilisers and pesticides is less than the E.C. average,²⁷ but enough chemical substances are released to have led to the deterioration of many ecosystems, such as that of Amvrakikos.²⁸ Agricultural activities, therefore, have an important impact on the biodiversity of the ecosystem and affect the chances of survival of species in a given habitat.

- *Environmental Pollution and Urbanisation*: The process of the country's urbanisation is characterised by regional imbalances and rapid and unregulated urban growth. One of the serious environmental problems associated with it is the disposal of solid waste. There are not enough existing inland sewage plants, and local authorities are fiercely opposed to the creation of new ones. Another environmental problem brought on by urbanisation is the unplanned encroachment of urban centres on the surrounding environment. Illegal housing-construction on the edge of towns and cities has endangered the surrounding

²⁵ Gatzogiannis, S. (1996), 'The Country's Forestal Resources' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papagiannakis, Kouvelis, *ibid*.

²⁶ Soil erosion affects more than one-third of the country and has become the main form of soil degradation in Greece. G. Pridham, S. Verney, D. Konstadakopoulos, 'Environmental Policy in Greece: Evolution, Structures and Process', *Environmental Politics*, 4 (2), (1995)

²⁷ Beopoulos, *op. cit.*, *op. cit.*, ref. 24.

²⁸ Kinisi Politon, *Evaluation of the Environmental Status of Greece in 1989* (Athens Kinisi Politon, March 1990).

ecosystems. The towns and cities themselves usually suffer from a lack of spatial planning, and so from a reduced quality of life. In Greece, a widely used practice is 'self-building'. Many 'self-built' houses are put up without permits or violating those permits. Moreover, they are often built on land not zoned for housing, or owned by the state, the Church, or other institutions.²⁹ Environmental pollution is related also to the living patterns of the urban population. The country-house, frequent use of the car, the development of leisure activities, etc., are all putting pressure on natural resources and the environment.

- *Environmental Pollution and Tourism*: The Greek economy is highly dependent on the economic returns from tourism. In 1980, the share of international tourist receipts in the GDP was 4.3 %.³⁰ Further development was often rapid and uncontrolled. In 1993, foreign tourists arrivals numbered 9.9 million, roughly equalling the country's population.³¹ The prevailing type of tourism has been of the cheap package-deal variety, leading to the rapid construction of tourist resorts at the expense of the environment. The spillover effects of tourism have been many, ranging from illegal building, increased amounts of sewage, garbage and litter, to noise pollution and traffic congestion.³²

Greek tourism policy can be divided into three phases. During the first period, the focus was chiefly on the expansion of services and accommodation. Then, from the early 1980s onwards, tourism became gradually integrated into economic-development plans and regional policies. The late '80s were marked by increased international competition concerning the tourist market. This brought a revision of the then-current policy towards a better-quality tourism, and integrating into this also environmental concern.³³

- *Environmental Pollution and Public Works*: Large infrastructural projects are another problematic. They often lead to the broad destruction of the natural environment, due mainly to the poor quality of the relevant environmental studies, and the persistence of

²⁹ OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

³⁰ OECD, *ibid.*

³¹ Pridham, Verney, Konstadakopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 26.

³² Pridham, Verney, Konstadakopoulos, *ibid.*

³³ Pridham, G. 'Towards Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean? Policy and Practice in Italy, Spain and Greece', *Environmental Politics*, vol. 8, no. 2, Summer 1999.

clientelistic practices that undermine the process of selection and construction.³⁴ Permits for public works are often the product of vested political interests, which totally ignore environmental considerations. Large infrastructural projects, such as the diversion of the Akheloos River, have often become the focus of protest by the environmental movement in Greece. The criticism is usually founded on inadequate studies of environmental consequences. In addition, large infrastructural projects are also opposed because they represent centralised state planning that contradicts the environmental movement's belief in small-scale self-management. Moreover, investments in public works usually manifest the government's higher evaluation of economic productivity than of sustainable development.³⁵

- *Energy Conservation:* Concerning energy production, Greece is mainly dependent on non-renewable and imported sources of energy. Imported petroleum and domestic lignite remain the chief sources of energy production.³⁶ Between 1920 and 1980, Greece's energy system changed from self-sufficient to being 73% dependent on foreign sources.³⁷ However, the per-capita energy consumption is quite low; in 1991 it was only 60% of the average in the EC member states.³⁸ A considerable amount of energy is consumed by the transportation sector – 43.4% of the total in 1991.³⁹ This is an index of the huge increase in the number of automobiles, which almost doubled in the decade 1980-90. Energy consumption by the industrial sector, on the other hand, has been decreasing since 1980, demonstrating the general malaise in Greek industry. Concerning energy consumption

³⁴ Papagiannis, T. (1996) 'Introduction' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papagiannis, Kouvelis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

³⁵ Large infrastructural investments need not be bound up with environmental degradation. For example, in Athens expansion of the metro system was necessary to reduce the high levels of air pollution.

³⁶ Pelekasi, S., *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

³⁷ Pelekasi, S., *ibid.*

³⁸ Plagianakos, P. (1996) 'Energy' in Papaspiliopoulos, Papagiannis, Kouvelis, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

³⁹ Plagianakos, *ibid.*

relative to the GNP, 1991 saw 50% more energy consumed for the production of one unit GNP, than did 1970. This demonstrates a lack of energy conservation, and shows that the Greek economy has not been able to disentangle energy consumption from economic development. Even so, attempts have been made to harness renewable sources of energy from the sun, wind, and waves. Research projects on solar and wind energy were set up in the 1970s in the Aegean islands. Hydraulic energy has been used since the 1950s, and 18% of the economically productive water supplies were being exploited by 1980.⁴⁰ There have also been attempts to use geothermal power, as in the geothermal public power plant on Milos.

- *Outside Effects:* Environmental degradation of Greece's ecosystem also results from certain international causes. Some very obvious influences are due to pollution in the neighbouring countries. For example, the reduction in the water supply by rivers from beyond the northern borders of Greece, pollution of the Black Sea, atmospheric pollution and acid rain, and the nuclear threat posed by Bulgaria's nuclear power plants are some of the environmental problems that illustrate the interdependency of the natural elements.⁴¹

An overview of the nature of environmental problems in Greece suggests that, aside from the big industrial polluters, the social origins of environmental degradation are quite diffused. In some way or another a high percentage of the population produces pollution (e.g. through the many small family enterprises, the practice of 'self-building', and in tourist enterprises). The dispersed nature of the country's environmental problems is also accentuated by the absence of nuclear-power plants, which probably would become the focal point of environmental protest in Greece.

Historically, the attitude to environmental problems in Greece has been variable. Expressed together with a variety of other political discourses, they have been interpreted in different ways. For example, in the early 1970s the junta regime 'cleansed' the environmental discourse from any socio-economic dimension or political elements that might be potentially subversive, and the problem was presented as a purely technocratic

⁴⁰ Plagianakos, *ibid.*

⁴¹ Papaspiliopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

one.⁴² In the late 1970s, with the restoration of democracy, the environmental discourse being articulated together with the ideology of the left parties transformed it into an ideological subject with a strong class content. The Left saw air pollution as the result of the government's dependency on big capital and the unregulated and unrestricted function of large enterprises in the Greater-Athens area. Left-wing protests emphasised the environmental damage done by large companies and underplayed that of small ones that were potential political supporters. The Right on the other hand emphasised the significant contribution to air pollution caused by means of transportation (private and public), in this way showing the diffuse social origins of pollution and presenting environmental protection as an exclusively administrative issue. The state and party attitude to environmental problems has usually rested on a utilitarian framework within which environmental issues were part of the more general question of human welfare. The ecological movement, on the contrary, has emphasised the independent status of the environmental question, and criticised the perception of the non-human world as a means for the self-determination of the political community. Section 5.4 will review how the Greek state has responded to the environmental dilemma.

5.4 State Administration and the Environment

The state's response to the augmenting environmental problems of Greece was to establish an institutional framework and implement certain policies that have had a marked influence on the country's ecological movement. The relationship between the ecological movement and the state highlights the significant role of political opportunities. A dominant theme in social movement writings is that political opportunities are central to the timing and course of such movements. Systematic analysis of the political environment of social movements has led to the elaboration of the concept of political opportunity structure. As mentioned in chapter 1, this has four dimensions: (i) the degree to which formal political access is open or closed, (ii) the stability or instability of electoral

⁴² Spanou, C. (1995) 'Public Administration and Environment: The Greek Case' in M. Skourtos, K. Sofoulis (eds) *Environmental Policy in Greece* (Athens, typothito-G. Dardanos).

alignments, (iii) the availability and strategic position of potential allies, and (iv) divisions within the elite.⁴³ In other words, the term political opportunity structure encompasses the formal institutional structure, the configuration of power, and the informal procedures of the political system. In this section of ch. 5 the focus is on the state, on exploring how the state has shaped the trajectory of the Greek ecological movement by organising the political environment within which the movement has operated. First, a brief history of government attempts to solve environmental problems may help us understand the extensive role of the state as well as its complex interaction with the ecological groups.

5.4.1 A Short History of Environmental Policy

• *The Environment as a Public- Policy Issue (1945-1974)*

The earliest official policies for the environment concerned only the Greater-Athens area. The problems experienced in the capital were studied in the 1950s, with the aim of making Athens a more efficient economic and administrative centre.⁴⁴

Before 1962, legislation with regard to the location and function of industrial units did not include any environmental factors.⁴⁵ Then, however, the gradual economic modernisation led to regulations for industrial zones imposing technical controls and special processes for the disposal of industrial waste. The term 'environment' did not appear as part of public policy until the early 1970s.⁴⁶ Even so, by 1971 there were already around fifty laws, decrees, and regulations dealing with environmental protection, the most important among them concerning industrial waste and the protection of archaeological sites.

⁴³ Tarrow, S. (1989) 'Struggle, Politics, and Reform: Collective Action, Social Movements, and Cycles of Protest, Western Societies Program?' Occasional paper no.21, (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University).

⁴⁴ Stevis, D. 'Political Ecology in the Semi-Periphery: Lessons from Greece', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 17, (1), 1993.

⁴⁵ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁴⁶ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

The trend of economic rationalisation initiated in the early '60s was reversed by the dictatorship in 1967. The authoritarian regime prohibited political mobilisation, and so greatly reduced social pressure on the government to incorporate environmental considerations in its public-policy making.⁴⁷ However, in the 1970s professionals in the public administration, managed to introduce environmental considerations into the agenda of the politically isolated Greek administration. Environmental planning was, of course, cleansed from any socio-economic or political dimension that could potentially undermine the regime.

'The environment was presented as an issue concerning "humankind", a problem of "contemporary civilisation" that could effectively be solved by technological development'.⁴⁸

The junta tolerated organisational initiatives concerning the environment, because this was a subject by means of which it hoped to win legitimation at home and abroad. It agreed, therefore, to admit the environment as part of the state's competencies. In 1970, the Ministry of Agriculture organised a National Conference for the Protection of the Environment to celebrate the E.C.'s Year of the Environment. In 1971, the Ministry of Culture organised a similar conference, and ensured the participation of foreign delegations.⁴⁹ The colonel's junta also made a collaborative arrangement with the United Nations Development Program and the World Health Organisation concerning problems related to the lack of infrastructural planning and rapid increases in population growth and pollution. This collaboration resulted in the Environmental Pollution Control Project for Athens (EPCP), which was to gather data and train personnel. The state's Centre for Planning and Economic Research (CPER) also began to incorporate environmental variables into its agenda. The main urban problems to which both the EPCP and the CPER addressed themselves were atmospheric pollution, noise, waste and water contamination.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁴⁸ Spanou, *ibid.* pp.121-22.

⁴⁹ Spanou, *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

In 1972, the environment was mentioned for the first time as part of the government's fifteen-year plan (1970-85).

• *Constitutional Provision for Environmental Protection: Founding the First Ministerial Body (1974 -1981)*

In 1974, a democratically elected government replaced the junta, and the new Constitution of 1975 became one of the few in the world to include an Article on environmental protection.⁵¹ Article 24 of the Greek Constitution assigns the duty for the protection of the natural and cultural environment to the state and declares that it is the state's obligation to take the necessary preventive and punitive measures to preserve the environment.⁵²

In 1975, an EPCP report delineated the main deficiencies of the existing environmental policy of the state. It listed four essential shortages: paucity of environmental data, insufficient personnel, scattered administrative authority, and lack of comprehensive planning. Comprehensive legislation and a separate ministry or agency have ever since been the two chief issues in the quest for effective environmental management.

In 1976, Law 360 established a new, high-level Council for Environmental Planning, which was given overall responsibility for environmental policy, including the introduction and supervision of plans and programs for the protection of the natural

⁵¹ Source of reference for the Article 24 of the Greek Constitution had been the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974, and the Article 9 of the Italian Constitution of 1948. See Papadimitriou, G. (1995) 'Environmental Constitution' in Skourtos, Sofoulis, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁵² Article 24 declares that 'Protection of the natural and cultural environment is a state responsibility'. The second paragraph of the Article concerns city planning. It makes it a state responsibility to provide the citizens with 'the best living standards possible'. The next three paragraphs (three, four and five) specify the rights and obligations of citizens and the government in terms of city and regional planning. Paragraph six defines as a state competency the protection of monuments and wilderness areas. Pelekasi, Skourtos, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

environment.⁵³ The Council was actually a committee at ministry-level for establishing the state's environmental policy priorities.

In 1977, the EPCP began to release data regarding air pollution in the Greater-Athens area. One of its measures was to prohibit the use of crude oil for domestic central heating. The opposition criticised the government for not advancing a more radical policy.⁵⁴

In 1979, the ministries of Labour and Industry presented a draft-law, applying environmental criteria to industrial activities. The parliament voted against it, on the grounds of the negative consequences it would have for the country's shaky industry that had hardly survived the second oil crisis and the economic recession in Europe. In the late 1970s the number of new environmental laws and decrees kept increasing, and the competencies of several government agencies were broadened. The most significant development of that period was the 1980 establishment of the Ministry of Regional Planning, Housing and the Environment. Law 1032/1980 established the Ministry as the sole responsible body for the control, development, and implementation of general environmental policy.⁵⁵ Setting up this official body was an important step in unifying the dispersed environmental policies, although certain ministries retained their authority over specific environmental issues. The new socialist government during the 1980s pursued the objective of comprehensive environmental planning by a single ministerial body.

• *State Administration and Ecological Movement in Close Collaboration (1981-1985)*

In 1981, the socialist party (PASOK) won the general election and remained in power for the next eight years. With regard to environmental policy, PASOK's tenure was divided into two periods, in parallel with its two terms of office. The first period (1981 to 1985) was marked by the government's influential role in setting the environmental

⁵³ OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

⁵⁴ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

⁵⁵ Pelekasi, Skourtos, *op. cit.*, ref. 14

agenda.⁵⁶ The second period (1985 to 1989) saw increasing discord with the ecological movement.

During its first three years in office, PASOK was trying to solve the major environmental problems of the Athens region. Soon after the elections, it introduced wide-ranging measures to combat air pollution in the capital. It froze the large infrastructural projects of the previous government and established forms of local participation in urban and regional planning. It set up environmental criteria for the building of new factories, declared itself opposed to the creation of a nuclear plant in Greece, and promoted eco-development and eco-tourism through the Undersecretary's office of Youth.⁵⁷ In 1982, the Athens Environment Pollution Control Programme, along with three other services, was merged with the Ministry for Regional Planning, Housing, and the Environment. A special office was set up for developing co-operation with international organisations on environmental issues. In 1983, the government presented a draft-law outlining the direction of its environmental policy, and amalgamating the various ministerial competencies under a new coordinative body.⁵⁸ However, serious opposition by the industrialists and the technical ministries resulted in the draft-law being withdrawn for revision.

During this first period, the socialist government perceived environmental problems as a 'crisis of participation', and aimed for a more equitable distribution of environmental benefits (e.g. urban amenities) and hazards (such as air pollution). Its environmental policy included decentralisation and reinforced local participation. In fact, PASOK's commitment to decentralisation and environmental protection became the foundation of close co-operation between the government and the ecological movement. Some prominent environmental activists were given government positions, while many urban planners were drawn into PASOK's ambitious, countrywide urban planning

⁵⁶ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

⁵⁷ Papadopoulos, P. (1987) 'For a Greek Political Ecology' in C. Orfanides (ed.) *The Ecological Movement in Greece*, (Athens, Meta te Vroche - in Greek).

⁵⁸ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

project.⁵⁹ The support of the socialist party by a large number of ecologists paralleled the political affiliation of the ecological movement with the Left. When PASOK came to power in 1981, left-wing forces within the ecological movement celebrated the election victory by expressing their strong support.

• *Economic Growth versus Environmental Protection (1985-92)*

PASOK gradually changed its initial focus from planned decentralisation with local participation to emphasising economic productivity and the need for certain large infrastructural projects. Already by 1983 the economic ministries had reasserted their dominance over the Ministry of Regional Planning, Housing, and the Environment.⁶⁰ In 1985, the government reorganised the latter by adding public works to its competencies. This created a conflict of interests - environment versus public works - within the new Ministry.

Escalating economic difficulties in the mid-1980s demanded a new economic policy. In 1985 the government announced a stabilisation program and began aggressively to procure E.C. funds for regional development and industrial investment. The unwillingness of domestic and international capital to invest in the modernisation of the Greek infrastructure prompted the state to promote a strategy of large public works (urban thoroughfares, new airport, etc.).⁶¹

In 1986, after three years of reviews and negotiations, PASOK submitted its Environmental Policy Act to parliament.⁶² Law 1650/1986 set out to clarify and specify the fundamental environmental principles that would act as guidelines for governmental policies. Although the law encouraged bold environmental principles and standards, it was criticised for its vagueness concerning the implementation of its major provisions. Moreover, it did not envisage the establishment of an independent agency, and it did not provide safeguards against the economic ministries' ability to bypass environmental

⁵⁹ PASOK's program for its first 100 days in office included new legislation for the protection of the environment. Spanou, *ibid*.

⁶⁰ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

⁶¹ Stevis, *ibid*

⁶² Stevis, *ibid*.

regulations.⁶³ What it did do was to specify a framework for limiting industrial pollution without affecting economic growth.

The socialist party's efforts towards decentralisation at first attracted members of the ecological movement. In due course, however, government neglect of sustainable development, as well as the pursuit of a centralised command-and-control policy, estranged ecological activists and drove them to seek autonomous political representation.

• *State Administration co-operation with Non-Governmental Environmental Organisations since 1992*

The clash of ecologists with the state apparatus in the late 1980s was followed in the 1990s by the state administration co-operating with non-governmental environmental organisations on strictly defined environmental issues. Many of these organisations originated in the late 1970s, but their role became vital only in the course of the 1990s. Their extensive technical knowledge, financial resources, and international networks prompted the government to ask for their collaboration. This has taken the form of co-management of the European Community's ACE program, concerning habitat and the protection of the Mountain Pindos' ecosystem.⁶⁴ Another example is the Greek Centre of Habitats and Wetlands (*Elliniko Kentro Viotopon-Ygrotopon*) acting as an advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture.⁶⁵ Co-operation has been facilitated by both sides concentrating on techno-scientific specialisation and underplaying the political dimension of ecological issues.

To recapitulate: the state's environmental policy has varied with the political forces in power. Overall, however the formerly fragmented and *ad hoc* institutional and legal arrangements concerning environmental management have increasingly been consolidated and strengthened.⁶⁶ Certain administrative and decision-making aspects were held in common by all governments since 1945. These are:

⁶³ Stevis, *ibid*

⁶⁴ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁶⁵ Papaspiliopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

⁶⁶ OECD, *op. cit.*, ref. 6.

i) *Centralisation*: The centralised nature of the Greek administration has been an important impediment for the development of a successful environmental policy, and curbed the creation of a strong network of peripheral environmental services.⁶⁷ Only in 1990 did a ministerial decision (84498/2579/13 Dec. 1990) counteract this tendency by creating environmental offices at the level of prefectures.

ii) *Fragmentation*: The centralised structure of the Greek administration did not lead to comprehensive environmental planning which, compared to other Southern European countries (Spain and Italy), is the most fragmented, since the Ministry of Environmental Planning and Public Works, has only a very limited power. Important environmental functions are held by other ministries: the Ministry of Merchant Marine is responsible for the marine environment; the Ministry of Health for monitoring the pollution of sea water and for classifying beaches; the Ministry of Agriculture for forests and rivers; and the Ministry of Transport for car emissions.⁶⁸

iii) *The symbolic nature of resolutions*: The symbolic nature of the environmental resolutions is illustrated by Presidential Decree 1180/1981, the European Community's Directive 85/337, and the Environmental Policy Act 1650/1986.⁶⁹ They all demand environmental studies for certain categories of public or private works likely to endanger the environment, none of which were undertaken in Greece, until in 1990 the country was threatened with trial at the European Court of Justice for not complying with the European Directives.⁷⁰

iv) *The reactive nature of policies*: In Greece environmental policies are predominantly reactive.⁷¹ Proactive policies require planning and monitoring mechanisms, efficient data collection, regular environmental information, and the availability of expert

⁶⁷ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42

⁶⁸ Pridham, G. 'National Environmental Policy-Making in the European Framework: Spain, Greece and Italy in Comparison', *Regional Politics and Policy*, 4(1), Spring 1994.

⁶⁹ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

⁷⁰ Spanou, *ibid.*

⁷¹ Spanou, *ibid.*

services.⁷² In these areas Southern European countries are at a decisive disadvantage compared with Northern Europe.

The crucial question is not, however, the availability of policy facilities, but the capacity for environmental adaptation. The state's unwillingness to establish strict environmental criteria for the private sector is due in part to its weak infrastructural ability capacity to mobilise financial resources.

5.4.2 Environmental Policy and Economic Surplus

'Having a strong and vibrant economy feeding off increasing productivity and international trade advantages is a major source of infrastructural power'.⁷³ In other words, the most significant factor when analysing state regulation of environmental problems is the absence of funds to finance a serious anti-pollution policy or corrective, even in the context of the existing system. Since the early 1960s, the Greek state has attempted to offset the structural weakness of the Greek economy by providing economic incentives such as low-interest loans, subsidies, and tax allowances.⁷⁴ It was the imperative of economic growth and business survivability that led to Parliament's repeated unwillingness to pass legislation on environmental pollution control (e.g. in 1979, 1983).⁷⁵ The reason given was uneasiness about the ability of economic enterprises to survive in a highly internationalised and competitive world. Whereas in countries of the capitalist centre the environmental costs are assumed by the producers, in Greece it is the state that must meet the bulk of them so as to assure business survival. The state has, indeed, played a crucial role in directly promoting environmental projects.

'During both the 1970s and 1980s, national development plans included state environment rehabilitation projects founded through the government's Public

⁷² Pridham, *op. cit.*, Ref. 68.

⁷³ Jenkins, C. (1995) 'Social Movements, Political Representation and the State: An Agenda and Comparative Framework' in C Jenkins and B. Klandermans, (eds) *The Politics of Social Protest*, (London, University College of London), p. 23.

⁷⁴ Kousis, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

⁷⁵ Kousis, *ibid.*

Investment Programme (PIP) ... those projects literally placed the burden of environmental protection on the state rather than the private sector'.⁷⁶

The large role of the state in paying the environmental bill of the productive process has made it a major target of criticism by the ecological movement. This dissatisfaction has its origins not only in the state's substantial involvement in the economy, but is due also to state control of political resources. The acute centralisation of power and decision-making in Greece stems from a tradition of intensive state interference in the political and social life. The strategic dilemmas the Greek ecological movement has had to face in its relation with the state apparatus are not dissimilar to the political problems of new social movements in Latin America. The central importance of the state in Latin American society as the dispenser of scarce resources has forced social movements there to develop a certain strategic approach to the state.⁷⁷ The greatly asymmetrical relation between the state and civil society in Greece has likewise influenced the overall trajectory of the ecological movement. Another factor has been the dynamic of the Greek party system.

5.5 The State versus Civil Society

Theorists locate the emergence of social movements within the realms of civil society, the institutions of which they aim to repoliticise by introducing into the political agenda issues previously regarded as predominantly private.⁷⁸ New social movements are primarily interested in public-oriented education, not in lobbying elites or making political deals. Their anti-state position is a distinctive element of their identity. While the contextual setting of new social movements is therefore assumed to be a dense and

⁷⁶ Kousis, *ibid.* p.127.

⁷⁷ Foweraker, J. (1995) *Theorising Social Movements* (London and Colorado, Pluto Press).

⁷⁸ Offe, C. 'New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics', *Social Research*, 52 (4), Winter 198; Cohen, J. 'Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements', *Social Research*, *ibid*; Habermas, J. 'New Social Movements', *Telos*, 49, Fall 1981.

communicative civil society, the strong statocratic elements of Greek society have (as mentioned in the analysis of the feminist movement) constituted a major impediment for their autonomous development.⁷⁹

The weakness of the country's civil society is demonstrated not only by the course the labour and feminist movement have taken, but also by that of the peace movement. In many Western European countries the peace movement has been a staunch ally of the ecological one (e.g. in former West Germany, the Netherlands), whereas in Greece the peace movement was afflicted with state repression and party dependency.⁸⁰ Its origins go back to the 1950s, when the first peace organisation, the 'Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace' (*Elliniki Epitropi gia ti Diethni Yfesi ke tin Irini - EEDYE*) was established (15 May 1955). It became a mass movement only after 1963, when it collaborated closely with the student movement. Both of them organised big rallies (Marathon Marches of Peace), questioning post-war political settlement and protesting against the political repression of the Left and the labour movement. The junta of 1967 put a decisive end to these mobilisations. The return to democracy in 1974 saw the establishment of three different peace organisations, affiliated respectively with the three largest political parties of the post-junta Left (PASOK, the Communist Party, the Communist Party of the Interior).⁸¹ The peace movement, therefore, has not been dissimilar to the feminist movement in the sense that its trajectory was closely associated with the political parties of the Left. In addition, it was likewise committed to safeguard political democracy and was opposed to the capitalist mode of production.

For civil society in Greece, the post-war period meant a closed political system that paid little if any attention to civil rights or a social contract. The prevailing tradition of clientelistic politics favoured the extra-institutional mediation of collective interests on a

⁷⁹ Foweraker, *op. cit.*, ref. 77

⁸⁰ Richardson, Rootes, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

⁸¹ Floros, G. 'From terrorism and court martial to the rallies for peace', *Anti*, No. 186, 11 Sept. 1981; Papoutsanis, G. 'The Peace Movement Nowadays: Splitting or Many-Voiced?', *Anti*, *ibid.*

personalistic basis and so inhibited the development of both collective action and civil society.

Although after the fall of the junta a democratic regime with a pluralistic party system safeguarded government accountability, in the absence of a strong civil society state corporatism persisted and so did the limited autonomy of the state bureaucracy and the judiciary vis-à-vis the executive power. Collective interests were mediated by the state and inter-party competition, leaving no space for independent representation. This meant that the party-dependent feminist and the peace movement, as well as the state-colonised labour movement, could not become political allies of the ecological movement. The strategic approach of the ecologists towards the strong asymmetrical relation between state and civil society was to orientate themselves towards institutionalisation: transforming themselves into a political party gave them formal access to the state. Even so, the openness of the Greek state to political challenges being limited; the ecological movement has not found it easy to overcome the barriers in its way.

According to Kriesi, the degree of formal access to the state is a function of its (territorial) centralisation; the degree of separation between the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary; the coherence of the public administration; and the degree to which direct democratic procedures are institutionalised.⁸² The Greek state is territorially centralised and leaves few access points on either the regional or the local level.⁸³ It is a system with an all-powerful executive, greatly delimiting formal access. However, its administration is fragmented and it lacks internal coordination, both of which characteristics are illustrated by the competing competencies of several ministries in regard of environmental policy. Concerning direct democratic procedures, the Greek state has no established tradition of popular initiatives or referendums. All of which is to say that, with the formal openness of the Greek state being restricted, the informal procedures and strategies of political challengers have traditionally been met with policies of exclusion and

⁸² Kriesi, H. (1995) 'The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on their Mobilisation' in Jenkins, Klandermans, *op. cit.*, ref. 73.

⁸³ The analysis refers to the period until 1993. In 1993 major changes towards decentralisation, affected many aspects of the Greek administration.

repression. This practice was aimed above all at the exclusion from power of the communist Left. Given, however, that the ecological movement developed chiefly during PASOK's terms in office, the early 1980s saw government strategies that resulted in co-operation with the ecological movement.

The ecological orientation towards the state was influenced not only by the strongly asymmetrical relation between civil society and state, but also by the configuration of power in the party system. As already mentioned, the Greek political parties capitalised on the feebleness of civil society and became the exclusive centres of power.⁸⁴ In that sense the Greek party system has manifested a seamless structural continuity with the past that left no room for the development of an alternative political pole. This safe reproduction of the party system resulted from the low volatility of votes, the limited choices of political alliances, and the polarised nature of the party system.

In the late 1980s, however, the Greek party system experienced a serious political crisis when its main features were openly being questioned, and this was the moment of a positive political conjuncture for the ecological movement. After 1986, the political opportunity structure was increasingly positive. The earlier attempts by PASOK and the communist parties to co-opt segments of the environmental movement had proven unsuccessful in the long run.⁸⁵ Then, in 1988, PASOK's involvement in a series of financial scandals entangled the party in a severe political crisis, and the Koscotas scandal led to widespread disapproval of the parliamentary political parties. Meanwhile the Communist Party of the Interior had split into two (1987). The smaller section was renamed Communist Party of the Interior-Renovative Left (*Kommounistiko Komma-esoterikou – AA*), while the larger part the Greek Left (*Elliniki Aristera – EAR*). In 1989 the Greek Left and the Communist Party decided to collaborate so as to provide a political answer to the augmenting crisis of the political system. The Coalition (*Synaspismos – SYN*) was short-lived. In 1991 they split apart again, reinforcing the public feeling of a

⁸⁴ Demertzis, N. (1994) 'Introduction to Greek Political Culture: Research and Theoretical Issues' in Nicos Demertzis (ed.) *The Greek Political Culture Nowadays*, (Athens, Odysseus - in Greek)

⁸⁵ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44

political impasse. During the period 1989-90 there were three national elections - a vivid illustration of the emergency. In 1989, the New Democracy (conservative party) and the Coalition, consisting of the united communist Left (SYN), decided to collaborate for the judicial persecution of the protagonists in the Koscotas scandal. Co-operation between these two political camps was so alien to the fundamental character of the Greek party system that it negated the Right/anti-Right cleavage and bipolar dynamic. It estranged a segment of supporters of the communist Left, so creating a political vacuum. This highly volatile situation was certain to make a lot of voters change allegiance. At the same time the political climate was finally conducive to the arrival of new political formations.

The crisis in parliamentary politics and the search for new political actors is illustrated by the findings of an enquiry conducted by the National Centre for Social Research, which investigated the political culture and electoral behaviour during the period 1988-90.⁸⁶ It showed that in 1985 the Greeks had been generally more positively predisposed towards politicians and official power holders than citizens of other Southern European countries, but in the period 1988-90 they became disappointed with politicians, whom they now saw as serving chiefly their own personal interests. Nevertheless, political alienation did not mean a decrease in political interest. This remained on the same relatively high level, revealing a discord between involved citizens and their representation by the established political institutions. In the late 1980s, Greeks presented the same degree of political alienation from the established political parties as did Italian and Spanish citizens.⁸⁷ Their normally high interest in politics now took the form of a search for new carriers of political representation. This political conjuncture brought discussions among ecologists about participating in the elections.⁸⁸ PASOK added to these positive conditions by making certain changes in the electoral law that unexpectedly provided the ecologists with parliamentary representation (in 1989 and 1990).⁸⁹ Hoping that the general

⁸⁶ Kafetzis, P. 'Political Crisis and Political Culture' in Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 84.

⁸⁷ Kafetzis, *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Nikolopoulos, P. 'Social Dynamic and Electoral Processes', *New Ecology*, 53, March 1989.

⁸⁹ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

political discontent would be transformed into political support for them, the ecological movement had formed a new party, the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (*Omospondia Ikologikon kai Enallaktikon Organoseon* - FEAO). Despite everything, the Greek party system continued to demonstrate a strong structural continuity with the past, belying thereby the high hopes of the ecologists. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6, which presents the trajectory of the FEAO.

The ecological movement's political project was enhanced by a series of political alliances. Given that many of the ecological supporters came from the Left, the movement first approached the parliamentary Left. As mentioned earlier, the socialist party initially absorbed some of these anti-Right elements. The ecologists also approached professionals and intellectuals of the Euro-Communist left (Communist Party of the Interior), which was open to political alliances with social movements.⁹⁰ (Its feminist branch Movement of Democratic Women (KDG) played a significant role in the Greek feminist movement). The reconstituted Greek Left (EAR) continued in the tradition of social movement politics and willingly formed an environmental section. However, in 1989 the co-operation of EAR with the Communist Party of the Exterior caused many ecologists to break away. The smaller Communist Party of the Interior- Renovative Left (KKE-es. – AA) then embraced the principles of social ecology and became a steady political ally to the ecological federation.⁹¹

Although the ecologists shared with all these parties a common belief in a socialist-humanist discourse, there were also strong political differences between them. These concerned issues such as the autonomy of civil society, direct democracy, and the role of the state. The anti-institutional stand of a section of the ecological movement, its strong belief in participatory practices, and the anti-developmental aspect of the ecological viewpoint resulted in the ecologists approaching alternative groups as well as the extra-parliamentary Left. This would not have been possible without the prior radical restructuring of the radical Left and the development of an alternative spectrum - two interrelated processes both originating in the post-junta revolutionary Left.

⁹⁰ Stevis, *ibid.*

⁹¹ Stevis, *ibid.*

The fall of the junta straightaway brought an initial flourishing of organisations of the revolutionary Left: Maoists, Trotskyites, Marxist-Leninists, Stalinists, supporters of the Albanian socialist regime, Anarchists, anti-authoritarians, etc. They were organised in small groups and supported primarily by students and labour unions. This expansion of the radical Left was partly due to the radicalisation after the end of the dictatorship, when legalisation of the Communist Party (in 1974) and the gradual consolidation of the parliamentary regime resulted in its step-by-step transformation.

‘A process started, where the Maoist organisations started dissolving, the Trotskyite barely survived and the Communist Parties witnessed many departures.

All these changes led to the formation of a new political space that was self-defined as the ‘*anentahtoi*’ (non-allied).⁹²

Supporters of this new political spectrum, who rejected both social democracy and the ‘socialism’ of Eastern Europe and China, shared three political viewpoints: they were anti-capitalist, anti-developmental, and anti-authoritarian.⁹³ Some of these forces established new political formations (e.g. Rupture - *RLX*), while others allied themselves with the alternative groups.

The ideological agenda of the alternative spectrum was clearly anti-industrialist and anti-capitalist. However, the groups differed ideologically from the extra-parliamentary leftists by denouncing the primacy of the economic sphere and admitting no reference to a future revolution for overturning capitalist society. Instead, they focused on the social level and argued in favour of immediate action in everyday life. They underlined the omnipresent intrusion of the state and capitalist society, and the consequent need to redirect politics towards the personal and social level. In brief, the alternative groups focused primarily on redefining social needs and everyday social practices. They argued that a liberated society could be realised only by the self-mobilisation of citizens on the level of everyday social practice.

⁹² Raptis, M. (1985) ‘Alternative Movements in Europe’ in M. Raptis, Giorgos Karabelias, N. Chrysogelos (eds) *An Alternative-Revolutionary Movement* (Athens, Alternative Publications Commune - in Greek).

⁹³ Raptis, *ibid*.

The alternative movement consisted entirely of social critics: anti-authoritarians, supporters of non-violence, feminist groups, supporters of alternative lifestyles, naturalists, alternative medicine groups, organisations for the alteration of the Penal Code and prisons, groups for the rights of the mentally ill, organisations against the military, homosexual groups, organisations concerned with drug abuse, groups against sexual abuse, organisations for the rights of immigrants and political refugees, etc. To sum up: supporters of alternative ethos struggled: (i) for the political rights of groups oppressed by the prevailing liberal political regime (e.g. conscientious objectors, soldiers, prisoners), and (ii) the rights of minorities socially and economically excluded or marginalized (drug abusers, the elderly, homosexuals, ethnic minorities, etc.). Thus, all alternative groups demanded specific rights, and at the same time criticised the existing societal organisation in all its manifestations.⁹⁴ In 1984, a series of meetings began among the alternative groups to construct a broader alliance. Ecological organisations participated at those meetings, thereby initiating a closer collaboration of the Greens and the Alternatives.

With regard to the extra-parliamentary Left, the growing crisis of Marxism in the 1980s made many Marxists rethink their anti-capitalist stand. This transformation process is best illustrated by the political writing of Giorgos Karabelias, a leading activist in the extra-parliamentary forces and a co-founder of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative organisations. His political argumentation carries weight, since he became the main representative of the radical Left within the Federation. He argued that the forces of the revolutionary and extra-parliamentary Left should be changed because the nature of capitalism had changed. The new phase of capitalism, Karabelias argued, had radically reduced the industrial working class. The working class was now to be found more and more outside the factory, and surplus value was being extracted from all of society. All of society had become the locus of class confrontation, and the factory had lost its centrality:

⁹⁴ 'A week of liberational alternative movements', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 11, February-March 1984; 'An Alternative Week', *Rupture*, No. 14, Feb. 1984; I. E., 'Alternative Meeting 1985', *New Ecology*, No. 13, Nov. 1985; G. M., 'Alternative', *Ecotopia*, No. 8, April 1990; Voiklis, G. (1992) *Ecologism* (Athens, Alternative Publications - in Greek).

society as a whole had become a social factory.⁹⁵ This transformation, according to Karabelias, has led to the formation of a new revolutionary subject, namely the 'social labourer'. The new revolutionary subject consists of new social strata (women, youth, immigrants, soldiers, etc.), all of whom are exploited in the process of production and reproduction of capital.⁹⁶

The ecological movement, Karabelias argues, became part of the new revolutionary subject from the moment capital began to destroy nature.⁹⁷ The ecological discourse, because of its cross-class and universal nature, makes it possible to unify the diverse alternative movements. He thought that to focus on the ecological discourse was a very clever political move of the alternative movements in Western Europe, because it made their unification feasible.⁹⁸ However, he did not want to see the Green movement reduced to matters of ecology:

'We demand not only an ecological viable society, but also a society of autonomy, that lacks exploitation and domination ... An ecologically viable society cannot specify the nature of the existing social regime, the type of distribution, gender relations, not even the technology of the society. The ecological perspective cannot be sufficient. This is also valid for the feminist movement'.⁹⁹

While, therefore, a good part of the extra-parliamentary Left proceeded to adjust its anti-capitalist stand, it retained its belief in the class structure of contemporary capitalist societies. It considered new social subjects (women, immigrants, homosexuals, etc.) as part of the exploited classes. The industrial working class having ceased to be the sole symbol of capitalist exploitation, certain forces of the extra-parliamentary Left approached the new social movements with proposals for a political alliance. However, the ecological discourse was perceived as too limited for founding a political project, and more as the

⁹⁵ Karabelias, G. 'Beyond Socialism' in Raptis, Karabelias, Chrysogelos, *op. cit.*, ref. 92.

⁹⁶ Karabelias, *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Karabelias, *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Karabelias, G. 'Green-Alternative Politics in an Altering World', *Rupture*, 39, January 1991.

⁹⁹ Karabelias, *ibid.*, p.8

necessary means to achieve a unification of the extra-parliamentary leftist and alternative groups.

The second radical restructuring of the extra-parliamentary Left concerned the means for fulfilling its political objectives. A growing number of activists had become sceptical about the marginalisation of the revolutionary Left. The anti-parliamentary character of all the post-junta movements had conducted to a severe political impasse, which in turn led to two significant changes: rejection of any armed seizure of power, and belief in the priority of society's self-education in terms of self-management and direct democracy.¹⁰⁰ Part of the extra-parliamentary Left now turned towards the established political institutions. Karabelias stated in one of his articles:

‘...we believe that an alternative political strategy, on the condition that no antidemocratic restrictions exist, includes political participation in parliament, municipalities, etc., even in government. Participation in politics means participation in any possible version of politics. We would obviously desire to win the majority of votes in order to apply our programme’.¹⁰¹

These changes made it possible for the radical Left to collaborate with the ecological movement. As a result of this, the majority of the ecological movement, together with forces of the extra-parliamentary Left and alternative groups, agreed to form a new political party, the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (FEAO). Social movements are largely the products of their immediate political environment, and influenced by the alliances they form in the bid for power. The co-operation of the Greek ecological movement with a segment of the radical Left and alternative groups resulted in the articulation of a rather homocentric ecological discourse influenced by the traditions of communism and anarchy.

By way of summarising, we may say that the enduring features of the Greek party system (limited but polarised pluralism) markedly reduced the ecological movement's chances of finding allies within the party system. The stable domination of the political

¹⁰⁰ Kastrinakis, M. ‘Ecology and Authority’, *Ecotopia*, No. 2, June 1989.

¹⁰¹ Karabelias, G. ‘The volcano cannot be tackled with exorcisms’, *Rupture*, 39, January 1991.

scene by three established camps militated against competition from outside challengers. Given the lack of potential allies, the Greek ecologists turned to the extra-parliamentary Left and the alternative organisations. The ecological movement had only a limited capacity for political autonomy, but it pursued a strategy of independence, by taking advantage of the changes in the political opportunity structure during the late 1980s.

5.6 Environmental Consciousness

Publications on environmental consciousness in Greece repeatedly stress the absence of well-developed environmental consciousness.¹⁰² This has been a strong factor inhibiting the development of an effective ecological movement. The following section is going to look at the various influences on the Greek environmental consciousness.

5.6.1 The Middle Strata and Collective Identity Building

The limited political appeal of the environmental discourse is often associated with the marked individualism due to the inflated role of the middle strata in Greek society. The country has always had a large petit-bourgeois stratum composed chiefly of artisans, shopkeepers, civil servants, and small landowners.¹⁰³ The post-war development further added to these social middle layers, whose mentality is recognised in the relevant literature as strongly self-centred and state-oriented.¹⁰⁴ The weakness of civil society and the domination of personalistic, clientelistic practices have fostered this individualism, and made the articulation of a collective consciousness very difficult. Moreover, rapid upward social mobility has meant higher expectations as well as a sense of relative deprivation,

¹⁰² Katsoulis, I 'What hinders the development of an ecological consciousness?', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 14, Dec. 1984 – Jan. 1985; Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹⁰³ Diamantouros, N. (1991) 'PASOK and State - Society Relations in Post-Authoritarian Greece (1974-1988)' in Spyros Vryonis (ed) *Greece on the Road to Democracy: From the Junta to PASOK*, (New York, Aristide D. Caratzas).

¹⁰⁴ Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

which have been expressed through a rush of consumerism and material greed. In such circumstances environmental protection is unlikely to rank high in the public interest.¹⁰⁵

I would object that this view of the new middle strata as associated with self-centredness and consumerism is too generalised and obscures other significant elements of Greek society. First, political support for environmental issues derives precisely from the new middle classes. Young people of good educational background, mainly professionals belonging to the new middle classes, compose the majority of Green voters.¹⁰⁶ Statistical data of the social strata that exhibit high levels of environmental consciousness will be given later (section 5.6.3). The role of the new middle classes should not, therefore, be identified in such wholesale fashion with clientelistic/personalistic politics. Besides, there was considerable collective consciousness building in the post-war period. The growth of the labour and student movements was based on strong collective identities. Both these movements expressed forceful anti-systemic sentiments that could not have been sustained without the crystallisation of collective identities. They, as well as the political parties of the Left, were guided by grand-narratives irreducible to any individualistic cost-benefit analysis. Emphasis on middle strata individualism cannot explain the polarisation of the Greek party system or the high incidence of political mobilisations.

The greatest obstacle the Greek ecological movement had to face was not diffused individualism or the lack of collective consciousness, but the strong identification of politics with political parties. Since politics and the public sphere were party-dominated, the ecological movement had to redefine the boundaries of politics. It had the dual task of convincing the people that its discourse was political, and establishing an autonomous political arena where collective interest representation would not be mediated by inter-party competition. In brief, the low environmental consciousness in Greece is not due to the lack of strong collective identities, but to the lack of a tradition of independent social movements that allow collective identities to be formed independently of party influences.

¹⁰⁵ Demertzis, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

5.6.2 Post-War Ideology

At the end of World War II the country was still economically backward. Native industry was almost non-existent, and agriculture remained underdeveloped. Within this historical context, economic development was considered as highly desirable by both the governing conservatives, and the opposition Left.¹⁰⁷ The successive governments envisaged a development that would sooner or later catch up with the advanced capitalist societies of the West. This goal also functioned as a means for legitimising the pre-junta authoritarian conservative regime, and the official political discourse tried to offset its political repression and exclusion by the promise of future prosperity. The role of the Marshal Plan was decisive in supporting this economic project.¹⁰⁸ The concept of development was entirely positive, therefore, and its limits, or the fact that political forces were guiding this process, were never discussed; it has been defined as modernisation from above without popular participation.¹⁰⁹

The Left, without questioning the positive character of development, nevertheless criticised the social impact of the government policies on the growing income differentiation, tax inequalities, unemployment, etc. Even so, it saw development as the solution to the country's problems such as emigration, economic dependency, foreign intervention, deficiency of social and political institutions, etc.¹¹⁰ The Left projected unrestricted development of the productive forces as the goal to be desired, and only questioned the composition of the political forces leading this process. Focusing their criticism on the capitalist mode of development, they ignored the consequences of economic expansion. Also, while the Left campaigned against the role of multi-nationals and the danger of monopolies, nothing was said about the increasing consumerism of the Greek people.¹¹¹ Quite the contrary: the Left supported many popular demands,

¹⁰⁷ Louloudes, Leonidas, 'Social Demands: From Environmental Protection to Political Ecology', in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

¹⁰⁸ Louloudes, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Louloudes, *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Louloudes, *ibid.*

¹¹¹ Louloudes, *ibid.*

predominantly consumerist, as socially or economically legitimate.¹¹² In other words, both the political Right and the Left supported economic development. The former endorsed economic growth by private initiative, while the latter argued for economic growth as part of socialising the means of production. The post-war ideological climate was not conducive to creating an environmental awareness, given that the discourse of the political forces was highly homocentric. If considered at all, the environment was perceived as merely useful to human pursuits, and issues of resource conservation or environmental quality were never given a thought.

5.6.3 Other Factors

One factor inhibiting the rise of environmental consciousness in Greece has been the absence of a tradition of environmentalism. Since economic development was never seen as a threat to the environment, awareness of such matters prior to the existence of an ecological movement was restricted to a few intellectuals, nature lovers, and cultural societies.¹¹³ There was nothing, on which an ecological movement could be built, which distinguished the Greek case from most European countries, where naturalist environmentalism preceded and has even been much larger than the ecological movement.¹¹⁴

While environmental consciousness has been generally low in Greece, it has fluctuated significantly depending on external influences. For instance, in 1986 the accident at Chernobyl increased impressively public awareness of environmental problems.¹¹⁵ The 1989 crisis in the Greek party system too led to increased support for the environmental movement. Public interest rose rapidly, the mass media published articles on environmental issues, and the circulation of environmental magazines rose by 30- 40%.¹¹⁶ There are no academic studies providing data concerning the general level of

¹¹² Papadopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

¹¹³ Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹¹⁴ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

¹¹⁵ Editorial, *New Ecology*, No. 23, 1986.

¹¹⁶ Papaioannou, D. 'Let the Amphitheatres Bloom Again', *New Ecology*, No. 42, 1988.

environmental consciousness in Greek society; information is available only from *Eurobarometer* and individual research by environmental magazines or organisations.

For Greece, the *Eurobarometer* (EB) survey series starts in 1980.¹¹⁷ The strongest conclusion drawn from the data is the slight score variation for the same problem in different countries, Greece included.¹¹⁸ This is confirmed in 1988 in terms of such questions as the environment, unemployment, price stability, arms limitation, agricultural surplus, the fight against poverty, aid to third-world countries, protecting national security, fighting terrorism and crime, etc.¹¹⁹ In other words, the EB sees no large gap between environmental consciousness in Greece and in other E.C. states.

Comparing the *Eurobarometer* of 1981 and 1983 shows strong opposition in Greece to the development of nuclear energy.¹²⁰ In the 1981 survey, 28% of the respondents disagreed strongly with developing nuclear energy to meet future energy needs; in 1983 the percentage had risen to 37%. The strongest opposition to nuclear energy came from Denmark, where 40% of the respondents opposed it in 1983.¹²¹ In the 1987 survey, 65% of respondents in Greece regarded the risks involved in building nuclear-power stations unacceptable – more than in Germany (51%), France (41%), or the United Kingdom (41%).¹²²

Concerning environmental protection generally, Greek respondents usually regard unemployment and rising prices as more serious. In the 1983 E.B. unemployment ranked as the problem of highest importance with the environment second.¹²³ The 1986 E.B. listed unemployment and inflation as the most urgent problems that should be debated in

¹¹⁷ Scarbrough, E. (1995) 'Materialist-Postmaterialist Value Orientations' in J. Van Deth, E. Scarbrough (eds) *The Impact of Values* (London, Oxford University Press).

¹¹⁸ *Eurobarometer*, No. 20, December 1983, p. 41

¹¹⁹ *Eurobarometer*, No.30, December 1988.

¹²⁰ *Eurobarometer*, No.19, June 1983.

¹²¹ *Eurobarometer*, No.19, June 1983.

¹²² *Eurobarometer*, No.28, December 1987.

¹²³ *Eurobarometer*, No.20, December 1983.

the European Parliament; the environment ranked fifth.¹²⁴ In the 1988 E.B., Greek respondents overwhelmingly gave unemployment as the foremost problem (95%), followed by price stability (90%), and with the environment third (85%).¹²⁵ By the time of the E.B. survey for 1991, unemployment and environmental protection were considered of equal urgency.¹²⁶ Since the spring of 1988, more and more people interviewed have considered environmental protection and the fight against pollution as 'an immediate and urgent problem'. In Greece this shift showed a difference of 15% between 1988 and 1992.

The level of environmental consciousness also changes with the social groups under consideration. Some social categories are more open to environmental questions than others, as shown by the surveys reported below.

In autumn 1986 the environmental magazine *New Ecology* circulated a questionnaire about its readers' profile and received 500 answers. They showed that the readers of *New Ecology* were mostly men (male: 79.35%, female: 20.65%) and around 30 years old.¹²⁷ The majority (71%) had no professional association with the environment. Politically they supported the Communist Party of the Interior (34.3%), or declared themselves politically non-affiliated (38.3%). In other words, the main profile of *New Ecology* readers showed younger men with a chosen interest in environmental issues, who were either politically unallied or supported the Greek Eurocommunists. In November/December 1995 the KAPA RESEARCH Company did some research for the Union of Municipalities and Communities in southern Attica. The sample covered 800 households. The results showed that the least developed areas of Attica also showed the least interest in the environment.¹²⁸ Young people (26-35 years) were more interested than older ones (over 56) - 61.8% and 39.5 % respectively. There were also marked differences in terms of education and income. The interest of people with little education (41.7 %)

¹²⁴ *Eurobarometer*, No.25, June 1986

¹²⁵ *Eurobarometer*, No.30, December 1988

¹²⁶ *Eurobarometer*, No.35, June 1991.

¹²⁷ Papaioannou, D. 'How do readers perceive "New Ecology"?', *New Ecology*, No. 35, September 1987.

¹²⁸ *Recycling*, No. 18, April/May/June 1996

greatly differed from that of individuals with a university or polytechnic degree (71%). Likewise, people with a high income showed more interest in environmental issues (49%) than low-income categories (41.7%). Hence, the variables of age, income, and education are strong indicators of the level of people's environmental consciousness. Accordingly, underdeveloped areas with lower quality of life are less sensitive to environmental questions. This was confirmed by the results of the Greek elections for the European Parliament in 1989 and the Greek national elections in November 1989 and April 1990.¹²⁹ In the 1989 elections, the urban Green vote was double to that of semi-urban areas, and more than double compared to the rural vote. In all three elections the Green vote was higher in well-to-do, new middle class areas than in lower income and environmentally polluted ones. Surprisingly, there seems to be no relation between the constituencies' environmental problems and their vote for the ecological parties: environmental degradation does not necessarily mean environmental awareness.

We have seen that a higher level of environmental consciousness is usually associated with the well-off, educated, middle class. The younger generation is more sensitive than their elders to environmental questions, and not as likely to be drawn into the entanglements of the polarised Greek party system. The general level of environmental consciousness may be lower in Greece than in other countries, but the *Eurobarometer* surveys show no large gap. Has the restricted environmental consciousness inhibited the development of a strong Green party in Greece? Richardson and Rootes claim that

‘...the principal factor in the rise and development of Green parties, and their electoral successes, has been the varying impact of political competition upon them, within the overall context of heightened environmental consciousness’.¹³⁰

In the Greek case, neither factor (level of environmental consciousness or political competition) has helped the growth of an autonomous ecological movement within civil society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the formation of an ecological party was

¹²⁹ Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2

¹³⁰ Richardson, Dick, Rootes, Chris (1995) ‘Introduction’ in Richardson, Rootes, *op. cit.*, Ref. 2, pp.1-2.

regarded as the only possible way for enhancing the political success of the ecological project.

5.7 A Concise History of the Greek Ecological Movement

Before describing the way the Greek ecological movement has developed, let us look at the environmental attitudes that preceded it and affected the ascendancy of ecological politics in the early 1980s. By that time the initial scattered activities had been succeeded by the formation of a social movement. This was not only a quantitative but also a qualitative change.

As already mentioned, nature conservation has never had many followers in Greece. When the first interest in environmentalism declared itself in the 1920s, it was restricted to a very small circle of naturalist, conservationist or scientific associations. It was at this time, between 1922 and '32 that the first naturalist, mountaineering, and excursion societies were founded. Associations like Pan, the Athens Mountaineering Society, and the Patras Mountaineering Society called the city dwellers to come closer to nature. Protection of the natural environment became part of their activities, for instance in the form of protests concerning forest fires set by stock-farmers wishing to extend their grazing land.¹³¹ In the next decade, 1930-40, the first two national parks, on Mounts Olympus and Parnassus, were founded on the initiative of the Central Council of the Greek Mountaineering Society.¹³² In 1951 members of this society established the Hellenic Society for Nature Protection. This and the Athens Society of Friends of the Forests are the oldest and most enduring organisations with explicit environmentalist priorities.¹³³ During this first period there was a conspicuous absence of any political framework or aspiration to broaden the social base of the environmental groups. Although the decades after the 1920s were one of the politically most turbulent periods in Modern Greek history, the environmental organisations restricted their activities exclusively to

¹³¹ Sfikas, G. (1987) 'To march forwards, while also looking backwards' in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

¹³² Adamakopoulos, T. (1987) 'In the beginning were the mountains', in Orfanides, *ibid.*

¹³³ Kousis, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

environmental issues and so avoided all and any conflict with the state or other established institutions.

The 1950s witnessed the pioneering role of archaeologists and architects in preserving the quality of the surrounding environment.¹³⁴ The lack of infrastructural planning coupled with rapid population increase led to state agencies sponsoring proposals for public health and spatial planning. The problems of Greater Athens were studied, and the Athens Centre of Urban Planning was set up in 1955.¹³⁵ Architects and archaeologists opposed the unrestricted development by pointing out the importance of a better quality of life as exemplified in urban planning.

The colonels' *coup d'état* in 1967 brought canvassing for broader support for environmental issues to an abrupt halt. On the one hand political repression forbade collective mobilisations and on the other, the first priority of collective struggles was the restoration of democracy. Environmental questions were not entirely in abeyance during the seven years of the dictatorship, however. For instance, peasants of Eastern Macedonia demonstrated in 1972 against the use of the local turf as fuel for a thermoelectric plant. Although they were promised generous land compensations, the peasants preferred to continue with the cultivations of corn and grapes.¹³⁶ And in 1973 the residents of Megara demonstrated against plans to extend the local oil refinery at the expense of their agricultural land.¹³⁷ Government policy in this period was contradictory. It both wished to acknowledge environmental matters as belonging to the competencies of public administration, and at the same time it sought to legitimise extensive environmental damage. An example of the latter was a large area in northern Attica, covered by olive trees and forests; this was designated by the dictatorship an industrial zone, and ruthlessly exploited by private capital.¹³⁸ Moreover, on a more unobtrusive level the junta tolerated

¹³⁴ Schizas, G. 'A contribution to the history of the Greek ecological movement', *Ekotopia*, No. 23, July-August, 1993.

¹³⁵ Stevis, *op. cit.*, ref. 44.

¹³⁶ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

¹³⁷ Kousis, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

¹³⁸ Sfikas, *op. cit.*, ref. 131.

people favourable to the regime, to violate or circumvent laws on environmental protection (e.g. by illegal building on tourist sites). Officially, however, the environment was a government responsibility. So in 1970 the Ministry of Agriculture organised a National Conference for the Protection of the Environment, 1971-'72 the government set up a Committee for the Environment, and in 1972 the environment became part of the government's fifteen-year plan (1970-'85).¹³⁹ Official references to the environment reveal the junta seeking political legitimisation as well as linkages with the international community.

The fall of the dictatorship revived the social struggle over the environment, and between 1973 and 1981 there was a surge of environmental interest and activities. This was the result not only of the return to democracy, but also of the emergence of the environmental problems created by earlier intensive industrial development. There were many mobilisations: in 1973 in Megara and Methana; in 1975 in Volos, Pylos, and Itea; in 1975/76 in Salonica; in 1977 in Eleona of Aighaleia; in 1977-79 in Karystos; in 1978 against a petrochemical plant being established in Misolonghi; in 1980/81 in Neohori of Aitolokarnania.¹⁴⁰ All of them purposed either to halt industrial development likely to cause environmental damages, or to relocate existing environmentally hazardous plants elsewhere. In other words, the chief aim of these protests was environmental conservation. Other common elements were as set out below:

1. Most of the demonstrations were held in rural districts, and Athens was rarely the target of environmental protest.
2. Environmental protests had a trans-class social support. Only in Salonica did skilled and semi-skilled workers constitute the majority of the participants.

¹³⁹ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

¹⁴⁰ In the beginning of the 1970s the Public Power Corporation of Greece began negotiations for the construction of a nuclear power plant at Karystos on Euboea. On 4 May 1979 there was a mass demonstration in Halkida of 4,000 people protesting against nuclear energy. An outcome of this was the short-lived organisation 'Anti-Nuclear Initiative' (*Antipiriniki Protovoulia*). Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

3. The protests were organised by initiative groups (in the form of coordinating committees) or local communities.
4. Non-local groups, such as organisations for the protection of the environment, scientific associations, Chambers of Commerce, as well as European organisations provided additional support.
5. All these protests opposed large-scale plans of state-owned, national, or multi-national enterprises that already had the support of the government.
6. The protesters suggested as an alternative to the offensive, the option of developing the primary sector, processing agricultural products and alternative forms of mild tourism.
7. All mobilisations developed similar repertoires of action: strikes, marches, rallies, publications, media announcements, scientific studies, meetings with experts or officials in Athens, and transferring the struggle to the capital.
8. The response from the state and the political parties was usually equivocal. To begin with they were usually hostile or mistrustful, but if the mobilisation became successful they showed tolerance or even approval. The press, student unions, intellectuals, academics, and sometimes the Ministry of Culture were very receptive to the demands advanced by the participants in mobilisation.
9. In the end, environmental protests contributed to increased social awareness of environmental issues and state initiatives concerning long stated environmental demands. The state either accepted the primary demands of the participants or new Bills for ratification were drawn up and proposals put forward for special environmental studies. Moreover, the political impact on social attitudes was considerable. Incidents of violence by state authorities (Megara, Salonica, Neohori) and contradictory responses of the government and political parties led to a series of local and national debates.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Vested interests also played a role and mobilisations were frequently supported by private economic interests, not mediated by the existing political networks. Additionally, the excessively concentrated administrative structure of the state forced those mobilisations to extend their appeal to the central decision-making headquarters of

Protest mobilisation in the capital and the broader region of Attica were limited to three incidents. The first was in 1976, when the government decision to create a new airport at Spata led to mass demonstrations against the planned expropriation of agricultural land.¹⁴² Then, in 1979-80, environmentalists opposed the installation of sewage disposal tanks in the area of Maroussi.¹⁴³ Finally, in the late 1970s, the Athens smog became a major issue. An ephemeral organisation Citizens Against the Smog (*Polites kata tou Nefous*) was formed but dissolved again shortly after organising a big publicity concert in Athens.¹⁴⁴ In 1981, there were two anti-smog demonstrations in Athens. It is a paradox of the Greek ecological movement that the Athens smog, despite its serious health repercussions and its wide scope (it affects one-third of the Greek population) has never become an issue that rallies mass support.

It is important to note that the ideological framework for all these mass-protests was environmentalism rather than political ecology. The ideological discourse during this period was human-centred, utilitarian, and emphasised resource conservation and human welfare. However, this was a crucial period for the post-1981 Greek ecological movement. It was the first time that a tradition of environmentalism was established. Many new and enduring environmental organisations were formed, and tentative, coordinated organisational schemes were devised. Industrialisation as such, as well as along the Greek pattern, was openly criticized. Finally, left-wing organisations also became involved in the protection of the environment.

Another important development during the 1970s was that environmental and ecological literature expanded greatly, either via the translation and introduction of foreign texts or by the introduction of environmental issues in Greek journals. The many foreign books on ecology that were published in Greek translation (by R. Dumont, B. Commoner,

Athens. Transferring their appeal to the national level was a precondition for its success. Hatzimichalis, K (1992) *Regional Development and Policy*, (Athens, Exantas - in Greek); Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹⁴² Kousis, *op. cit.*, ref. 9.

¹⁴³ Karabelias, *op. cit.*, ref. 95.

¹⁴⁴ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

M. Bookchin, R. Carson, P. Samuel, A. Gorz, etc.) helped towards moulding an ecological consciousness.¹⁴⁵ In addition, articles on sea pollution, the consequences of high-speed motorways, the effects of poisonous substances used in agriculture, the nuclear threat, and so on, now appeared in newspapers and periodicals. Places like Lavrion, Kozani, Ptolemaida, Megalopolis and especially Elefsis (oil refineries) were frequently referred to because of the serious environmental problems connected with them. A recurring theme in the ecological and environmental writings in 1974-78 was criticism of the junta and conservative governments as the main actors responsible for environmental degradation. In other words, pollution and environmental destruction were not considered the inevitable result of industrialisation, but as proof of the government's dependency on private and foreign capital. So, environmental and ecological issues became linked in these articles with the nature of the political regime. For example, the Athens smog was declared to be the result of the unregulated and uncontrolled industrial activities in Attica. The degradation of the Greek forests was seen as the result of colonialist contracts signed by right-wing governments. Accordingly, the anti-Right forces of that period incorporated the environment into their project of democratic consolidation and political self-determination. They portrayed the solution of environmental and ecological problems as feasible only within the context of a left-wing political regime.

An important place for environmental and ecological struggles after the 1974 fall of the junta was the universities. Many students who had originally been drawn to the political Left began to criticise the centralisation in the student unions, the inflexible party discourse, the creation of hierarchies, and the repression of intra-party opposition. A number of members of party-affiliated student unions left and began to involve themselves with local, social problems.¹⁴⁶ One outcome of this was the formation of the organisation New Left (*Nea Aristera*), and the magazine New Left Review (*Epitheorisi Neas Aristeras*) that focused on issues of associationalism, a better quality of life, and the protection of citizens. In 1976, the New Left was renamed Association for the Quality of

¹⁴⁵ Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107; Voiklis, *op. cit.*, ref. 94.

¹⁴⁶ Poulos, G. '1976-86: Experiences and Crises of the Ecological Movement' in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

Life (*Enosi gia tin Piotita Zois* - EPOIZO) and became Greece's first enduring organisation in the field of political ecology. It instigated the creation of the first small co-operative companies, the founding of consumer protection associations, and the promotion of organically grown foodstuffs.¹⁴⁷ EPOIZO also became one of the most active organisations in the anti-nuclear campaign during the 1970s. The academic year 1979-80 saw a new wave of student mobilisations. They were directed against the educational reforms proposed by the government, and the students remained to a certain extent independent from political control by the established parties. This means that the political student movement articulated demands that went beyond the parties' agenda and extended to the whole of social reproduction. The Chemistry Department students were the first to include ecological matters in their demands. Students that had taken an active part in these mobilisations then formed the ecological organisation Ecological Initiative (*Ikologiki Protovoulia*), and some of them eventually became co-founders of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations.¹⁴⁸

Towards the end of the period 1974-81 there was a significant regrouping in the ecological spectrum. Many new organisations endorsing the ideological principles of political ecology emerged in the big cities as well as in the countryside, but the older environmental groups also continued to maintain an active presence. It was they who made the first attempt to create a unified umbrella organisation the Coordinating Committee of Organisations for Environmental Protection (*Syntonistiki Epitropi Organoseon Prostatias Perivallontos* - SEOPP). Among the members were the Athens Mountaineering Society (*Oreivatikos Syndesmos Athinon*), the Society of Friends of the Forests (*Filodasiki*), the Greek Movement of Foresters (*Panellinia Kinisi Dasologon*), the Piraeus Club of Nature Lovers (*Fysiolatrikos Omilos Piraeus*), Country Life (*Ypethrios Zoi*), etc. One of the disadvantages of SEOPP was that many of its constituent members

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Polydevkis Papadopoulos, co-publisher of the *Ecological Newspaper* (1982-'85), member of Ecological Initiative (*Ikologiki Protovoulia*), Initiative for a Green Alternative (*Protovoulia gia mia Prasini Enalaktiki*) and Alternative Movement of Ecologists (*Enalaktiki Kinisi Ikologon*), Athens, 13 Dec.1996.

¹⁴⁸ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

were not primarily environmentalists. Environmental-protection groups co-existed with others for whom the environment as such was secondary. SEOPP's action was further impeded by the fact that the member-organisations were predominantly conservative and not really willing to clash with the right-wing government.¹⁴⁹ The new ecological organisations that joined the green spectrum in the 1980s signified a transition from environmentalism (as publicly established by groups in the 1970s) to political ecology.

This process was somewhat halted when the socialist party (PASOK) came to power in 1981 and some of the anti-right forces among the ecologists gave it their political support. The perception of the Right as a main source of environmental problems, and the adoption of environmental topics by the socialist party, led to passing political support for the socialist government. In 1981 PASOK announced its hundred-day program to fight the smog. It then drew up a Bill for the protection of the environment (1650/1986), and set up an organ of its own for environmental policy (Comprehensive Body of Environmental Policy - EFOP).¹⁵⁰ However, the socialist government was increasingly criticised by the majority of the ecologists for not fulfilling its pre-election promises. It was also criticised for using environmental demands as a means of forcing opposition against the conservatives.¹⁵¹ Moreover, the socialist party after its first four years in government giving greater priority to higher rates of economic production than to Green matters created new friction with environmental and ecological forces.

¹⁴⁹ Sfikas, *op. cit.*, ref. 131.

¹⁵⁰ Spanou, *op. cit.*, ref. 42.

¹⁵¹ An example of the inconsistent environmental policy of PASOK was the case of the Aluminium factory at Delphi. The first two attempts to build an aluminium factory in that area were made by the conservative governments in the 1970s. The second (1978-79) was severely criticised by the then oppositional PASOK, which submitted a question in Parliament. However, when PASOK came to power itself, it began a new round of discussions with potential investors for building an aluminium plant in the same area (1984). See C. Orfanides, '1975-87: Mobilisations for the rescue of Delphi: From Environmentalism to Political Ecology', in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

In the early 1980s the appearance of new ecological publications illustrated a shift in the Green spectrum. The Ecological Newspaper (*Ikologiki Efimerida*) came out in 1981, and from the very beginning concerned itself with the dynamics of social movements.¹⁵² In 1982 the magazine Ecology and the Environment (*Ikologia kai Perivallon*) appeared, and attempted a more scientific discussion of environmental problems. It contributed to the dissemination and acceptance of viable scientific solutions by the general public. At first the magazine endorsed a technocratic version of ecology, but after changing its name in 1984 to New Ecology (*Nea Ikologia*), it also explored the political facets of ecology.¹⁵³ Alongside the new ecological publications were many new organisations, some of them taking over from the older environmental ones – for instance the Green Alternative (*Prasini Enallaktiki Kinisi*), the Alternative Movement of Ecologists (*Enallaktiki Kinisi Ikologon*), the Ecological Movement of Salonica (*Ikologiki Kinisi Thessalonikis*).¹⁵⁴ These new groups no longer restricted themselves to matters of environmental protection, because they believed that environmental problems could be solved only after fundamental changes in dominant values and/or methods of production. They saw ecology as a viable political proposal that could reshape both inter-human relations as well as relations between the human and the non-human, natural world. During the 1980s, therefore, a significant quantitative and qualitative change took place in the Green consciousness. As Demertzis notes, ‘...since 1981 there has been a sort of transition from environmentalism to political ecology’.¹⁵⁵

Other new organisations at this time centred on the creation of alternative lifestyles, a subject that was still virtually unknown in Greece. So it was not only environmentalists, but also the growers of organic foodstuffs, opponents of hunting, cyclists, anti-smokers, etc. who became organised. They were supported by scientific

¹⁵² Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹⁵³ A less-known editorial effort was the short-lived attempt by publisher Timos Stavropoulos that led to 12 issues of ‘Environment and Pollution SOS’. See in Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

¹⁵⁴ Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹⁵⁵ Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2, p.196

bodies like the Society for the Protection of Nature (*Etaireia Prostatia tis Fysis*), the Greek Ornithological Society (*Elliniki Ornithologiki Etaireia*), and the Ecological, Environmental and Alternative Information Centre (*Kentro Ikologikis, Perivallontikis kai Enallaktikis Pliroforisis*).¹⁵⁶ In 1981 the first squatters appeared in Athens.¹⁵⁷ This was also the time when ecologists illegally set up private radio stations in protest against state control of the mass media. The years 1982 to 1987 were highly productive in expanding the ecological discourse and witnessed some original repertoires of action (theatrical events, happenings, 'marches' on bicycles, etc.).¹⁵⁸

All these changes and innovations had two main consequences:

(1) The multiplication of ecological and environmental organisations raised the issue of coordination and the creation of a pan-Hellenic network that could coordinate action and serve as an information exchange. The majority of the organisations agreed on the need to unify the Greens, since lack of communication and of technical as well as moral support amongst the dispersed groups had long been recognised as a vital problem.¹⁵⁹ However, there was no general agreement concerning the organisational form and the future role of this unifying network. One section of the Greens argued that unification should take the form of a national network in civil society, because this would shape the necessary conditions for developing a Green mass movement. They insisted that the unified network should be independent of the state and the political parties. Other organisations saw the Greek unification as the first step in the establishment of a political party. Participation in electoral politics, they argued, would stimulate much-needed

¹⁵⁶ Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹⁵⁷ S. Papapolimerou, 'Citizens' Initiatives, City Movements' in *Ecology-City-Self-Administration*, (Athens: Centre of Ecological Information, 1990 - in Greek).

¹⁵⁸ *Ecological Calendar* (1996), published by Ecological Movement of Salonica.

¹⁵⁹ Some ecological organisations (e.g. the Ecological Movement of Volos) disagreed with the formation of the Federation, because of their anti-institutional stand. Interview with journalist N. Chrysogelos of the Ecological Newspaper, co-publisher of the magazine *Recycling*, member of Ecological Initiative and Initiative for a Green Alternative Movement, Athens, 10 Dec.1996; *New Ecology*, No 29, March 1987.

support for the infant ecological movement. The debate between the two camps over which strategic option to adopt remained lively all during the 1980s.

(2) The transition from environmentalism to political ecology led to the convergence of the ecologists and the extra-parliamentary Left. By going beyond environmental protection after 1981, the ecological movement addressed itself to issues that were already part of the political project of left-wing politics. The anti-capitalist critique, mistrust of the state apparatus, confidence in civil society and self-management, and critical reassessment of power became the common ground for co-operation between ecologists, the extra-parliamentary Left, and proponents of alternative beliefs. In addition, in the 1980s older organisations with Left origins began to interest themselves exclusively in ecology (e.g. EPOIZO), while other sections of the extra parliamentary left (e.g. RIXI), changed their earlier belief in the primacy of class conflict and acknowledged ecology as an independent conflict. These new viewpoints facilitated the political unification of the various areas of social conflict in the prevailing socio-political order. While acknowledgement of the political value of ecology was a precondition for achieving any convergence, some unresolved tension between the ecologists and the alternative side remained over whether or not ecology should be in first place. This tension was to become more overt later in the organisational scheme of the FEAO and would lead to disagreements and ideological impasses.

The successful expansion of the ecological movement in the 1980s gave rise to several attempts at creating a new, unified organisation for its growing dynamic. In 1982 the first pan-Hellenic meeting of ecological and environmental organisations took place on the island of Aegina. About 100 organisations attended and expressed their wish for a nation-wide network. An ecological centre was set up in Exarhia (Athens).¹⁶⁰ The meeting was called again the following year (1983), but the project of unification failed because of strong ideological disagreements amongst the participating groups.¹⁶¹

In 1984 a new pan-Hellenic meeting was held in Pendeli outside Athens. Participation was broad and high publicity was given to the event. The Minister of Urban

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Papadopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 147.

¹⁶¹ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

Planning and Environment gave the welcoming address, thereby indicating the good relations between the socialist government and the Greens. Again, however, no organisational links were set up among the groups, although this failure was compensated for by the creation of a nation-wide information network, the Ecological Information Centre (*Kentro Ikologikis Pliroforisis*). Its purpose was to transmit information and disseminate knowledge among the ecological groups. In 1985 it began to publish its Bulletin of Ecological Information (*Deltio Ikologikis Pliroforisis*).

In 1984 an external factor, namely the prospect of the 1985 elections for the national as well as the European parliament, acted as a strong incentive for the Greens to step up their contacts and organisational endeavours.¹⁶² The ecologist N. Prasinos gave a resumé of the main arguments in favour of the Greens participating in these elections:

- Participation at the elections would initiate and empower the contact with and mobilisation of voters interested in ecology and the environment.
- The election campaign would include activities (happenings, occupation of streets, exhibitions, etc.) that are difficult to realise in ordinary times.
- Election participation would advance Green debates and urge the organisations to come up with concrete and viable policy proposals.
- It would also increase communication and collaboration with the Green movement in Europe
- An election campaign would widely publicise the Green discourse and ideology.
- The financial subsidy from the European Community and the Greek state would be very welcome, and printing and distribution of relevant material would become possible.
- The election of a deputy would provide access to sources of information.

¹⁶² According to Maria Kousis: '...the number of grass-roots environmental mobilisations increases - sharply in the case of Greece - immediately before election years'. Kousis, M. 'Sustaining Local Environmental Mobilisations: Groups, Actions and Claims in Southern Europe', *Environmental Politics*, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1999.

— Participation at the electoral processes would enhance the comprehension of the political system.¹⁶³

These arguments in favour of sending Green candidates to stand for election were rebutted by the anti-institutional stand of many of the organisations as an act of co-optation. They insisted, instead, on developing a mass movement in civil society by engaging as much as possible in extra-parliamentary activities. This conflict remained unresolved until it was eventually decided to participate in the national elections of 1989.

The forthcoming elections in 1985 initiated a new round of contacts among environmentalists and ecologists. There was in 1985 a meeting at the offices of EPOIZO to explore the feasibility of a pan-Hellenic ecological formation, but the project failed, and so cancelled any possibility of participation in the elections.¹⁶⁴

In October 1985 the alternative groups also attempted to unify organisationally their political forces. A meeting in Athens invited all groups and individuals interested in issues concerning the ecology, women, youth, workers, the unemployed, urban problems, the alternative ethos, the people in the Third World and the national struggles for self-determination.¹⁶⁵ The broad range of issues covered by the meeting indicated the alternative groups' attempt to attract potential supporters and showed their increased overlapping with the ideological tenets of the ecological groups. All the groups did not welcome the growing proximity between the two. An editorial in *New Ecology* was very critical of the alternative meeting and applauded all ecological organisations that had stayed away. The editorial closed with a clear condemnation of the anarchists for their anti-institutional stand.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Prasinos, N. 'European Elections: Is there any prospect for an active involvement of the ecologists?', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 11, Feb.-March 1984; Papaioannou, Dimitris 'Let the amphitheatres bloom again', *New Ecology*, No. 61, Nov. 1989, and Ritzoulis, G. 'To participate or not in the political game?', *New Ecology*, No. 52, Feb. 1989.

¹⁶⁴ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 134.

¹⁶⁵ *New Ecology*, No. 12, October 1985.

¹⁶⁶ Editorial, *New Ecology*, No. 13, Nov. 1985.

In May 1986 the Ecological Information Centre organised an all-Greek meeting of ecologists in Athens, and the prospect of municipal elections in October stimulated new efforts for organisational unity.¹⁶⁷ Once more the attempt was unsuccessful, and in the end only two Green groups participated in the municipal elections: the Municipal Ecological Movement of Elefsis (*Dimotiki Ikologiki Kinisi Elefsinas*) and Independent Self-administration Larisa (*Larisa-Anexartiti Autodioikisi*).¹⁶⁸ The former received 2% of the local vote, the latter 5%. The election results confirmed that the public trusted ecological formations for the solution of local issues, but withheld its support from them in major issues (the economy, national defence, etc.).

In November 1986 the Green Alternative European Link (GRÄEL) held its monthly meeting in Athens. Its representatives contacted political parties, peace organisations, and ecological groups to discuss the possibility of founding a Green party in Greece.¹⁶⁹ However, the chief Greek ecological organisation (the Alternative Movement of Ecologists) declared itself opposed to creating a new party at this stage, and insisted on the need to first build an extensive network of autonomous ecological groups.

In 1987 the ecological groups associated with the periodical *New Ecology* took the lead in setting up a pan-Hellenic ecological formation. The umbrella organisation Ecological Collaboration (*Ikologiki Synergasia*) was the product of two pan-Hellenic general assemblies that took place first in Athens (January 1987) and then in Tsepelovo Zagoriou (August 1987).¹⁷⁰ The chief objectives of the new organisation were specified by one of its co-founders, I. Efthimiopoulos:

¹⁶⁷ *New Ecology*, No. 19, May 1986.

¹⁶⁸ 'Independent Self-Administration' was founded by the citizens of Larissa and was a purely municipal group. Its program focused on the ecological reconstruction of the city, and its practices were guided by the principles of self-management and direct democracy. It succeeded in electing one representative to the municipal council. Tsantilis, C 'Larissa: Independent Self-Administration' in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

¹⁶⁹ *New Ecology*, No. 26, Dec. 1986

¹⁷⁰ *New Ecology*, No. 38, Dec. 1987

‘... to fight for strictly defined ecological issues (environmental protection, sustainable development, etc) as well as to contribute to the restoration of politics’.¹⁷¹

However, Ecological Collaboration never grew to represent the whole of the ecological movement, because it never acquired wide enough support. It remained an organisational effort limited to a specific segment of the ecological groups.

In September 1987, the Ecological Movement of Salonica proposed to start proceedings to form a federation of ecological and alternative organisations.¹⁷² On 13 and 14 February 1988, fifteen Green and alternative groups from eleven cities of Northern and Central Greece (Kavala, Xanthi, Serres, Salonica, Giannitsa, Ptolemaida, Kilkis, Volos, Lamia, Athens, Rhodes) met and defined the ideological guidelines of the future federation.¹⁷³ They approved a statement specifying the proposed federation’s positions on ecological policy, social policy, self-management, direct democracy and anti-violent culture. The problems of the existing ecological groups were outlined as follows: insufficient exchange of information amongst the organisations, lack of co-operation and common campaigns, inadequate theoretical debate, and incomplete coverage of ecological activities by the press of the ecological press. In consequence, the meeting resolved to

¹⁷¹ Efthimiopoulos, I., Stamatopoulos G., ‘In Tsepelovo, this Summer?’, *New Ecology*, No. 36, Oct. 1987, p.22

¹⁷² Ecological Movement of Salonica, ‘The Federation has disproved our hopes’, *New Ecology*, No. 95, Sept. 1992.

¹⁷³ The participating organisations were: ‘Ecological Movement of Salonica’ (the organiser), ‘Alternative Ecological Movement of Kilkis’ (*Enallaktiki Ikologiki Kinisi Kilkis*), ‘Ecological Movement of Volos’ (*Ikologiki Kinisi Volou*), ‘Ecological Movement of Lamia’ (*Ikologiki Kinisi Lamias*), the magazine *Kontra* from Kavala, ‘Ecological Movement of Serres’ (*Ikologiki Kinisi Serron*), representatives from EPOIZO, friends from Giannitsa, Rhodes, Ptolemaida and the groups around the magazines *Praxis*, *Katina*, *Skylakia tou Pavlov*, *Arnoumai*. See in Psomas, Stelios ‘Salonica: In support of the Collaboration and the Federation’, *New Ecology*, No. 42, April 1988

publish a Bulletin that would provide all the necessary information about Green developments.

On 11-12 June 1988, the collaborating Green and alternative organisations came together again, in Volos this time. They agreed to have four two-day meetings, on the following subjects: (i) the ecological crisis of nature and society; (ii) political and social institutions, iii) social movements and minorities; (iv) peace, anti-militarism, anti-violence and social defence; (v) forms of organisation and collective action.

Between 40 and 50 ecological/alternative organisations took part in these two-day conferences.¹⁷⁴ The reports of the proceedings were published in the Bulletin of Collaborating Ecological and Alternative Movements and Groups (*Deltio ton Synergazomenon Ikologikon Enallaktikon Kiniseon & Omadon*). The process for the establishment of a federation that had begun in 1987 finally led after two years to the formation of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisation (FEAO) in September 1989. The success of this effort to unite all of the ecological groups was not due to any specific host or single trend, and its ideological pluralism allowed the co-existence of different, even conflictual, views. For example, the new FEAO incorporated in its political profile both a pro-institutional and an anti-institutional stand. Bringing together such different trends increased the Federation's credibility as a representative institution, but it undermined its policy formulation when it entered the political arena. The ideology, organisation, social base and activities of the FEAO will be discussed in the chapter 6.

The matter of election participation remained an open question for the new Federation too. It became even more pressing, when the political organisation Ecological Alternative Union of Citizens (*Ikologiki Enallaktiki Enosis Politon* - OEPP) took part in the European elections of 1989 with the support of GRÆEL.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, the OEPP

¹⁷⁴ 'The founding of the Federation', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 36, Oct. 1989.

¹⁷⁵ The OEPP network was founded in 1988 in order to provide the ecological groups in Greece with a pluralistic federational body. However, its close collaboration with and support by GRAEL, made other ecologists denounce the network as a foreign intervention imposing on ecological developments in Greece. The friction was further intensified by

and certain ecological groups began a dialogue with some left-wing political parties (e.g. Coalition, Communist Party of the Interior – Renovative Left) and extra-parliamentary formations, concerning the prospect of an alliance for the national elections.

Two international events in the 1980s clearly influenced Greek society and made it possible to set up a united, representative ecological body. Those two events were the 1983 entrance of the German Greens into the federal parliament, and the April 1986 disaster at Chernobyl. The first proved that ecology can constitute a realistic political proposal for the present crisis, and the second attested to the legitimacy of fears expressed by the environmentalists.¹⁷⁶ In Greece, the Chernobyl disaster brought public support for the ecological movement to its zenith. The majority of the existing political forces had devalued environmental issues to a secondary, minor subject. On the contrary, the Greek Greens had underlined the urgency of environmental demands and therefore became the sole focus of the new public awareness on environmental hazards. Moreover, a common argument among the Greens in Greece had been that environmental problems were not intensive enough to support a viable movement.¹⁷⁷ Chernobyl, however, proved that pollution knows no borders, and an ecological movement has no need to be stimulated by local problems.

From 1985 onwards, another factor favourable to promoting the process of unification was the spread of the ecological discourse in Greek society. In the mid-1980s there were a number of ecological groups competing in the student elections. Ecological publications continued, the new magazine *Ekotopia* (*Ekotopia*) appeared in Salonica in 1987; and *Nature and Society* (*Physi kai Koinonia*), the first magazine on ecological theory, began to circulate in 1992. Meanwhile the daily Greek newspapers or weekly

OEPP's decision to participate in the elections. Tremopoulos, M. 'The native political ecology', *Ekotopia*, No. 1, April-May 1989 and Town, S. and P. Kollias, 'The Ecologists and Europe', *New Ecology*, No. 59, Sept. 1989.

¹⁷⁶ Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹⁷⁷ Chrysogelos, N. 'Fear of the open sea even though all sails are set' in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 57.

magazines (like Eleftherotypia, Kathemerini, Ta Nea, Avgi, To Vima, Mesemvrini, Oïkonomikos Tachydromos, Epochi) now regularly featured environmental issues.¹⁷⁸

Once properly set up, the Federation had a strongly negative impact on ecological activism, however. Much energy was consumed by the FEAO's internal affairs, and many rural ecological groups faded out or withdrew their support. Disagreement among the groups postponed decisions and undermined the Federation's active presence. Only a vibrant ecological movement continuing its activities in everyday life could have counterbalanced the increasing complexities of the FEAO's functioning. The fact that the Federation has been set up as a political body without mass support from civil society meant that the Green groups were exclusively dependent on developments within the Federation itself. The Greens became identified with the Federation and therefore had to radically restructure themselves when the Federation failed.

This outline of the history of the Greek ecological movement has shown the environmental activities that preceded and co-existed with ecological mobilisations. Not all forms of social mobilisation qualify as a social movement, however. As Foweraker argues, an increase in associationalism does not necessarily signify the formation of a social movement. Rather this associationalism

‘... may be considered as a pre-movement, or as providing the essential social networks and political learning, which underpin social mobilisation’.¹⁷⁹

In Greece, the 1974 fall of the dictatorship was followed by an intensification of social struggles over the environment. These environmental protests remained, however, on the level of a pre-movement, as described by Foweraker. The novelty and intensification of environmental struggles during that period did not signify the existence of an ecological movement. It was only during the 1980s that increased associationalism resulted in the moulding of a social movement. Earlier environmental mobilisations (1974-81) were the work of small environmental groups and local organisations. The post-1981 ecological activities, on the other hand, aimed at creating a unified national network. The quantitative expansion of the early 1980s was accompanied by a notable qualitative

¹⁷⁸ Papaspiliopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

¹⁷⁹ Foweraker, *op. cit.*, ref. 77., p. 4.

change.¹⁸⁰ When the Greek environmental organisations began to think about an alternative political project, the original scattered environmental activities made way for larger ecological mobilisations that targeted society as a whole. These post-1981 ecological activities did manifest the properties of social movements. According to Melucci,

‘The notion of a social movement is an analytical category. It designates that form of collective action which (i) invokes solidarity, (ii) makes manifest a conflict, and (iii) entails a breach of the limits of compatibility of the system within which the action takes place’.¹⁸¹

All the elements mentioned above were present in the ecological activities of the 1980s. The Greek ecological organisations (i) built social networks that increased the bonds of solidarity, (ii) rejected the post-war ideology of development and proceeded to the articulation of an alternative political project, and (iii) called into question the regulatory ability of the political parties. Thus, the post-1981 ecological mobilisations have constituted the very heart of the Greek ecological movement.

¹⁸⁰ Louloundes, *op. cit.*, ref. 107.

¹⁸¹ A. Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 29-30.

CHAPTER 6
THE FEDERATION OF ECOLOGICAL
AND ALTERNATIVE ORGANISATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The association of green and alternative groups into a federation was the most far-reaching and longest-lasting organisational scheme of the Greek ecological movement. However, it did not function as a uniform whole, but rather as an umbrella-organisation for bringing together heterogeneous ecological, environmental, leftist, anti-war, feminist and other alternative groups. Its failure to merge organisationally and harmonise ideologically was due to both its own distinctive features and the changes in the political system that were taking place during its lifetime.

The history of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (FEAO) is rather unusual, since its establishment was almost immediately followed by its hasty transformation into a political party, and without any prior elucidation of its specific political identity or organisational principles. The Federation then proceeded to participate in two national elections (November 1989 and April 1990), still without ever having drawn up its Constitution. The precipitate change into a political party prevented the construction of a broad and viable social network. The founding of the Federation, therefore, signified on the one hand the demise of movement politics, and on the other the Federation's institutional dominance in the Green spectrum. The absence of a real green movement (which might have counterbalanced the social effects of the FEAO's troubles) magnified the Federation's internal ideological clashes and organisational impasses. In the end, the FEAO's internal stalemates became the only measure for judging the state of the green movement in Greece.

Section 6.2 below outlines the Federation's course, as an introduction to the application of the five central variables - ideology, organisational structure, social base, strategy, and new scenarios of conflicts - to the case study.

6.2 Seeking Public Support for Green Politics.

The various attempts to set up a unified network for the green spectrum have already been discussed in the previous chapter. The process of forming a federation, begun in 1987, led finally to a preparatory Panhellenic Conference in Athens (1 July 1989). Aside from the environmental and ecological groups, it was attended by 25 alternative groups, which indicates the enduring collaboration of Alternatives and Greens. The dominant subject at the conference was the organisational form of the

envisaged ecological/alternative political body. The majority of the participants favoured federation, but there was sufficient disagreement on this point for the matter to be postponed.¹ The meeting then evaluated the results of the European elections, given that the participating organisation, the Ecological/Alternative Union of Citizens (OEEP), had received a relatively high number of votes.² This was considered a sign of Greek society becoming more aware of the green discourse.

The first official Panhellenic Meeting, in Athens (30 Sept.-10 Oct. 1989) formally established the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (FEAO). In addition to 47 environmental, ecological, leftists, feminist and alternative groups, 25 other organisations, participated as observers.³ The FEAO's elementary organisational and constitutional principles were voted in, specifying only groups or organisations of at least five members each, as eligible to join. The meeting elected also a General Secretariat of 27 members and ruled by the principles of direct revocability and alteration.

The Federation sought to avoid the western as well as eastern European models of industrial societies.⁴ Both western liberal democracy and eastern bureaucratic centralisation were criticised for respectively leading to the extermination of life on the planet and totalitarian dominance. The FEAO declared that its own organisation intended a complete reconstitution of social relations.

¹ Protopsaltis, Michalis 'The organisational issue is a political one', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 36, Oct. 1989.

² In the European elections of June 1989 the Union of Citizens received 72.826 votes, or 1.11%. The party came very close to elect a representative, the required minimum percentage being 1.36%. Demertzis, N. 'The Green Movement and the Green Party in Greece', *Diavazo*, No. 318, Sept. 1993.

³ The observers represented were environmental, ecological and alternative organisations, one homosexual group, and also two minor radical leftist political parties. See 'Ecological and Alternative Organisations participating in the Federation' in *Bulletin by the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations*, special issue, Oct. 1989.

⁴ 'Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations', *Bulletin*, *ibid*.

‘Our federal organisation aims at a radical reconstitution of the entirety of social relations via interventions in the political, economic, cultural and ecological sphere’,⁵

and clarified that this was not a one-dimensional project but founded on the principle of pluralism. Although it affirmed the priority of the universal ecological crisis, the declaration also underlined the significance of other social conflicts (such as between the individual and the collective, gender-based, ethnic, etc.). The major aim of the Federation was to end the exploitation of nature by mankind, as well as the exploitation of man by man.⁶ It stated very clearly that this aim could be accomplished only via the establishment of a non-violent culture and adherence to the principles of direct democracy and self-management.

Another important question at the meeting was the prospect of the November national elections and whether or not the Federation should participate. There were two schools of thought. The bloc of the groups Rupture (*Rixi*), Action (*Praxi*) and other Alternatives was in favour.⁷ Its proponents argued that electoral participation

⁵ *Bulletin, ibid*

⁶ ‘Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative organisations’, *op. cit.*, ref. 4, p.3.

⁷ The group around Rupture became politically active in the post-junta period. Its first organisational manifestation was the magazine *Political Information Bulletin (Politiko Deltio Pliroforisis)*, published in 1978, and in 1979 appeared the new magazine *Rupture* (in Greek: *Rixi*), the ideology of which underwent certain changes. Initially (1979) the group around *Rupture* identified itself as a section of the broader movement of the proletarian Left. It acknowledged the centrality of the proletariat, but thoroughly criticised other groups of the extra-parliamentary Left for their Marxist economic determinism, which negated the possibility of a worker’s revolution. The group initially focused on factory workers, as the new revolutionary subject. In 1978-79, the massive student mobilisations in Greek society, made students the potential new carrier of the revolution for them. While acknowledging school and university students as well as workers and the unemployed young as the new revolutionary elements of Greek society, *Rupture* also participated in ecological mobilisations, feminist activities and neighbourhood initiatives. At first it strongly based both feminism and ecology on class and underlined their anti-capitalist orientation, but

would (i) enhance the FEAO's efficiency in projecting its political platform, (ii) provide a continuation of the OEEC's successful presence in the 1989 European elections, and (iii) prevent the political parties from unduly profiting from the increased public interest in green politics. The opposite view was put forward mainly by the Alternative Movement of Ecologists (EKO), the Ecological Movement of Salonica, and Ecological Co-operation (*Ikologiki Sinergasia*). These groups stated that strengthening the Federation through building up a broad social network and shaping its political profile were far more important and should come before taking part in elections.⁸ The majority vote was in favour of election participation, with 40%

later it acknowledged the autonomous existence of many social conflicts. At this point, the group redirected its efforts towards unifying the diverse alternative organisations under a common banner. Although many ideological differences existed between the group around *Rupture* and the ecologists, there were also some common ideological elements: the centrality of the human subject, the belief in direct democracy and self-management, the critical stance towards the old dogmas of the Left and the so-called socialist republics, anti-statism, and the desire to politically mobilise civil society. The *Rupture* group constituted the main force of the alternative spectrum within the Federation. The group *Action* (in Greek: *Praxis*) was the organisational manifestation of *Rupture* in Salonica. *Rupture*, No 1-39, June 1979-Jan. 1991.

⁸ Alternative Movement of Ecologists, 'The five months that shook the Federation', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 36, October 1989; and Blionis, G. 'Some remarks concerning the ecological configuration and the elections', *Ecotopia*, No. 5, Nov. 1989.

against. This result brought to the fore existing discrepancies among the Federation's members concerning the organisation's future role with regard to the established political system. The Alternatives saw the FEAO as a political means for intervening dynamically in the political arena, while the Greens opposed the politicisation of the FEAO. The decision to enter candidates for election also raised the issue of whether to collaborate with established political schemes. The groups Rupture and Action argued in favour of alliances with radical political parties like the Alternative Anti-Capitalist Union (*Enallaktiki Antikapitalistiki Syspirosi*- EAS) and Communist Party of the Interior - Renovative Left, but most of the representatives voted for the Federation's autonomy.⁹

The November 1989 national elections were of major importance for the Federation; it received 39,158 votes (0.58%) and one seat in the Greek Parliament.¹⁰

⁹ Ritzoulis, G. 'Ecology in muddy waters?', *Ecotopia*, No. 6, Jan. 1990.

¹⁰ The elections of November 1989 and April 1990 were conducted under a new electoral law, which introduced elements of proportional representation. The socialist government had passed this new law in April 1989 in order to safeguard its future electoral victory. The electoral system included many favourable regulations for the minor political parties and facilitated the electoral representation of the FEAO (twice). When the conservatives returned to power in April 1990, they changed the electoral system again (in November 1990). Mendrinou, M. (2000) *Electoral Policy in the Greek Political System: Domestic and European Factors, 1974-2000* (Athens, Papazisis - in Greek).

Only 35 days after its founding as the socio-political carrier of the green movement in Greece, the FEAO was already represented in parliament.

The next two Panhellenic Conferences (November 1989 and March 1990) manifested considerable friction between different sections of the Federation. The Conferences concerned themselves mainly with organisational problems, such as what procedures were to be followed in decision-making, what body would be responsible for these procedures or what rules were to be applied concerning the parliamentary representation of the Greens. All these issues became foci of much disagreement, revealing a very deep discord in the matter of participatory and representative democracy. At one end were the pure environmentalists, who wanted a scheme of direct democracy that would equalise all the FEAO's fractions. At the other end were the alternative groups, who wanted a mixture of representative and direct democracy. The environmentalists accused the Alternatives, of promoting rules of representative democracy in order to manipulate political procedures and impose their own will on the majority. The Alternatives accused the environmentalists of a naïve perception of participatory democracy that spelled organisational inefficiency and political stalemate.¹¹ The conflict came to a head when Rupture, Action and the Union of Citizens put forward a proposal to set up a small presidential council to take over some of the political responsibilities of the existing 55-member Secretariat, which was criticised as both unwieldy and too rigid. The proposal was fiercely opposed not only by the pure environmentalists but also by the provincial groups. The issue served to highlight another significant conflict within the Federation: that between the Athens organisations and the groups in the countryside.

When the Federation was founded in September 1989, it consisted of 47 groups; by January 1990, the number of members had risen to 81.¹² This rapid enlargement was coupled with an overrepresentation of Athens organisations, with 50% of the participating groups and 60% of their members located in the Athens area in 1990.¹³ Moreover, the FEAO increasingly oriented its policy from local green

¹¹ Marakis, N. 'Red against Greens', *To Vima*, 28 January 1990.

¹² Hatzigogas, G. 'Politics as art and Basket-ball', *Ecotopia*, No. 6, Jan 1990

¹³ EPOIZO, 'Declaration of withdrawal from the Federation', *Bulletin*, June 1990.

activism to political intervention in the parliament. This meant a gradual estrangement of the non-Athenian groups in terms of both of the Federation's organs and its policy. They charged the Federation with distancing itself from the movement and from its social base in the countryside. Even as early as 1990, one year after the FEAO was set up, a number of provincial groups began to withdraw from it after publicly protesting their organisational exclusion from the Federation's organs and their degradation to local discussion groups.¹⁴

The FEAO's increased focus on formal politics was partially due to the unusual conjuncture of that period. The national elections of November 1989 had returned one representative from the Federation to Parliament. Overall, however, the election had not resulted in a clear majority government, and many informal discussions commenced to try to break the stalemate. At this political conjuncture the one seat held by the FEAO was unexpectedly crucial for the formation of a viable coalition government between the socialist party (PASOK) and the euro-communist Coalition (SYN). In these circumstances certain members of the FEAO Secretariat entered into secret negotiations with the two parties, pledging Federation support on ten non-negotiable conditions. The subjects were: 1. Disbandment of the special police force MAT-MEA; 2. Abolition of the new computerised identities (EKAM); 3. Reduction of working hours; 4. Legal distinction among drug-substances; 5. Amendment of the Reformatory Code, 6. Cancellation of plans for the Akheloös River diversion; 7. Abandonment of the previous government's plan to host the 1996 Olympic Games, 8. Setting up a car-free zone in Athens; 9. Economic regulations for the automatic adjustment of the cost of living (ATA); 10. Aligning Greek legislation with that of Europe concerning conscientious objectors and; also introducing a new

¹⁴ See declarations of withdrawal by the Alternative Movement of Christian Socialists, the Ecological Movement of Kalamata, EPOIZO, Anti-Hunting Initiative, and the Group for Alternative Technology, *Bulletin, ibid*; Athens interview on 15 Jan. 1997 with Stelios Psomas, member of the Ecological Movement of Salonica, FEAO member, Director of Greenpeace in Athens; Athens interviews on 11 Dec. 1986 with Katerina Iatropoulou, FEAO parliamentary deputy 1991-93, and Christos Korkovelos, member of the editorial board of the *Ecological Newspaper*, ex-member of the FEAO Secretariat.

electoral law of direct proportional representation.¹⁵ When these negotiations, as well as talks conducted by the conservative party reached deadlock, new elections were announced for April 1990. Meanwhile the independent initiatives by individuals in the FEAO Secretariat brought strong reactions from the Federation's social base. When the issue of supporting a governmental coalition was finally put to the vote, the proposal was soundly defeated, and members asked that in future a referendum be held in the case of major political issues (such as electoral participation, support of coalition governments, or political collaboration with other political formations).¹⁶

At the beginning of March 1990 the Federation held an international conference in Athens of green groups, parties, or movements from the Balkans. The discussions focused on inter-state environmental problems that had caused friction between the participants in the past. They included also the significant and delicate issue of ethnic minorities. All representatives were agreed on the need for closer collaboration and declared their opposition to the existing models of 'modernised social democracy' and 'neo-liberalism'.¹⁷

With new national elections coming up in April 1990, the FEAO candidature was again an issue. Apart from an articulate minority opposed to any institution of representative democracy, the majority of Federation's members believed that green activism should develop both inside and outside Parliament. It was therefore decided to put forward candidates for election, again, but the high hopes of the FEAO were dashed by the vote count. The Federation had received 50,868 votes and was still only entitled to its one representative, though it had increased its percentage from 0.58 to 0.77%.¹⁸ Since all the opinion polls had predicted between 2 and 3%, there was general disappointment and talk about a lost historical opportunity.¹⁹ The poor election results revitalised discussions about turning from political institutions back to

¹⁵ Tsavides, K. 'Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations and the Social Movement spectrum', *Flowers of Evil (Anthi tou Kakou)*, No. 5, Spring 1990.

¹⁶ Schizas, G. 'Let's Start from the Beginning', *New Ecology*, No. 62, Dec. 1989.

¹⁷ 'Eastern Europe and the Balkans: A Preliminary Co-operation', *New Ecology*, No. 66, April 1990.

¹⁸ Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹⁹ Ritzoulis, G. 'The shop-window is in a thousand pieces, but what matters is the display', *New Ecology*, No. 68, June 1990.

civil society and encourage green activism at the local level.²⁰ Many FEAO members complained that for some time most of the internal discussions had concerned organisational issues or political topics, and that there was no comprehensive political agenda with concrete policy proposals.

Since there was a host of unresolved problems within the Federation, it was decided not to participate officially in the municipal elections of October 1990, although many ecological or alternative municipal groups, which participated, had FEAO support. Some of these groups stood independently, some allied themselves with political formations (all of them from the Left). These political collaborations at the municipal elections caused new friction within the Federation, because the environmentalists accused the alternative groups of trying to unite extra-parliamentary left-wing groups at the expense of ecology.²¹

However, if ecological and alternative groups had not scored highly in the national elections, it was otherwise in the municipal ballot. The participating green organisations much increased their percentages, and became represented on many municipal councils. Provincial environmental and ecological groups (e.g. in Larissa, Kozani, Zakynthos, Rhodes, Nafplio) that had a long history of local green activism received the highest number of votes.²² The results of the municipal elections showed that the people have confidence in green political formations where local problems are concerned, but less so concerning general issues like the economy, foreign policy, etc.

Between 1989 and 1991 the FEAO parliamentary group concerned itself with many matters closely related to the Federation's agenda. It submitted a draft-law, introduced amendments to existing draft-laws, raised questions in Parliament, and responded to issues raised by the media and social foundations. The issues to which it

²⁰ Modinos, M. 'The period of Adulthood', *New Ecology*, No. 67, May 1990.

²¹ Paraskevopoulos, G. 'The Municipal Elections and the Ecological Spectrum', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 39, Nov. 1990; and Tremopoulos, M. 'Was Sisyphus an Ecologist?' *Ecotopia*, No. 11, Jan. 1991.

²² At the municipal elections in Kozani in northern Greece, the independent green Ecological Movement of Kozani took 8% of the vote. Ritzoulis, G. 'The Centre is Grey, Yet the Periphery has Become Green', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 39, Nov. 1990; and Tremopoulos, M. (1992) *The Ecological Movement in Greece and the Balkans: History and Perspectives*, M.A. Thesis, Goddard College, U.S.A.

addressed itself, and which transcended the boundaries of mere environmentalism, were:

1. environmental protection and the quality of life (e.g. sweet-water shortages, disposal and recycling of sewage, industrial pollution, the protection of archaeological sites);
2. the government's social and economic policy (e.g. the rise in the price of tickets on public transport, social insurance for people with special needs, indirect taxes);
3. violation of labour legislation and the right to unionisation (e.g. cases of dismissal of public sector employees, the right of policemen to unionisation),
4. the rights of social minorities and human rights generally (e.g. E.C. funding for improving conditions at the psychiatric hospital on Leros island, students' right to housing);
5. peace and anti-military movement (e.g. the American military bases on Crete, harmonising Greek legislation with that of Europe with regard to conscientious objectors);
6. certain matters concerning local self-administration (e.g. adjusting the boundaries of prefectures and municipalities).²³

The Federation's Constitutional Conference was initially planned for May-June 1990, but was repeatedly postponed due to growing internal troubles. A firm date was finally set for 23-26 January 1992, and between January and June 1991 three preparatory meetings of working groups were held to elaborate the agenda.²⁴ The range of topics discussed manifested the groups' hope to put forward a comprehensive political program including certain specific positions on major issues. Inevitably, the sensitive issues of nationalism and ethnic minorities also came up for discussion, and the working groups were unable to reach agreement; they therefore provided a simple statement of the incompatible positions. The existing rupture between the ecological and the alternative groups on some of these issues became very evident indeed.

The 1992 Constitutional Conference itself was, for the first time, attended not only by groups and organisations, but also by single individuals. By inviting groups

²³ 'Parliamentary Questions by the FEAO', *Eco-Information*, No. 6, Jan. 1991.

²⁴ 'Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations' in *First Constitutional Conference of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations*, Bulletin published by the Federation, Jan. 1992.

and individuals, who may previously have been excluded, it was hoped to broaden the Federation's social reach.²⁵ That this was fast shrinking soon became apparent. Many organisations (above all from the provinces) had already withdrawn, and the remainders were faced with strong ideological disagreements over the rise of nationalism in Greek society.

The two topics that dominated the proceedings were the situation in the ex-Yugoslav democracy of Macedonia, and ethnic minorities.²⁶ There was a profound disparity of opinions concerning the Macedonian issue. They ranged from recognising the right of the people of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) to call themselves Macedonians, to insisting on official participation at the Salonica pan-Hellenic rally on the lasting importance of the Greek-Macedonian civilisation, and the objection to any renaming of FYROM that would include the word Macedonia or Macedonian.²⁷ The Macedonian question was of course closely intertwined with that of ethnic minorities, since denying the FYROM people the right to self-determine their national identity automatically affected the right of all ethnic minorities to adopt an identity at variance with that of their host-state.

²⁵ '“Ecologists/Alternatives”: The Two-Year Course', First Constitutional Conference, *ibid.*

²⁶ The Macedonian issue was one of the main mobilising forces of nationalism in the early 1990s. The dissolution of Yugoslavia had led to the independent status of the former republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia. The formation of an independent nation-state under that name resulted in passionate objections from a large part of the Greek people, who feared that recognition of an independent Macedonian state would complicate the question of ethnic minorities in Greece and lead to active involvement by Turkey on behalf of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace.

²⁷ Athens interview on 10 Dec. 1996 with N. Chrysogelos, member of the Alternative Movement of Ecologists, member of the FEAO, journalist on *Ecological Newspaper*, on the editorial board of *Recycling*. Interview with Caterina Iatropoulou, *op. cit.*, ref. 14; Korakianitis, M. 'Hollow Nationalistic Infatuations and Mummified Peoples', *Flowers of Evil*, No. 7, Winter 1991; Ifantis, S. 'Dry Soil', *Ecotopia*, No. 17, March 1992; Blionis, G. 'The Fragmentation of the Ecological Movement', *Ecotopia*, No. 26, Oct.-Nov. 1994.

The Constitutional Conference split into two camps. The first, consisting mainly of the extra-parliamentary left-wing groups Rupture and Action, wanted to create a Balkan bloc against European Community and United States expansionism in the region. Moreover, they argued that recognition of an independent nation-state named Macedonia would increase tension in the Balkans and undermine the strong Balkan union that was the only viable strategy against Turkish expansionism. Concerning the issue of ethnic minorities, they asserted that in Greece and Cyprus the Muslim minorities are being manipulated by the Turkish state, undermining thereby Greek national interests. The anti-European and anti-American position of the alternative camp, and their approval of nationalism as a political strategy for realising the presence of a strong Greek nation-state in the Balkans, brought strong opposition from the ecologists, environmentalists, anti-militarists, conscientious objectors, and internationalists.²⁸ This ecological/environmental camp denounced any rise in nationalism as entailing the increased polarisation and militarisation of Greek society.²⁹ On the Macedonian issue and the rights of ethnic minorities, it unequivocally came out in favour of the right to self-determination as a principle taking precedence over any strategic interest of some national majority or oppositional state. In any case, the ecologists and environmentalists questioned the premise of an expansionist Turkish state and of any cultural and/or religious unity in the Balkans.³⁰

²⁸ The positions of the *Rupture* and *Action* groups are presented more fully in a book by G. Karabelias, the leader of the alternative camp. The following two extracts are typical: 'Until 1974 the dominant conflict, in regard to foreign policy, was the one between the Greek social formation and American imperialism. After 1974, the dominant conflict has been between Greece and Turkish expansionism'. And: 'The re-acquisition of our national identity constitutes our strategic policy for the '90s'. Karabelias, G. (1993) *Greece: A Country in Between Boundaries*, (Athens, Alternative Publishing and Egeon Publishing House), p. 83 and p. 105.

²⁹ Tremopoulos, M. 'Greek-Turkish Relations: "National Policy" or Development of an Anti-War Consciousness', *I Refuse*, No. 3, July 1987.

³⁰ Kakouriotis, S. 'Draft Resolution in Regard to the Balkan Issue', First Constitutional Conference, *op. cit.*, ref. 24.

The FEAO, therefore, incorporated a broad range of attitudes from extreme nationalism to international pacifism.³¹ Its internal proceedings were further complicated by the decision of the Greens in the European Parliament to support the immediate recognition of the old FYROM under the name of Macedonia.³² The 1992 Panhellenic Constitutional Conference finally witnessed the dissolution of the Federation. However, the withdrawal of the environmental and ecological organisations did not stop the Alternatives from opening the third phase of the Conference.³³ The ecological/environmental organisations declared the groups Rupture and Action as responsible for the breakdown of the Conference, and denounced the continuation of proceedings under the general auspices of the Federation as illegitimate.

Following the FEAO's dissolution, the environmental and ecological groups went their different ways. In general, the period succeeding the Federation was marked by an increased professionalisation of the Greens.³⁴ Many groups became involved in international non-governmental organisations (the World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace, etc.) and established local branches in Greece.³⁵ Others built up their

³¹ Indicative of some extreme nationalistic positions in the Federation was the proposal to close down the Turkish consulate in Komotini, in northern Greece, on the grounds that it constituted one of the Turkish state's political means to influence and impose policies on the Muslim minorities. 'Muslim Minorities in Thrace', First Constitutional Conference, *ibid.*

³² P.N., 'Why do the Greens in Europe support the immediate recognition of the democracy of Skopia under the name Macedonia?', *Ecotopia*, No. 21, Jan.-Feb. 1993.

³³ Ecological Movement of Salonica, 'The Ecologists-Alternatives have Belied our Hopes', *New Ecology*, No. 95, Sept. 1992.

³⁴ Athens interview with Leonidas Louloudes, ex-member of the ecological department of SYN, journalist at *New Ecology*, *Anti*, *Dawn*, ex-member of the Coordinative Committee of *The Citizen*, professor at the Geoponic School, and FEAO member, 17 Dec. 1996.

³⁵ Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) differ significantly from new social movements in regard to their ideological agenda, social base, and strategy.

(i) *Ideology*: New social movements have formulated a holistic critique of modernity. Even where new social movements have focused on specific topics (gender the

own non-governmental networks (for example SOS Mediterranean, or the Recycling Group). Most of these NGO's have co-operated extensively with international networks like MEDNET (Mediterranean Network), EARTHACTION, etc., as well as with ministerial agencies. Since 1992 the number of non-governmental ecological or environmental organisations has risen rapidly.³⁶

environment, etc.), they have associated these specific demands with an alternative vision of politics. NGO's on the other hand have concrete objectives, which they try to meet via management of material and political resources,

ii) *Social base*: New social movements have a broad base of supporters and sympathisers, who also legitimate these movements. NGOs consist of a circle of professionals and sympathisers. Their legitimation stems from the effective delivery of policies. Accordingly, the leadership of NGOs is composed of professionals, who can either offer unique expertise in specific areas, or a knowledge base useful for the evaluation and implementation of social programs. The professional character of NGO's excludes by definition individuals and social groups that cannot meet these criteria.

iii) *Strategy*: New social movements also include anti-institutional elements. The desired position vis-a-vis political institutions has always been a significant issue of ideological dispute in new social movements. NGOs, on the other hand, are inevitably bound up with existing political or economic institutions (e.g. the European Community) since they have to deliver policy successes. For instance, government agencies or international institutions often collaborate with NGOs to develop, evaluate, and implement social programs. Many activists of new social movements have participated in the formation of NGOs. However, new social movements and NGOs are different phenomena associated with different historical periods (the 1960s to 1980s for the former, the 1990s for the latter).

³⁶ In 1995 there were 145 non-governmental environmental or ecological organisations in Greece. In 1997, the number had risen to 196. Research conducted by the 'Environmental Group' of the National Centre of Social Sciences (Jan. 1996-March 1997) and Katsakiori, M. (1995) *Non-Governmental Nature-Oriented Organisations in Greece, Europe and the Mediterranean Basin*, (Salonica, The Goulandris Natural History Museum, Greek Habitat-Wetland Centre).

There have also been several attempts to construct broader collaborative green projects, which have taken the form of either green activism on purely environmental issues, or trying to build up a new political formation, or to coordinate the green groups in Greek society.³⁷ However, none of the new collaborative projects succeeded in bringing together as broad a range of environmental and ecological organisations as did the FEAO. After 1992, therefore, the Greens broke up into a large number of environmental/ecological NGOs and uncoordinated efforts to revitalise political ecology. The FEAO's failure has left a strong mark on the Greens, exemplified by the subsequent ascendancy of environmentalism and the demise of political ecology. The Federation constituted the last broad effort by the Greens to transcend mere environmentalism and formulate a political vision of a novel society based on the principles of political ecology.

In brief the history of the green movement in Greece can be divided into four phases: 1973-81: primacy of environmentalism and green activism, 1981-1989: rise of political ecology and movement politics, 1989-1992: fragile supremacy of political ecology, ascendancy of party politics (Federation), demise of movement politics.

³⁷ For instance, the Network of Environmental Organisations was founded in October 1995. The 65 participating organisations proclaimed as their main target co-operation and coordination concerning environmental degradation (for instance, the management and pollution of water resources, environmental impact of large public works, the new draft-law concerning forest regions). Another important endeavour, initiated by the magazine *New Ecology* in collaboration with individuals ideologically linked to SYN, led to a Panhellenic political formation called New Ecological Initiative (*Nea Ikologiki Protovoulia*). However, its bearing on the green spectrum was limited. In December 1993 various ecological groups, interested in unification of the existing environmental and ecological groups and in safeguarding green autonomy, set up the organisation Political Ecology. This organisation became a member of the European Greens and participated in the 1994 European elections. In 1996 the Initiative of Green Politics (*Protovoulia Prasinis Politikis*) was set up to intensify the debate in politics with regard to the ecological transformation of society. 'Network of Environmental Organisations: One more Step', *New Ecology*, No. 146 Dec. 1996; Ifantis, S. 'The Ecological Spectrum at the European Elections', *Ecotopia*, No. 25, June 1994; *Initiative of Green Politics*, leaflet; Blionis, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

Since 1992: rise of environmentalism and ascendancy of non-governmental organisations.³⁸

In section 6.3 the ideological discourse of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations will be discussed with reference to that of the feminist movement put forward one decade earlier.

6.3 Ideology

The FEAO's ideological framework is representative of the shift in the dominant political discourse from dualistic to multi-factor analysis during the late 1980s/early 1990s. The Federation's position of ideology goes beyond the essential dualist position of the Greek feminist movement (capitalism and patriarchy) and introduces a post-modernist reading of society that is based on a decentralised perception of power. Concerned with a multiplicity of social conflicts, the Federation's very declaration of principles admits fragmentation and indeterminacy. Aside from obvious differences between the feminist and ecological movement, both share certain ideological elements. These are representative of the new social movements' common ideological core, the clear influence of the political Left and the enduring impact of geopolitics.

6.3.1 Ecocentrism and Humanism, Environmentalism, Social/Political Ecology

The various manifestations of green politics can be grouped in two broad categories in terms of the importance they attach to mankind's place in the natural world:

‘...the most fundamental division from an ecophilosophical point of view is between those who adopt an anthropocentric ecological perspective and those who adopt a non-anthropocentric ecological (or *ecocentric*) perspective. The first approach is characterised by its concern to articulate an ecopolitical theory that offers new opportunities for *human* emancipation and fulfilment in an ecologically sustainable society. The second approach...regards the question of our proper place in the rest of nature as logically prior to the question of what are the most appropriate social and political arrangements for

³⁸ The term ‘movement politics’ denotes the transition from green activism to organisationally more coherent and ideologically more articulated forms of action.

human communities...The magnitude of the environmental crisis is seen by ecocentric theorists as evidence of, among other things, an inflated sense of human self-importance and a misconceived belief in our capacity to fully understand biospherical processes'.³⁹

The divide runs between environmentalism and political or social ecology on the one hand, and ecocentrism on the other. In the case of the Federation ecocentrism was absent, since the organisation's ideology was clearly founded on an anthropocentric green ethos encompassing strong humanistic ideological elements.⁴⁰ Representative of the strong and enduring roots of humanism in the Greek green agenda are the ecological manifesto distributed by the ecological group Red Balloon in October 1978, and the ideological position of the ecologist Georges Voiklis (FEAO candidate in the national elections of November 1989) fifteen years later on. The Red Balloon group clearly states: 'The ecological movement constitutes the humanism of modern times'.⁴¹ Voiklis declares similarly: 'Ecology is not simply a new political vision, but also a social ideology that connects us directly with the tradition of humanism'.⁴² The humanistic elements in the FEAO's ideological declaration echo the humanistic discourse of the Greek feminists. Both movements formulated a political vision centred on the notions of collectivity, liberation, and the fulfilment of 'the essence of humanity'. Although the feminist movement projected the opposition of the sexes, it also firmly acknowledged mankind's common humanity. Likewise the ecological movement remained faithful to humanism, ideologically marginalizing any ecocentric discourse that would have questioned its ideological premises.⁴³ This is evidence of

³⁹ Eckersley, R. (1992) *Environmentalism and Political Theory: Towards an Ecocentric Approach* (London and New York, University College London), pp. 26-28.

⁴⁰ A strong exception has been the organisation and member of the Federation of Physiocratic Anti-Hunting Initiative. The organisation published the magazine *Nature and Ecology*, which put forward an experiential and biocentric approach to nature. *Nature and Ecology*, special issue 17 ('Against Humanism'), Spring 1992

⁴¹ Tremopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 22, pp. 22-23.

⁴² Voiklis, G. (1992) *Ecologism* (Athens, Alternative Publications-in Greek), p. 99.

⁴³ A common critique by the proponents of ecocentrism of an anthropocentric political ecology is that humanism is inherently 'speciesist'. The word 'speciesism', like

the two movements' common origin in the broader spectrum of the Left, as well as of their enduring interaction with the Left in the course of their existence.⁴⁴

In the absence of an ecocentric discourse, the ideological variants in the Federation were confined to three major themes: environmentalism, social and political ecology, and the alternative discourse.

The *environmentalist* platform argued mainly for nature-protection, and was found in organisations dedicated to improving the quality of life, to scientific associations, health or alternative life-style clubs, and certain single-issue associations. Environmentalism was not homogeneous, since some groups were interested in it exclusively in terms of degradation due to the waste and depletion of natural resources, while others extended their interest also to the urban environment and quality of life. Some single-issue organisations were concerned with one specific demand and did not engage in broader ecological schemes. What all these ideologically diverse groups within the environmentalist persuasion had as a common denominator and unifying element was their deep mistrust of the political system and the established political institutions. Within the Federation the environmentalists formed as a united bloc that persistently opposed any politicisation of green issues by the Federation.

The second ideological current in the Federation consisted of supporters of *political or social ecology*. Political and social ecology differ in their evaluation of modern political thought and the degree of importance they attach to the human subject. *Political ecology* is based on modern political theory, and underlines aspects related to the social construction of our human or non-human environment, as well as to the political significance of human agency. Accordingly, political ecology

sexism or racism, indicates discrimination. In the case of speciesism it is discrimination on the grounds of species. Accordingly, political ecologists are accused of attaching superior value to the human world compared to the animal world. Dobson, A (1995) *Green Political Thought*, (London and New York, Routledge).

⁴⁴According to Nicos Chrysogelos, the Greek ecological movement has been more homocentric than its European counterparts, due to the participants' organisational origins from the political Left, and also because there has been no large environmental movement that could have fostered a more ecocentric green ethos. Interview with N. Chrysogelos, *op. cit.*, ref. 27.

‘...refers to the attempt to see nature primarily as a political question. The political ecology package gives social actors a constructive role in the relationship between man and nature... Its basic assumption is that the environment is a field of political struggles and as such is open to human (political) intervention. The conservationist idea of a nature that has to be maintained ...is replaced by an idea of the political making of a “better” nature... Its moral framing devices are characterised by an agency symbolism that is closely connected to ideas of an ethics of responsibility’.⁴⁵

Social ecology on the other hand is based on an organismic philosophy of nature. The concept of social ecology is associated with the work of Murray Bookchin, who states that social ecology promises to put an end to the existing hierarchical and domineering attitudes as well as the social relations that connect man’s domination of nature with mans domination of man.⁴⁶ Bookchin has elaborated a comprehensive philosophy of nature based on the ecological principles of differentiation, inner development and unity in diversity. He applies these principles to all realms, including the nature of the self. He underlines that no kind of organisation can guarantee non-domination, not even self-management, communalism, or direct democracy. Only those liberating structures, that allow the free development of an authentic selfhood and consequently change the nature of the self, can be successful.⁴⁷

Although, therefore, political and social ecology are in some respect ideologically incompatible, they do agree in their definition of ecology as a political project reconstituting society in its totality. Both emphasise the social and political origins of environmental degradation, both are vehemently critical of mere environmentalism and ecocentrism. Although the declarations and documents of the Federation represent an ideological framework that is closer to political ecology, they

⁴⁵ Eder, K (1996) *The Social Construction of Nature* (London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi, Sage Publications), pp. 178-79.

⁴⁶ Bookchin, M. (1986) *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Montreal, Black Rose Books).

⁴⁷ Clark, J. (1984) *The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power* (Montreal, Black Rose Books).

also include elements of social ecology.⁴⁸ In any case, the FEAO's political ecology tenet has always been rather fragile, since both the environmentalist and the alternative groups have consistently questioned it.

The *alternative groups* perceived ecology as a universal and trans-class discourse, a view that has made possible the unification of the various alternative movements under a single banner. However, ecology itself was seen as an incomplete political project.

‘An ecologically viable society does not specify necessarily the form of the social regime, economic distribution, gender relations or even the one of technology...the ecological perspective cannot turn out to be adequate’.⁴⁹

It was claimed that since ecology does not constitute a holistic political project in itself, only an alternative perspective originating from the unification of alternative movements can encompass the notion of totality. This is an interpretation of ecology in narrower terms than given by the proponents of political or social ecology, and thereby also denies the primacy of the ecological discourse. This is quite clear in the documents of the Federation, where any reference to the primacy of the ecological crisis is always followed by a list of social conflicts that constituted the main locus of the political activism of the alternative groups.

In brief, the co-existence of environmental, ecological, and alternative groups under the common banner of the Federation became possible by the adoption of an ideological platform, which, while approximating to political ecology, avoided a clear definition of ecology. The Federation's agenda presents a pluralistic reading of society that unites humanism with a vague definition of ecology, thereby providing the vital common ground for safeguarding the organisational alliance.

⁴⁸ The FEAO documents often stress the need to intervene politically on the personal level too, in order to change the nature of the self that has been deprived of all freedom and creativity by the present industrial civilisation. A very active group in the Federation and a proponent of social ecology has been the Alternative Movement of Ecologists (EKO). Declaration of Constitutional principles, *op. cit.*, ref. 4, and *Ecological Calendar*, 1988

⁴⁹ Karabelias, G. ‘Green-Alternative Politics in a Changing World’, *Rupture*, No. 39, January 1991, p. 8.

6.3.2 Holism, Pluralism, Difference

The Federation's all-embracing discourse put in question the legitimacy of the modern political and social order and its relation to nature. For the environmentalist/ecological groups this holism was ideologically founded on the green principles of interdependency and mutuality. As Michalis Modinos argues:

'the infinitely small becomes infinitely large, because everything has an end result and everything influences something else... The small and the large must come together in order to lead to a new awareness of things, a new political perspective'.⁵⁰

In an applied sense, the Green emphasis on interrelationship has provided the ideological background for a critique of industrial civilisation as such (both western and eastern-European manifestations of industrialism, as well as the relations of the capitalist centre with developing countries). The holistic discourse of the alternative groups, on the other hand, rests on an anti-systemic ideological stand:

'Society cannot be cleansed of pollution, it must be overturned'.⁵¹

The Federation has taken interdependency, mutuality, and the anti-systemic standpoint and merged them all into one ecopolitical program.

By its holistic criticism of industrial civilisation, coupled with its efforts towards a new eco-political utopia through creating a new and liberated society, the FEAO's ideology corresponds more to the radical political culture of the 1970s and early 1980s than to the dominant political culture of the subsequent decade (1990s). In that regard it is in agreement with the holistic and utopian nature of the Greek feminist movement's political project. There is an important difference between them, however, concerning their perception of power. The feminists expanded the dominant political discourse by introducing the dimension of gender, but remained faithful to a reading of society centred on capitalism and patriarchy. The Federation, on the other hand, provided a holistic reading of social reality without acknowledging a central organisational principle or dominant social conflict. If, therefore, the Greek feminist movement questioned the modernist claim to universality by asserting women's right

⁵⁰ Modinos, M (1990) 'The Time of Ruptures and the Claim to Universality' in George Karabelias (ed.), *The Greening of Theory* (Athens, Alternative Publications 'Commune'- in Greek), pp. 61-62.

⁵¹ *Rupture*, No. 7, Nov. 1981, p. 30.

to speak for themselves in their own voice, the green protagonists questioned modernity further by adopting a reading of society closer to post-modernism. Thus it was pluralism, fragmentation and difference that constituted the ideological marks of the Federation's discourse.

The first declaration of the constitutional principles of the Federation states very clearly that

'... the proposed "ecological/alternative" perspective of politics and the social conflicts of this world is not one-dimensional; on the contrary this perspective is pluralistic and multi-dimensional'.⁵²

The pluralistic aspect of the FEAO's ideology is illustrated by the detailed references in its documents to a series of fundamental social conflicts, namely between society and nature, individuality and collectivity, intellectual versus manual labour, administrators and administrated, labour and capital, the battle of the sexes, racial conflicts, social minorities and the state, ethnic conflicts, centre and periphery, First World and Third World, national liberation movements versus imperialism, etc.

The juxtaposition of social conflicts as equivalent was in accord with the green principles of multiplicity, heterogeneity, and interdependency, but it also exemplified the Federation's actual ideological and organisational impasses. As already mentioned, the co-existence of green and alternative would not have been possible under a purely ecological agenda, and absolutely necessitated associating the ecological with other social predicaments. Not surprisingly, merging the two perspectives created problems of its own. Simply enumerating social conflicts without shaping them into an ideological whole with a clear political theme led to confusion with respect to the Federation's political identity. The FEAO's subsequent endeavours to create a political image of itself beyond that of a catch-all organisation of numerous social minorities led to further ideological dilemmas.⁵³ The greens argued for a

⁵² 'Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations', *op. cit.*, ref. 4, p. 3.

⁵³ Both the FEAO's ideological components, Greens and Alternatives, severely criticised the lack of a clear political identity and underlined the dangers of this deficiency for the organisation's future. Nerantzis, P. 'The Moment of Truth has Come also for the Ecologists', *Ecotopia*, No. 11, Jan. 1991; Athanasopoulos-Kalomalos, T. 'Identity and Principles of the Green Movement in the World and in

broader definition of ecology, while the alternative groups dismissed ecology as an incomplete political project and insisted that only the alternative perspective can be politically comprehensive. The inability of the two sides to agree on the definition of ecology and its political priority does not, however, negate the Federation's clear commitment to the principles of multiplicity, heterogeneity and interdependency. Because of its ideological commitment as well as from organisational necessity, pluralism was never questioned.⁵⁴

6.3.3 Development, Industrialism, Capitalism

The Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations was uncompromisingly anti-developmental. It made it quite clear that

'By the concept "development" we understand the distortion of the creative evolution of humankind. This process commenced with the appearance of industrial society in the middle of the eighteenth century and has led to the dominance of economic growth as the necessary and sufficient precondition of progress. Contrary to former societies, western societies have a linear

Greece: Critical Review and Proposal', *Ecotopia*, No. 13, May-June 1991; 'Ecologists/Alternatives: An All-Encompassing Account', *Eco-Information*, No. 6, Jan. 1991.

⁵⁴ The Greek experience has been similar to the case of the *Groen Links* (Green Left) in the Netherlands. The *Groen Links* consisted of a progressive Christian party (the Evangelical People's Party), the Political Radical Party, the Pacifist-Socialist Party and the Communist Party of the Netherlands. Due to its composite origins, the *Groen Links*, like the FEAO, acknowledged several social conflicts: man-nature, gender, north-south, hetero- and homosexuality, labour-capital, etc. Its first manifesto '...was a cocktail of pacifist, Marxist, progressive Christian, libertarian socialist, ecologist and feminist ideas'. Like the FEAO, the *Groen Links* struggled with its ideology from the beginning and 'had real difficulties in framing a coherent ideology'. Voerman, G (1995) 'The Netherlands: Loosing Colours, Turning Green' in Dick Richardson, C Rootes (eds) *The Green Challenge: The Development of Green Parties in Europe* (London and New York, Routledge), p. 118 and p. 110.

perception of progress and perceive as a stage of maturity the capability to endless growth, instead of the realisation of a condition of balance'.⁵⁵

The rationale of economic expansion, the Federation declared, now dominates the whole world, penetrating all economic and political systems in the East, West, and Third World.⁵⁶ On the international level, consequences of this global rule of industrialism have been the unequal exchange between North and South and the consequent impoverishment of the Third World. Moreover, industrialism has destroyed the Third World social networks and devalued and marginalized its culture.⁵⁷ On the national economic level, industrialism has led to the establishment of dependent wage labour, the increasing exploitation of man by man, and the eradication of social solidarity through increasing commercialisation and individual competition.⁵⁸ Furthermore, on the political level industrialism has set in motion the centralisation and bureaucratisation of political power, the increasing intrusiveness of the state in the private life of its citizens, and the dominance of a political culture favouring political inertia and indifference.⁵⁹

In the Federation's all-encompassing criticism of industrialism two aspects of the industrial model are especially underlined: the ecological crisis and industrial civilisation. According to the Federation's Bulletin

'the crisis of nature is the most important outcome of the ideology of development and the decisive boundary mark of the actual end of the society of affluence'.⁶⁰

This clearly states the physical limits of the rationale of development and the shrinking of the material preconditions for the perpetuation of the human species. Ecological degradation is not, however, put forward as an independent, phenomenon:

⁵⁵ 'Is there any Counter-Solution to the Rationale of Development?', FEAO Bulletin-Jan .1992, p. 21.

⁵⁶ 'Is there any Counter-Solution to the Rationale of Development?', *ibid.*

⁵⁷ 'Is there any Counter-Solution to the Rationale of Development?', *ibid.*

⁵⁸ 'Common Agreement of the Cooperating Ecological Groups', *Bulletin*, No. 6, Nov. 1988

⁵⁹ *Fundamental Principles of Green-Alternative Politics*, FEAO bulletin.

⁶⁰ 'Is there any Counter-Solution to the Rationale of Development?', *op. cit.*, ref. 55, p. 21

‘Any discourse concerning the “crisis of nature” is also a discourse concerning the “crisis of society”. The destruction of the former (nature) is posing the question of the restructuring of the latter (society)’.⁶¹

Thus, the depletion of natural resources is presented as an outcome of industrial civilisation, which provided the foundation for the consolidation of many different forms of domination. The critique of ecological degradation is coupled with that of the destructive logic of capitalist accumulation, of the acquisitive values of the consumer society and, more generally, of the authoritarian and hierarchical relations underlying the various systems of domination (class exploitation, patriarchy, imperialism, racism, domination of nature, etc.). The Federation has accordingly projected the ecological emergency primarily as a ‘crisis of culture’, meaning a crisis of the inherited knowledge, values, and ideas permeating social relations and practices.⁶² The creation of new values, and restructuring of shared human needs are underlined as most fundamental for the realisation of any ecopolitical project.⁶³ The declaration of the Federation’s constitutional principles specifies that the green principles of balance, diversity, pluralism, and interconnectedness delineate the

⁶¹ ‘Ecological Crisis in Nature and Society’, *Ecological Calendar*, publ. Ecological Movement of Salonica, 1989.

⁶² Robyn Eckersley argues that the ecological problematic of political and social ecology can be identified as a ‘crisis of culture’: ‘In short, this new breed of ecopolitical theorists began to draw out what they saw as the emancipatory potential that they believed was latent within the ecological critique of industrialism. Moreover, this new project entailed much more than a simple reassertion of the modern emancipatory ideal of human autonomy or self-determination. It also called for a revaluation of the foundations of, and the conditions for, human autonomy or self-determination in Western political thought’. Eckersley, *op. cit.*, ref. 38, p. 18.

⁶³ ‘The question of human needs constitutes one of the most fundamental issues of the ecological movement...The human needs of everyday life must...be evaluated in regard to the social system’s production of “artificial” needs and the endless effort to satisfy them. The ecological movement believes that the rationale underlying the evaluation and satisfaction of human needs must change, in accordance with the ecological, social and cultural consequences of any realisation of those needs...’, Common Agreement of the Co-operating Ecological Groups, *op. cit.*, ref. 58, pp. 5-6.

ideological framework of any endeavour to restructure social values and practices.⁶⁴

The FEAO's anti-developmental stand is paralleled by its anti-capitalist position, with capitalism denounced as a result of the worldwide supremacy of industrialism. The profitability motive inherent in capitalist production is presented as one of the chief causes of the present ecological dilemma. This means that

‘... overcoming the ecological crisis is a precondition of overcoming the capitalist mode of production and the creation of a new liberated, self-defined society’.⁶⁵

For all that, for the FEAO industrialism was not synonymous with the capitalist mode of production, and references to the former outnumber references to the latter. This is due mainly to the Federation's global perspective, which includes countries with a certain degree of industrialisation but not capitalist. Furthermore, the strong emphasis on industrialism illustrates the organisation's opposition to not only the capitalist production but to all manifestations of industrialism.

The Federation's documents include a historical account of Greece's specific route to modernisation, as well as its impact on the growth of the country's green movement. The FEAO texts note that in Greece capitalism has been characterised by a fragmentation of capital and property, with post-war development based predominantly on small manufacturing, middle-range industry, tourism, and massive remittances from emigrants. This process of modernisation has resulted in a large middle class with a highly self-interested and state-oriented mentality. Moreover, the prevalence of small or medium-sized industrial enterprises and the lack of economic surplus that would allow a serious anti-pollution policy or restoration, has forced the state to assume the bulk of environmental investment costs.⁶⁶ In this context, the

⁶⁴ ‘Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations’, Bulletin, special issue, *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

⁶⁵ EKO, ‘In Regard to the Ecological Crisis in Nature and Society’, *Bulletin*, No. 6, Nov. 1988.

⁶⁶ Louloudes, L. (1987) ‘Social Demands: From Environmental Protection to Political Ecology’ in C. Orfanides, *The Ecological Movement in Greece* (Athens, *Meta te Vrochi* – in Greek); Papadopoulos, P. ‘For a Greek Political Ecology’ in Orfanides, *ibid*; ‘Ecology and Sewage tanks’, *Rupture*, No. 5, Nov. 1980; Schizas, G.

Federation pointed out, the Greek ecological movement had to deal with two major problems: the middle strata's consumerist ideology, and the magnified role of the state. In other words, Greece's route to modernisation frequently brought the ecological movement in conflict not only with private capital, but also with the social middle layers and the state.

The above analysis by the FEAO of Greece's post-war development is in accord with the ideological premise of the Left that the country has experienced a distorted process of capital accumulation, which made private capital dependent on foreign actors and the state. While the FEAO adopted the argument of a false modernisation, it at the same time rejected outright the Left's belief in economic progress in the sense of unending further development of the productive forces.⁶⁷ In that respect the Federation's discourse constitutes a radical break with the political tradition of the Left, which has regularly projected development as the solution to many of the structural problems of Greek society (e.g. emigration, economic poverty, foreign dependency, deficiency in social and political institutions). Its denial of the Left belief in economic growth has constituted the only anti-developmental political discourse in Greece's post-war political culture.

6.3.4 The State and Civil Society

The ideological stance of the FEAO was generally anti-state and in favour of direct democracy. The declaration of its constitutional principles clearly professes adherence to the principles of autonomy and self-management. Achievement of these two aims presupposes the transfer of powers and authorities from the state to civil society, meaning the citizens themselves.

'The state-Leviathan has been suppressive and oppressive. Moreover, it has confined the autonomy of its citizens, by acting on their behalf. Therefore, the realisation of autonomy presupposes the transfer of powers from the state to the citizens'.⁶⁸

'Contribution to the History of the Greek Ecological Movement', *Ecotopia*, No. 23, July-Aug. 1993.

⁶⁷ Modinos, M. 'The Developmental Myth of the Left', *New Ecology*, No. 7, May 1985.

⁶⁸ 'Non-Violent Culture', in FEAO *bulletin* Oct. 1989, p. 5.

The above statement shows the organisation's political stand vis-à-vis both the state and civil society. In the Federation's early publications the state is associated with domination, violence, and falsification of the people's political choices. It is also linked to oppression of and violence against social and political minorities. Furthermore, its authoritarianism has been supported and legitimated by scientific and technocratic knowledge.

'Politicians and technocrats define and impose policies, leading to a state of things where "freedom", "democracy", "equality", and "justice" have become merely formalistic terms losing their real meaning'.⁶⁹

It was the FEAO's view, therefore, that the authoritarian function of the state, in association with the consolidation of a hegemonic political culture, has diminished the role of citizens and made a mockery of political representation. The only solution to this escalating democratic deficit is, according to the Federation, the mobilisation of civil society for the purpose of deepening democracy.

'As a consequence we radically question, in action and theory, whatever is nowadays called "politics", and any organisational scheme and procedure, which aims at organising better the society of exploitation'.⁷⁰

The FEAO's broad definition, of the 'institutionalised political system' (e.g. the parties, labour unions, the army, psychiatric institutions) means a narrow definition of civil society as the sphere of the active enactment of collective citizenship. Since associations in the political and economic domain function according to a bureaucratic and capitalist logic of their own, civil society can only be located within the life-world, which remains a world of meaning and freedom. Civil society, therefore,

⁶⁹ Indicative of the anti-scientific position of many green organisations was also a slogan in the April 1981 Athens demonstration against the smog: 'The solution will not come from the experts, it will come from the people'. Some green groups, however, did believe in 'ecological science' as a means for overcoming environmental degradation (e.g. the group around *New Ecology*, Ecological Challenge (Ikologikos Antilogos), the Union of Greek Ecologists, the Greek Association for the Protection of Nature, the Panhellenic Movement of Foresters, the Greek Ornithological Association). *Ecological Calendar*, 1988, p. 43; 'Non-Violent Culture', *ibid*, p. 5

⁷⁰ 'Non-Violent Culture', *ibid*.

located outside the borders of the dominative politico-economic system, is perceived as the only sphere with an emancipatory potential. It is civil society that, in the Federation's creed, is capable of realising:

'the fundamental needs of human beings for solidarity, personal fulfilment and creativity'.⁷¹

And:

'There exists only one option for Greek society nowadays, that is the autonomous reconstitution of civil society, involving every single social movement'.⁷²

Within the Federation, however, ideological variations existed, especially between the green and alternative protagonists, with regard to political strategy vis-à-vis civil society and the state.⁷³ The Greens focused on the emancipatory potential of civil society, while the alternative groups underlined the political danger of 'self-limited radicalism', giving no consideration to the interaction between civil society and the state. So, while the ideological principles of anti-statism and anti-capitalism served to unify the two sides, the question of civil society's political potential generated dissent. The ideology of the Federation is significantly different from that of the feminist movement in this respect. While the latter aimed at the autonomous mobilisation of citizens, it never mentioned civil society in so many words. The discourse of the Federation illustrates the ideological shift in the political culture of the 1980s/1990s away from the terminology associated with the political Left and towards the new social movements' emancipatory potential in civil society. While both, the feminists and the FEAO, are phenomena of new social movements, the ideology of the ecological movement also presents a kind of self-reflection and self-

⁷¹ Fundamental Principles of Green Alternative Politics, FEAO *bulletin*, p. 5.

⁷² 'Social and Political Institutions', *Bulletin*, No. 9, Feb.-March, 1989, p. 17.

⁷³ Among the Greens, the pure environmentalists articulated the most rigid anti-state and anti-institutional discourse. They declined all participation in the established institutions of the political system, on the grounds that it would lead to co-optation and abolition of Green autonomy. Nikolopoulos, F. 'Social Dynamic and Electoral Processes', *New Ecology*, No. 53, March 1989; Xiros, G. 'The Course of Autonomy is Consistent with Us', *New Ecology*, *ibid*.

identification that is grounded in the new body of academic literature about new social movements.

6.3.5 Participatory and Representative Democracy

A fundamental premise of the Federation's ideology was the principle of direct participatory democracy. While the superiority of direct as opposed to representative democracy was never questioned by the FEAO in the course of its existence, how these two forms of political participation should be balanced remained an open dispute that was never resolved. In the FEAO's declaration of its constitutional principles the support for direct democracy is clearly stated. So is its opposition to any ruling out of the institutions of representative democracy .

'The Green movement is a democratic movement. It does not counterpoise representative with direct democracy. However, it regards direct democracy as the centre of the new political perspective, and that representative democracy devoid of direct democracy becomes merely a form without a content'.⁷⁴

The Federation's proposals for a future novel societal organisation expressed a firm belief in direct democracy. In terms of the economy, they underlined the need for decentralisation and empowering the periphery.

'The ecological alternative movement proposes an agricultural economy that is not going to be founded on monocultivations and fertilisers; an industry developed on a peripheral basis, which will not pollute, and finally a tourist sector converse to the unilateral tourist development of specific regions and the development of "mass tourism"'.⁷⁵

In the Federation's terminology, economic decentralisation is perceived as a presupposition for successful decentralisation on the political level.

The Federation did not consider the political institutions of liberal democracy as expendable. On the contrary, it declared the aim of ecological/alternative politics to be the restoration of their democratic character through the citizens' active political participation. It would be the people themselves, who, once mobilised, will either restore their democratic meaning and purpose or expose them as obsolete and create

⁷⁴ 'Self-Management, Autonomy', in FEAO *bulletin* Oct.1989, p. 4.

⁷⁵ 'The Ecological and Economic Crisis in Greece', in Fundamental Principles of Green-Alternative Politics, FEAO *bulletin*, p. 9.

new political institutions that truly meet social needs.⁷⁶ A presupposition for the citizen's active participation is the eradication of 'any form of centralisation and gigantic size either of the state or the private sector'.⁷⁷

The policy proposals by the Federation for encouraging direct democracy in Greece were the following: (i) direct control of the government at all times by way of referendums; (ii) restructuring the judicature by means of new laws concerning the promotion and appointment of judges; (iii) empowering the institutions of local self-management. Certain competencies, concerning not only local problems but also general social needs, must be transferred to local self-management. Moreover, decision-making must not be restricted to organs on the top of the hierarchical ladder or to individuals. The FEAO proposed indirect election of the mayor, and the transfer of competencies from the mayor to municipal and neighbourhood councils and any other form of local organisation, (iv) application to all political institutions of the principles of rotational alternation and direct reversibility of representatives, and prohibiting of any single person from occupying more than one public office.⁷⁸

In terms of direct democracy and self-management, the green/alternative perspective went beyond the political and economic to the sphere of culture and prospects for attaining personal fulfilment. Direct democracy

'is going to advance a new cultural perspective, where human beings are not subjects of central governing bodies, but in control of this process themselves.

This will advance the specification of the actual true needs, contrary to the artificial needs produced by the existing culture'.⁷⁹

In the Federation's ideology, belonging to the community is a fundamental human need. Since the community plays such an important role in building a personal identity

⁷⁶ First Constitutional Conference of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations, FEAO *bulletin*, Jan. 1992.

⁷⁷ FEAO *bulletin*, Oct. 1989, p. 5.

⁷⁸ FEAO *bulletin*, Jan. 1992.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 27.

‘the right to be oneself presupposes the continuous participation in social developments. Direct democracy is the only procedure safeguarding this every-day participation of citizens’.⁸⁰

In brief direct democracy, by providing human autonomy and self-determination, while integrating human beings in their social environment, reconciliates community and subjectivity and so conduces to personal development.⁸¹ In the Federation’s creed direct democracy was a fundamental precondition for any broader political project for human emancipation.

The Federation’s ideological adherence to the institutions of participatory democracy was challenged by its rapid transformation into a political party and its subsequent election candidacy. The principles of direct democracy were also put to the test within the organisation itself by the persistence of administrative problems and ideological clashes. It was for this reason that, at the first Constitutional Conference three years after the FEAO’s founding, its earlier unconditional support for the principles of direct democracy became a cautious reference to the necessary preconditions for the application of these principles. There were many reservations at the Conference concerning the feasibility of direct democracy. It was noted that, to function effectively, participatory democracy required communities of only a limited size, and that it was necessary to remain flexible concerning the merger between direct and representative democracy.⁸²

⁸⁰ FEAO *bulletin*, Oct. 1989, p. 4.

⁸¹ The ideological framework of the Federation is representative of ‘ecological communitarianism’. This stream of thought reproduces ‘the idea of a community embodying a single shared subjectivity’. Like communitarianism, it is inspired by ‘the romantic project of recreating the “whole” individual, presently torn apart by the conditions of modern life’. However, ecological communitarianism deepens the traditional communitarian discourse by stressing not only the human constitutive communities in which one is embedded, but also the natural biotic ones. Kenny M. (1996) ‘Paradoxes of Community’, in B. Doherty and M. de Geus, (eds), *Democracy and Green Political Thought: Sustainability, Rights and Citizenship* (London and New York, Routledge), pp. 25-26.

⁸² ‘Principles of Ecological Alternative Politics: Third Meeting’, in FEAO *bulletin*, Jan. 1992.

6.3.6 Non –Violence, Pacifism, Civil Disobedience

The ethic of non-violence was central to the ideology of the Federation. The concept was perceived as a core value of the broader subject of ecology. Since ecology advocates respect for nature and human beings, its tenets can be realised only in the context of a non-violent culture. This is why it was constantly pointed that the attitudes towards human communities and nature are mutually interdependent. Violence identifies with both military aggression and ecological destruction. To implement the principle of non-violence requires, in the Federation's argument, the creation (via education) of a culture based on co-operation and solidarity, and the advancement of non-violent social practices:

‘The absence of domination over humans and nature presupposes the development of a non-violent culture, meaning non-violent repertoires of action, methods and institutions’.⁸³

As the proponents of non-violence have argued:

‘If you want peace, you have to prepare for peace’.⁸⁴

The Federation investigated the cultural roots of militarism, but also put forward specific claims and policy proposals, which can be summed up as follows: demilitarisation, disarmament (nuclear and conventional), abolition of the military blocs of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the revocation of military intervention in local or international conflicts, the abolition of military expenditures and allocation of these sums to relieve true social needs and protect the environment, the establishment of nuclear-free zones, empowering the international peace and anti-militaristic movement, empowering the role of international institutions and NGOs (the United Nations, International Amnesty, human-rights organisations etc), the development of new forms of social defence and civil disobedience (e.g. the refusal to pay taxes for military expenditure), and active solidarity with all oppressed communities across the world.⁸⁵

⁸³ ‘Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations’, *op. cit.*, ref. 3, p. 4.

⁸⁴ ‘Alternative Movement of Ecologists’, *Bulletin*, No. 2, July 1988, p. 39.

⁸⁵ A strong rallying point for activists belonging to various social movements has been the subject of nuclear power. It has also played a role in the creation of Green

Concerning specifically Greece, the claims centred on withdrawal from NATO, the ouster of all foreign military bases, the immediate reduction of military service, recognition of the rights of conscientious objectors, the army's right to unionise, reduction of the military expenditure, improvement in Greek-Turkish relations and rapprochement of the two peoples.⁸⁶ The major demands (Greece's withdrawal from NATO, abolition of the two military blocs) were put forward by individual organisations or blocs of groups, whereas the official documents of the Federation focused more on more long-term processes like the development of international institutions, co-operation with NGOs and the peace movement, and the encouragement of civil disobedience.⁸⁷

The issue of 'non-violence' acquired additional weight due to the outbreak of two wars during the FEAO's existence: the Gulf-war and the civil war in the former Yugoslavia. The Federation vividly denounced both the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait

protoparties, as in Great Britain. In Greece it was of much less importance, due to the absence in the country of nuclear plants or weapons.

The Federation reproduced the firm belief of one section of the global green movement that 'A people united in their desire for freedom and well prepared in the methods of non-violent resistance should ... be able to mount a non-military social defence against any potential invader'.

See Rootes, Chris (1995) 'Britain: Greens in a Cold Climate', in D. Richardson and C., Rootes, *op. cit.*, ref. 54; Tokar, B. (1991) 'Green Defence', in A. Dobson, (ed.) *The Green Reader*, (London, Andre Deutsch, 1991), p. 92.

⁸⁶ Ecological/Alternative Union of Citizens, 'For a "Green" Federal Europe of Peripheries', *Bulletin*, No. 8, Jan. 1989; 'Alternative Movement of Ecologists', *op. cit.*, ref. 84; *I Refuse*, No. 4, Spring 1991.

⁸⁷ The Federation's most active group in regard to 'non-violence' was the conscientious objectors around the magazine *I Refuse*. The magazine took a strongly anti-militaristic and pacifistic stand within the anarchist tradition of social ecology. Accordingly it stressed the significance of the nature of the self for establishing a non-violent culture.

and all and any practice of war (including embargo).⁸⁸ In the Balkan case the principle of non-violence revealed itself as more sensitive and caused ideological dissension within the Federation. The camp of the ecologists and environmentalists argued that peace is inseparable from the right to self-determination and that the principle of non-violence is undisputable. They accordingly were against Serbia's military reaction to the declaration of independence by Croatia and Slovenia. The alternative groups, on the other hand, considered the principles of both self-determination and non-violence as relative in the context of imperialistic expansion, and declared that violence in self-defence against an imperialistic attack can be legitimate, and that the right to self-determination can be misused in the interests of imperialistic expansion.⁸⁹ They argued that Slovenian and Croatian independence did ultimately serve the imperialistic interests of Europe and the United States, and that the Serbian reaction was therefore legitimate.

In order words, during the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, the non-violence triad of peace, disarmament, and non-violent social defence lost its unambiguity and moral certainty and was subsumed into the Federation's broader ideological dispute on the rights of ethnic minorities and nationalism. The above ideological differences and conflicts illustrate the dissimilar interpretation of the connection between the local/national and international level by the environmental and ecological groups on the one hand, and the alternative organisations on the other.

6.3.7 The Local, National, and International Level

A slogan of the green movement, present in all green manifestos all over the world, has been: 'Think globally, act locally'. It expresses the wish of the green movement to transcend the traditional constraints of the nation-state and to link up the local and the international level directly. In this respect, the green movement is clearly anti-state:

⁸⁸ Ecologists/Alternatives, 'No to the Gulf War, No to the New International Order', *Eco-Information*, No. 6, Jan. 1991; Skordoulis, K. 'Gulf-Crisis: The Unfolding of the Anti-War Movement', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 39, Nov. 1990.

⁸⁹ 'Principles of Ecological/Alternative Politics: Third Meeting' in FEAO *Bulletin* Jan. 1992.

‘Green anti-statism characteristically emanates in proposals not for strong suprastate political institutions but rather in proposals for breaking states up and developing their powers to smaller units organised around bioregions or some such...But of course what gives impetus to the contemporary green movement in its present form is the supposition that we can no longer afford purely local remedies’.⁹⁰

On the one hand the Greens have focused on the ‘specificity of local action’, and on the other on a ‘universal network of solidarity based on social citizenship’.⁹¹ This anti-state characteristic is clearly present also in the Greek green movement, which has always been mindful of the dialectical interaction between local and global. Its agenda has ranged from the idea of establishing a universal citizenry to setting up smaller units of self-management on the local level. References to a national plane of analysis have been very limited in the Greek Green publications.⁹²

Concerning the international community, any references to foreign-policy matters, or the geopolitical role of Greece in the world context, have been entirely absent. Instead, the movement’s writers have focused on the international ecological dilemma, the dominance of industrial civilisation, demilitarisation, active solidarity with oppressed communities, and co-operation with the peace movement. The absence of any reference to the nation-state as a geopolitical unit reflects the green movement’s ideological stand in favour of an international community founded on

⁹⁰ Goodin, R. (1992) *Green Political Theory* (Cambridge, Polity Press), p. 157.

⁹¹ Benton, T. (ed.) (1996) *The Greening of Marxism* (New York and London, The Guilford Press), pp. 152-53.

⁹² The West German Greens and German unification illustrate the Green anti-state attitude and the difficulty this causes for integrating the national level into a green theory. The federal program of the West German Greens in the 1980s contained only one reference to unification on the premise of dissolving the two military blocs. So, when national unification became the dominant political theme, the West German Greens were left ‘...confused, ambivalent and discordant’, while ‘... on the unification issue, one national survey indicated that the West Greens were out of touch with 66 per cent of their supporters’. Frankland, G (1995) ‘Germany: The Rise, Fall and Recovery of Die Grünen’ in Richardson and Rootes, *op. cit.*, ref. 54, pp. 34-35.

solidarity and co-operation. In addition, the Greens in Greece have been critical of the presence of nation-states in the international community, since they associate this with phenomena like nationalism and geopolitical competition and with prolonged vicious circle of militarisation, violence, and oppression. This green anti-state perspective was clearly illustrated when the Federation clarified that it did not oppose European unification, but that this process should lead to the consolidation of a federal scheme based on different local centres and founded on the principles of autonomy and self-management. Accordingly, the FEAO actively supported opening up the EC to countries in Eastern and Southern Europe so as to achieve a more balanced development among the Community members.⁹³

In respect of internal state organisation, existing analyses concern themselves with either Greece's main ecological problems, or with the societal transformations necessary for empowering civil society and restraining state power (e.g. by changes in the existing social and political institutions as well as in cultural values).⁹⁴ The ultimate aim of these policy proposals is to free civil society from both state intervention and the market economy. If on the international level the state is identified with militarisation and aggression, on the national level it is identified with hierarchy, domination and authoritarian structures. The green movement wants to see small communities founded on self-management and participatory democracy, and the Greek organisations, in accord with the principle 'Think globally, act locally', have advocated international peace and a universal citizenry, as well as local self-management and decentralisation.

The political target of the green movement in Greece has been declared to be the formation of

⁹³ The Union of Citizens has argued in favour of the demise of nation-states and their integration into broader peripheries: 'Our ultimate vision, on a European level, is a United Federal Europe, above and beyond the extant political and militaristic defence blocs. A Europe, which is going to transcend the concept of the nation-state and will be composed instead by equal in force and authority peripheries, according to each periphery's geographical, historical, cultural and social distinctiveness, which is of course going to be equally valued and respected'. Ecological/Alternative Union of Citizens, *op. cit.*, ref. 86.

⁹⁴ 'Common Agreement of the Co-operating Ecological Groups', *op. cit.*, ref. 58.

‘... an ecological movement, which articulates a criticism of the institutions of industrial society and struggles for the dismantling of those institutions on a local and global level’.⁹⁵

By this direct linkage of local and international level, the concepts of nation-state and national interests become obsolete, contrary to the ideological framework of the alternative organisations.

The alternative literature has no lack of geopolitical analyses of the international community with respect to matters of national dependency or foreign intervention. The alternative group Rupture has even accused the green movement of having imported foreign models of ecological thought and of being unaware of the particular conditions of the Greek nation-state. It charges that

‘A section of the Greek ecologists, like in the past the Marxists, devaluates the significance of the “national issues”. [Thus, for the green movement] to become a political formation with a broader magnitude, it must first of all become “grounded”, meaning to connect itself with ... older Greek historical movements and the Greek national reality. Today, a primary issue, in regard to the green alternative movement’s “Greekness”, is its political position vis-à-vis the national issues’.⁹⁶

For Rupture, ‘national grounding’ means to see the Greek people as a national unit in the context of a competitive global order. Previously, Rupture had focused on national issues relating to the European Community, NATO and Cyprus. However, during the late 1980s it changed direction and stated that the United States and the European Community had ceased to be the main imperialistic threat for Greece. Now it was Turkey, which in the new international conditions, had emerged as an increasingly autonomous peripheral power and was threatening Greek sovereignty. Rupture considered that Greece was in an increasingly vulnerable position vis-à-vis Turkish expansionism. In addition to that, the growing interference of the European Community and the United States in the Balkans, necessitated according to Rupture, the formation of a strong unified Balkan presence. In brief, while in the earlier post-junta period the alternative discourse identified imperialism with the European

⁹⁵ Ecological movement of Volos, ‘Ecology and Ecological Movement’, *Bulletin*, No. 1, June 1988.

⁹⁶ Karabelias, *op. cit.*, ref. 28, pp. 70-72.

Community and NATO, from the 1980s onwards it became identified with Turkish expansionism.

It was, therefore, national issues bringing out the very the different political and ideological attitudes of Greens and Alternatives that became the Achilles heel of the Federation and led to its dissolution. The Greens, in defiance of the political tradition of the Left, asserted their anti-state stance as non-negotiable.⁹⁷ The alternative groups, on the other hand, reproduced the Left's older arguments of national empowerment and international solidarity. In the eyes of the Greens the national level is irreversibly associated with relations of hierarchy and domination. The alternative groups, on the other hand, have adhered to the position of the political Left that, in the case of imperialism, the national level is the sole effective vehicle for attaining self-determination.

We have seen that the ideological agenda of the Federation, like that of the feminist movement, reproduced certain fundamental premises of the Left, namely humanism, the belief in collectivity, anti-capitalism, and a holistic political project of human emancipation. However, in terms of the ascendancy of new values, associated with the new social movements, it broke away from the political tradition of the Left. The Federation's political discourse rested on anti-statism, the emancipatory potential of civil society, the principles of autonomy and participatory democracy, the multiplicity of social subjects and identities, criticism of industrialism and the significance of symbolic goods and individual needs, and the politicisation of the personal sphere. The ideologies of the FEAO and the autonomous feminist groups are in agreement with the ideological framework of new social movements, as set out in the relevant literature. However, in the case of the Federation this fact has often been blurred by the presence and views of the alternative protagonists.

⁹⁷ For the Greens the nation-state concept embodies also the consolidation of a quite artificial homogeneity. By contrast, the green principles of differentiation, pluralism and unity in diversity allow a perception of minorities as contributing to the heterogeneity of society and enriching existing social formations. Tremopoulos, M. 'Solidarity to the Minority', *Ecotopia*, No. 7, March 1990.

6.4 Organisational Structure

The Federation's belief in grassroots democracy influenced its endeavour to establish an organisational scheme and procedures that would allow everyone's active participation in decision-making. Although it was not always clear what form this should take, there was no doubt about what it should avoid. The organisational proposals by the FEAO members against the practices and values of the established political parties, denounced hierarchism domination, centralisation, and reliance on the edicts of experts as manifestations of the undemocratic nature of the existing political system. Proposals for the Federation' Constitution underwent a series of discussions before a first draft could be formulated.⁹⁸ This was finally approved by the 47 participating groups at the First Panhellenic Meeting (in 1989), and contained the following provisions concerning the organisational set up.

1. The Federation would consist of organisations. In order to become a full member, a candidate-organisation must be composed of five or more members, and be proposed by another organisation already belonging to the Federation. The prospect of organisations acting as mere observers, but with full access to the Federation's information and participating in its activities was not excluded.
2. Every member-organisation was entitled to take part in local (neighbourhood or city) or peripheral assemblies. Every local or peripheral assembly elected a local or peripheral secretariat.
3. The member-organisations elected representatives to the Federal Assembly, the highest decision-making body, and these representatives elected the Federal Secretariat.
4. Committees would be set up to elaborate on ideological issues, campaign topics, etc., and to research or generally support the Federation's activities.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ The first organisational draft was intended as only temporary until its ratification by the first Founding Conference. However, it became the only existing organisational regulation of the Federation, since the Conference was repeatedly postponed, and when it finally took place the Federation was dissolved.

⁹⁹ In 1989 the Secretariat had 27 members, later it was enlarged to 45 and finally 55 members, a size that caused problems of political efficacy. FEAO *Bulletin*, Oct. 1989; Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

Relations between the local or peripheral secretariats and the Federal Secretariat remained unspecified, chiefly because the first organisational draft did not specify the function of local or peripheral secretariats.¹⁰⁰ However, the lack of any obligatory institutionalisation of these representative bodies, in the long run undermined the provincial organisations, which had access to the Federal Secretariat only via the organisation's Assembly.

The draft, therefore, outlined an organisational structure where the composition of the Federation's Assembly and Secretariat constituted the crucial factor for the members' proportional representation. It also contained more detailed regulations on a number of other points concerning the participatory character of the organisation. With respect to bring the representative bodies under direct control and to prevent any political elite of becoming established, no representative from the member-organisations had the right to participate more than twice in succession at the Federal Assembly, and the principles of rotation and revocability applied to all representatives at all organisational levels of the FEAO. Several regulations were to protect usually underrepresented social minorities and safe-guard their participation and expression. So, (i) it was obligatory for all representative bodies to consist 35% of women. If this requirement could not be met, the positions were to be left vacant; (ii) the composition of the Federation's Secretariat should favour the privileged representation of students, provincial organisations, and the publications of the ecological/alternative spectrum; (iii) three members of the Federation's Secretariat should be appointed by lot from groups not represented at all at the level of the Secretariat. Moreover, the principle of appointment by lot was to be applied increasingly to all the FEAO's representative bodies; (iv) a logarithmic proportional representation was decided on in order to increase the participation of smaller groups. So, if a group consisted of 10-19 members, it had two representatives at the Assembly; between 20 and 39 members, three; between 40 and 79 members, four; between 80 and 159 members, five and so on.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ The majority of the participants voted in favour of the obligatory function of those institutions. However, since the proposal did not gather two-thirds of the vote, a final decision was postponed until the first Constitutional Conference. FEAO Bulletin, *ibid*.

¹⁰¹ This regulation indirectly acknowledged the more influential presence of a small organisation in a local environment than the presence of a same-size organisation in

To summarise: the organisational scheme of the Federation set out a number of organisational principles and practices (rotation, revocability, appointment by lot, proportional representation, quotas, etc.), which illustrated the FEAO's belief in participatory practices and its opposition to the consolidation of any political or technocratic elite. It also included a series of provisions, manifesting the Federation's ideological stand in favour of protecting and enhancing the political participation of social minorities (women, students, provincial groups):

'Our federal organisation has a horizontal structure that safeguards the maximum feasible organisational decentralisation and the actual dispersion of power to the autonomous organisations-members. The provided organisational structure makes ineffective any concentration of power in the hands of an all-powerful and essentially uncontrolled central guiding body; an organisational practice that is common in the traditional political formations, which implement the vertical pyramid-like organisational structure'.¹⁰²

The very establishment of the Federation and the proposed organisational scheme were major loci of serious dispute. The green groups in the mid-1980s all felt that there was significant lack of informational exchange, theoretical debates, and co-operation among them on practical projects. A series of meetings was begun to try and create a nationwide coordinating network. The first disagreement centred on whether to adopt a federated scheme, of member-organisations, or to set up a party consisting of individuals.¹⁰³ The reasoning underlying federalization was to create a central body while respecting the members' independence and the first Panhellenic Assembly (September-October 1989) duly voted in the federated scheme.¹⁰⁴ The main difficulty this caused was the exclusion of active individual ecologists who shared the Federation's principles but belonged to no specific group. In the end a compromise

Athens. Tremopoulos, M. 'For A Green Federal Political Body', *Ecotopia*, No. 3-4, Sep. 1989.

¹⁰² 'Declaration of the Constitutional principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations', *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

¹⁰³ Protopsaltis, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

¹⁰⁴ 'We support... the prospect of a Federation, because we believe in the autonomy of the participating groups and denounce any centralised, bureaucratic formation'. Ecological Calendar, *op. cit.*, ref. 61.

was arrived at, whereby single individuals could participate at the organisations' local meetings, but were only represented if they participated in city-assemblies, composed by non-affiliated individuals.¹⁰⁵ The Constitutional Conference three years later had to acknowledge the impracticability of this scheme.¹⁰⁶

Another point of dispute, related to the previous one, was what political role the Federation should adopt vis-à-vis the political system. The proponents of changing the Federation into a political party were political ecologists mainly from organisations in the Greater Athens area, as well as alternative groups.¹⁰⁷ In their view the lack of a strong and broad ecological movement in Greece could only be corrected by some electoral shock tactic that would bring the ecological issues to the forefront and create a positive dynamic for the further development of the ecological movement.

Opposition to the formation of a political party stemmed from anti-institutionalists, provincial organisations, and advocates of movement politics and civil society. They objected that the creation of a political party would estrange individuals who were active in green formations, but were also politically affiliated to other parties.¹⁰⁸ The organisations in the countryside also disagreed, because they expected the FEAO's political institutionalisation to enhance the role of well-known organisations or personalities in the broader Athens region, and therefore devalue the equally important, but less publicised green activism in the provinces. This reflected also the opinion of many other members who believed that changing the Federation into a political party would inevitably lead to a split between the party of professional politicians, and the green movement, confined to practical green activities.¹⁰⁹

As we have seen in section 6.2, the Federation did finally become a political party, but it always maintained its federal organisation and was the only political party in Greece without a normal party structure. As the FEAO's history has shown, its existence as a political party eventually eroded its social base and multiplied its

¹⁰⁵ Protopsaltis, *op. cit.*, ref. 1.

¹⁰⁶ 'The procedures for participating at the Conference', in FEAO *Bulletin*, Jan. 1992.

¹⁰⁷ Tremopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 101.

¹⁰⁸ Glarnetatzis, G. 'Ecological Movement of Drama', *Ecotopia*, No. 3-4, Sept. 1989, and Tremopoulos, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Tremopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 22.

internal difficulties. When the Federation was functioning chiefly as a political party, this led to the marginalization of its provincial groups, which gradually withdrew their membership. This shrinking of the organisation's social base had marked repercussions. In traditional political parties the lack of an active and expanded social base is usually compensated for by the existence of a strong party machinery. In the case of the FEAO, however, they were both absent. The loose federal scheme could not act as a strongly unifying apparatus supporting the Federation politically, and the feeble political presence of the organisation was not counterbalanced by a strong green movement.

Another organisational difficulty was the implementation of regulations concerning direct democracy. For instance, the Federation's resolution on rotating the members of the Secretariat every three months was never put into practice due to major organisational problems and the reluctance of many of its members to take on official posts.¹¹⁰ Likewise the Federation's initial decision that all representative bodies must consist 50% of women showed itself, to be impracticable, and even when the quota was reduced to 35% this did not solve the practical complications.¹¹¹ Yet, another example was the incompatibility between the ideological principle of safeguarding the right to expression of minorities, and the endeavour to arrive at binding political decisions. Whenever important issues were at issue (e.g. participation in the elections), the reinforced majority of the participants were entitled to overrule the right of the one-third of the representatives to veto the decision taken.¹¹² The relation between the Federation's principles and its actual organisational practices corresponded to a large extent to the degree of political efficacy.

The Federation's organisational endeavour to find a third way, between that of democratic centralism and total decentralisation, shows the practical obstacles between the principles of direct democracy and the required minimum political efficacy. At the end of the first year of the Federation's existence, most of its

¹¹⁰ Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹¹¹ 'Concerning the Quota', *New Ecology*, No. 65, March 1990.

¹¹² So, in the 1989 Panhellenic Conference, 85% of the participants overruled the right of one-third of the representatives to veto the majority decision to participate in the forthcoming elections. Papaioannou, D. 'Let the Auditoriums Flourish Again', *New Ecology*, No. 61, Nov. 1989.

members had come to believe that putting into practice the principles of direct democracy (e.g. rotation, revocability, autonomy of the member-organisations) together with the acute power struggles between individual groups, had resulted in individual irresponsibility and political inefficacy.¹¹³ The organisational impasses generated a new debate: should the participatory structures and procedures be adhered to in their pure form, or should they be accompanied by some degree of representative democracy? Two camps developed. The environmentalists were wholly for the principles of direct democracy, irrespective of any political inefficacy. The alternative groups argued in favour of a combination of representative and participatory democracy, and underlined the necessity of political efficacy.

The discrepancy between direct democracy and political efficacy made itself felt also in the relations of the FEAO as a unifying and central organisational body with its autonomous member-organisations. Given the Federation's belief in participatory democracy and its opposition to centralisation, it was hardly possible to restrict the members' autonomy. There were many complaints, however, that the Federation's inability to construct a comprehensive political platform was due to the growing sense of independence of certain groups that objected to a comprehensive political agenda as an ideological imposition by the central body.¹¹⁴

The emergence of non-institutionalised power structures constituted another significant organisational problem. The absence of a rigid, well-defined organisational structure often led to *ad hoc* hierarchical relations and the domination of single personalities.¹¹⁵ In other words, the endeavour to keep the organisation flexible and to promote participatory democracy often brought about the opposite effect. Non-institutionalised hegemonic relations were an especially awkward problem. Their development took two forms: either as the result of organisational and ideological dominance of single personalities or blocs of groups, or through the increasingly

¹¹³ Nerantzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 53.

¹¹⁴ In contrast to the situation of the political Left, there was no binding commitment of the members to the Federation. Interview with Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 34; Athanasopoulos-Kalomalos, *op. cit.*, ref. 53.

¹¹⁵ Diakos, K 'Let's talk seriously about the Federation', *Ecotopia*, No. 10, Sept.-Oct. 1990; Kalesakis, K 'The Federation Presumes Work and Sincerity', *New Ecology*, No. 84, Oct. 1991.

unilateral and arbitrary actions of individuals in their official capacity. In the first case, the individuals aspiring to monopolise procedures were persons with scientific qualifications or with a long history in the green movement; well-known political personalities with access to the mass-media; and persons skilled in organisational manipulation.¹¹⁶ However, there was one person particularly, who was the main cause for hierarchical relations within the Federation, and this was the leader of the alternative protagonists, Georges Karabelias. The strong influence of the alternative persuasion and their leader was founded on Karabelias well-known political history, on the ideological homogeneity of the Rupture-Action combination, and their long experience in political mass-procedures. The Rupture-Action bloc had an ideological and organisational rigidity that endowed it with a disproportionately strong presence in the Federation's flexible proceedings.

In this general context, questions were also raised about the increasingly unilateral policies put forward by certain individuals in the Secretariat.¹¹⁷ A very obvious case in point was the occasion when members of the Secretariat on their own initiative began secret talks concerning the FEAO's position in efforts of forming a coalition government.¹¹⁸ To prevent similar such occurrences in the future, internal referenda were proposed, and at the Panhellenic Meeting in November 1989 it was agreed that decisions on important issues (e.g. whether or not to participate in elections, changes in the FEAO program or additions to it), should be taken by referendum.¹¹⁹ This demand from the Federation's social base proved the existence of non-institutionalised hegemonic, and therefore non-representative, relations between two organisational layers (Assembly and Secretariat).

The likelihood of the emergence of power structures other than those defined by the Constitution had been discussed during the process of the Federation's

¹¹⁶ Diakos, *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Dikaioakos, M. 'Concerning the State of the Federation', *Ecological Newspaper*, No. 38, Sept. 1990; and 'Declaration of Withdrawal' by EPOIZO and the Physiologic Anti-Hunting Initiative, *op. cit.*, Ref. 13 and 14.

¹¹⁸ In the elections of November 1989 no political party gained an absolute majority of parliamentary seats, and the FEAO's single seat assumed major importance for forming a governmental coalition (see section 6.1).

¹¹⁹ Schizas, *op. cit.*, ref. 16.

founding. The Federation-to-be took into account the organisational problems experienced by the autonomous feminist groups. While the experiment of the autonomous feminist groups to create small units without structure was agreed as necessary for establishing contact and raising personal consciousness, it was also acknowledged that any form of collectivity will inevitably set up unofficial hierarchical structures. A clearly defined organisational scheme would, therefore, constitute a minimum guarantee for a certain degree of representation and responsibility.¹²⁰ The Federation's outline of organisational principles on the one hand specified the function of the organisation as such, and on the other assured the presence of elements of participatory democracy. The failure to control the emergence of non-official power structures in practice, together with the difficulties of implementing the participatory regulations and achieving political efficacy, gradually led to a more cautious stand vis-à-vis direct democracy. If in 1989 direct democracy was perceived as the only possible organisational form guaranteeing the revitalisation of the true content of representative democracy, in 1992 it was admitted that representative democracy too was necessary for a viable implementation of direct democracy. In consequence, the two forms of representation were no longer considered incompatible and became increasingly supplementary.

6.4 Social Base

As we have seen, the FEAO consisted of an association of many groups with very different social attributes. Besides the pure environmentalists, the ecological and alternative groups, there were for instance the antivivisectionists, the Society of Bicycle Lovers, the homosexual group (*Kraximo*), the feminist group (*Katina*), the students' group (Pavlov's Dogs), the alternative Christian-Socialist group around the magazine *Exodus*, the group for an alternative intervention in the sphere of knowledge (Erotic Mushrooms) - which illustrates the wide range of participating organisations.¹²¹

The Federation's organisational base accordingly showed a high degree of political pluralism and social heterogeneity. It was strongly present right across the

¹²⁰ 'Groups without Structure and their Limits', *Bulletin*, No. 10, April-May 1989.

¹²¹ 'Ninety-One Organisations', *New Ecology*, No. 65, March 1990.

country, including the islands.¹²² The extensive geographical penetration by the Federation was coupled with its penetration of diverse social strata. So, in the Greater Athens area the groups in the Federation came from both privileged and underprivileged neighbourhoods.¹²³ The Federation's trans-class identity endured longer than the participation of provincial groups, which, as mentioned earlier, withdrew when the Federation was functioning chiefly as a political party and they felt themselves excluded. By the time of the First Constitutional Conference in 1992 the FEAO's social base was already restricted to a few groups that were active predominantly in the two major cities of Greece: Athens and Salonica. Still, its initial capability to penetrate both different social strata and geographical areas was remarkable, given that it never had a party-like organisational apparatus like the Union of Greek Women. The heterogeneity of the Federation's social base was, of course, in part attributable to the pre-existing nuclei of local green groups.¹²⁴

An interesting characteristic of the FEAO's social base was the very limited presence of scientific and academic organisations.¹²⁵ This eventually proved to be a serious disadvantage in terms of proposing scientifically viable solutions to problems of environmental degradation. Besides, this under-representation of scientists and academics contradicts new social movement literature, which notes the high presence of better-educated strata in new social movements. However, some of the Federation

¹²² For instance some of the towns and geographical areas represented in the Federation were: Patras, Chalkida, Lamia, Pilion, Karpenisi, Amfissa, Ptolemaida, Yiannina, Giannitsa, Drama, Trikala, Kozani, Kilkis, Xanthi, Karditsa, Messini, Lakonia, Imathia, Ermionida, Kalamata, Zakynthos, Kefalonia, Corfu, Lefkada, Carystos, Paxchsi, Syros, Rhodes, Milos, Mitilini, Crete (Iraklio-Sitia). 'Ninety-One Organisations', *ibid.*

¹²³ For instance: Neo Psychico, Maroussi, Glyfada, Drapetsona, Hhaidari, Egaleo and the western districts of Athens. 'Ninety-One Organisations', *ibid.*

¹²⁴ In 1987 there were roughly 150 environmental organisations, spread all over the country. Papadopoulos, *op. cit.*, ref. 66.

¹²⁵ Interview with Stelios Psomas, *op. cit.*, ref. 14; with Leonidas Louloudes, *op. cit.*, ref. 34; with Caterina Iatropoulou and Christos Corcovelos, *op. cit.*, ref. 14.

members included former activists of the students' mass-mobilisation in the late 1970s.¹²⁶

Another noteworthy element of the organisation's social base was the high percentage of members who had formerly been active on the political Left. They had either belonged to the established political parties (mainly the Communist-Party of the Interior), or to the extra-parliamentary Left. In the former case, disagreement with repression of intra-party differences, as well as the instrumental rationality that dominated the parties, led to their departure and their active involvement in new social movements or the institutions of local self-management (e.g. municipal councils).¹²⁷ In the second case, the gradual withering away of the extra-parliamentary groups that had prevailed during the post-junta period meant a restructuring of the alternative protagonists, who now denounced the strategy of a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and focused instead on the mobilisation and radical reconstitution of civil society.

The unifying element in the Federation's social base, which was made up of people of diverse social origins, from different geographical areas and all ages, was their prior active involvement in green groups, in political organisations of the Left, or institutions of self-management. While this multiplicity of social and political attributes, enhanced the FEAO's pluralistic distinctiveness, it also slowed down the process of shaping a concrete political identity that would be unambiguous and comprehensible to the wider public.

The social base of the Federation did not always correspond to the social profile of the voters supporting its political project. As discussed earlier (chapter 5), the Green vote in urban areas differed markedly from that in semi-urban ones and even more so in the countryside. The wealthier, well-preserved, new middle-class areas were much more likely to cast a green vote than low-income and

¹²⁶ A by-product of these student mobilisations was the founding of the organisation Ecological Initiative. Athens Interview (13 Dec. 1996) with Polydevkis Papadopoulos, first publisher of *Ecological Newspaper* (1982-'85), member of Ecological Initiative, and of the Alternative Movement of Ecologists.

¹²⁷ Poulos, G. '1976-1986: Crises and Experiences in the Ecological Movement' in Orfanides, *op. cit.*, ref. 66.

environmentally damaged areas.¹²⁸ This dissociation between the social attributes of the Federation's members and its electoral supporters was coupled with a further factor: In many areas, with a pre-history of green activism, the green vote was surprisingly limited. It was only in municipal elections that this discrepancy between local green activism and the green vote disappeared.

According to the theorists of new social movements, it is the younger, better educated, and more articulated strata of society who make up the social base of new social movements.¹²⁹ In the case of the Federation, this premise was reflected by the FEAO's electoral base, but not by its actual social base. This of course created organisational problems of its own concerning the formulation of an effective political strategy.

6.5 Strategy

In its declaration of constitutional principles the political role of the Federation is envisaged as a political intervention in the whole spectrum of society and politics. This means that even in the case of the FEAO participating in representative politics, it would always be actively involved in social struggles rather than convert them into votes or act as mediator with the political system.¹³⁰ Accordingly, the Federation did not initially exclude political action in any form, whether on behalf of civil society or involving participation in the conventional channels of the political system. It tried to reconcile two strategic choices: Whether to give priority to movement politics over traditional politics, and how to maximise FEAO influence within traditional politics. The first focused on mobilising civil society via participatory practices, the second centred on delivering policy outcomes. Every social movement is constantly faced with these two strategic choices. In the case of the Federation, the gradual dominance of the second strategy was due to: (i) the organisation's positive evaluation of the

¹²⁸ In the elections of April 1990, the all-Greek record of the FEAO was in one of the wealthiest areas of Athens (Palaio Psychiko: 2.11%). 'Comments on other Comments', *New Ecology*, No. 67, May 1990, Demertzis, *op. cit.*, ref. 2.

¹²⁹ O' Neill, M. (1997) *Green Parties and Political Change in Contemporary Europe: New Politics, Old Predicaments*, (Aldershot and Brookfield, Ashgate), p. 5.

¹³⁰ 'Declaration of the Constitutional Principles of the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations', *op. cit.*, ref. 4.

political opportunity structure, (ii) in belief that society was ready and able to respond to ecological demands and iii) the feeble state of the ecological spectrum. When the Federation was set up, the first two factors were very positive, which gave support to those members who argued in favour of its election candidature.

In 1989, when the Federation was founded, an intense political crisis erupted, which was expected to lead to a great volatility of votes. With the political scene torn by scandals of corruption in 1988 and '89, a decisive break in party loyalties was predicted. It was precisely this assumption that persuaded the Greens to enter into politics. The hasty transformation of the Federation into a political party was not, however, due only to the exceptionally favourable political conjuncture, but also to the increasing social awareness of environmental issues. In the European elections of June 1989, the Union of Citizens had received an unexpectedly high vote (1.11%). Also, in 1989 the circulation of ecological magazines rose by 30% to 40%, and the mass media included more and more environmental material in their disseminations. On the other hand, the state of the Greek ecological movement remained fragile. Although there had been several meetings to organise some form of cooperation, the FEAO was not set up until 1989. Political ecology had begun to dominate green thinking from 1981 onwards, but there was not yet a robust, broad, and co-ordinated ecological movement.

The positive political conjuncture, the rise in environmental consciousness, and the feebleness of the ecological movement made the majority of the FEAO members argue in favour of a strategy, which would first tackle the party system and hope to carry civil society along with it. So, instead of starting by strengthening the ecological movement and then proceeding to the formation of a party, it was decided to create a political party, as an electoral shock tactic, which would then accelerate the movement's progress. Therefore, traditional politics became the Federation's priority, which hoped to activate then civil society.

It was the strategic decision by the Federation to join the party-political game that in the long run led to its demise and indeed to that of the whole movement. Changes in the political conjuncture, the rise of nationalism, the enduring polarisation of the 'frozen' Greek party system, and the lack of social interest in environmental issues were some of the factors that invalidated the Federation's earlier reading of the political opportunity structure and society's ecological readiness. The desired electoral breakthrough, which was supposed to act as a political accelerator, never

happened. In addition, a number of internal factors - including the ambiguity of its own political identity, organisational problems and personal clashes, the almost exclusive focus on central politics and the consequent neglect of the ecological movement in the provinces - inhibited the Federation from projecting a strong political presence.

The shrinking of the FEAO's social base and its political marginalization were openly acknowledged in the organisation's Constitutional Conference (1992):

'In the last two years, since autumn of 1989, many things have changed. The situation at the present time shares few common elements with the period of our starting point, when we were at the centre of publicity and full with optimism and expectations. The continual internal clashes have tired most of us; an extended ecological movement has not yet been generated and our alternative activities have been feeble'.¹³¹

In these circumstances the Conference organisers had hoped to change the direction of the Federation's strategy and strengthen its presence in civil society. Green groups and single individuals were invited to this new beginning, and the willingness to turn towards movement politics shows that new social movements are not constrained to keep to one strategy only, nor do they tend irreversibly towards increased institutionalisation. It is the wider societal context, the institutional setting, and the actors' own understanding of these factors that are the crucial variables for the strategic choices by social movement organisations.¹³² The Federation's reading of the institutional and societal context had certainly changed between 1989 and 1992, but its dissolution at the 1992 Conference ruled out all possibility of testing some different strategy.

The failure of the Federation's political project left a strong mark on all of the green protagonists. Most of the green groups withdrew from all political involvements and concentrated instead on green activism on the local level or on professional activities in the broader environmental context.

¹³¹ 'The Situation at the Present Time', in FEAO *Bulletin*, Jan. 1992, p. 4.

¹³² Hjelmar, U. (1996) *The Political Practice of Environmental Organisations* (Aldershot, Brookfield, Ashgate).

6.7 New Scenarios of Conflict

The green and alternative endeavour to collaborate in a federated organisation became really in the late 1980s/early '90s. This means that, in relation to the autonomous feminist groups and the Union of Greek Women (EGE), the Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations was a new scenario of conflict. The autonomous feminist groups and the EGE, all of which became active after 1974, represented the evolution of two earlier phases of conflict. In the first period, following the fall of the dictatorship, all these feminist groups incorporated into their program demands concerning the consolidation of democracy, the formation and defence of liberal political institutions and the termination of the political and social exclusion of the political forces of the Left. Then, after the socialist party came to power in 1981, the conflict concerned the introduction of fundamental social-democratic reforms and the modernisation of obsolete institutions, regulations and practices (such as the reform of Family Law). As we have seen in chapter 4, the question of modernising the political system and social practices created a great deal of disagreement in the autonomous feminist groups between pro- and anti-institutionalists. When the green and alternative groups initiated their collaborative efforts later in the 1980s, the issue of modernisation was in the forefront again, but in a rather differed context. Social-democratic reforms had been implemented for almost a decade, but the crisis of political scandals in 1989, as well as the changing international environment, put in question the efficacy of liberal political institutions and the viability of social-democratic reforms within a context of globalisation. So, in the late 1980s the political crisis in Greece and the country's increasing international exposure gave rise to a new debate, this time concerning the premise of representative democracy as well as a national strategy for the global context.

The answer of both the ecological and the alternative schools of thought to the growing dilemma was twofold: (i) representative democracy must be merged with participatory democracy in order for the first to regain its true character and meaning; and (ii) the neo-liberal as well as the new social-democratic model of management, imposed by the process of globalisation, must be rejected. The only permissible policy was decentralised and anti-developmental. Meanwhile, in the late 1980s/early '90s Greece's interdependence with other countries (in terms of economic crisis and its impact on the prospect of European monetary unification, international intervention in the Balkan war, and the rise of the discourse of globalisation) was for the first time

experienced as an immediate and unavoidable reality. In consequence, a broad section of the Greek people began to reassert the concept of 'Greek identity' and to support a nationalism that cut across party lines. In the 1990s Greek politics was polarised between nationalists/anti-Europeans and anti-nationalists/pro-Europeans. In this new conflict, permeating the whole of society, the ecological/alternative protagonists split up and followed diverse routes. The alternatives embraced nationalism as a form of anti-imperialism, while the ecologists and environmentalists adhered to their anti-state platform and concentrated on green issues locally and globally.

The alternative and environmentalist/ecologist groups may have formed opposing sides with regard to nationalism, but they were still united in their rejection of the political and economic model linked to the process of globalisation. Yet, while both held anti-capitalist and anti-developmental views, the alternatives saw the process of globalisation as inseparably linked with capitalist modernisation, while for the Greens globalisation carried the potential of strengthening local and global civil society. The question of modernisation, therefore, re-emerged in a new form. The post-junta call for the activation of liberal institutions, and the post-1981 social claims for deepening political and economic democracy, now became demands for formulating a new strategy to defend the rights recently acquired, but also to respond to the increasing international pressures. In such a historical conjuncture, the anti-state stance of new social movements accords better with the process of globalisation than do the national policies of traditional parties. The difficulty for new social movements lies in how to become political bearers of a national claim for self-determination without embracing the institutions representative of the nation-state as such.

6.8 Summary

The case of the Federation of Ecological and Alternatives Organisations is representative of the ideological framework and organisational structure of new social movements as depicted in the relevant literature. This cannot, however, be said of its actual political strategy. The organisation's decision to proceed quickly to the creation of a political party so as to make use of the political system for influencing civil society differs from that of the previous case studies. The autonomous feminists focused exclusively on civil society, and the EGE was looking to the political parties and the state apparatus for support. The FEAO tried to formulate a third strategy, which, however, could not be put into practice because of the too great diversity of its

member organisations. The Federation's most serious shortcoming was its organisational structure. Resource-mobilisation theorists have always argued that organisation is one of the most important elements for the success of a social movement. Exactly what organisational scheme a social movement adopts is closely connected to its overall goals, so that for instance decentralised organisation is more likely to be successful for dispossessed groups or mobilisations of civil society. In the case of the Federation, however, the decentralised, participatory form of organisation that was adopted was not congruent with simultaneous active involvement in traditional politics. While, the FEAO had chosen a decentralised, fluid organisational form in accord with its belief in participatory practices, it nevertheless participated in a political system that demanded efficiency rather than communication. In the end the participatory form of organisation proved to be incompatible with the requirements of representative democracy. Its ineffectiveness in policy-formation gradually led the Federation to drop its former principles of participatory politics, and this undermined the belief of many of its members that direct democracy can intervene on a general political level. Therefore, after the Federation's dissolution many of them restricted their activities to specific domains and single-issue agendas.

Conclusions

We have seen that of the three case studies examined in chapters 2-6 above that the autonomous feminist groups came closest to the ideal type of new social movements. The Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations (FEAO) was an amalgam of groups some of which adhered to the principles of new social movement politics and others were more interested in the question of political efficacy. The Union of Greek Women (EGE), finally, manifested a number of attributes that contradicted the ideal type (its centralisation, state engineering, nationalism, etc.). However, all three groupings expanded the boundaries of the political by questioning the representative quality of formal politics and introducing new subjects into the political agenda. The different forms this new politics took in the post-1974 Greek society was related to the prevailing structures and cultural attributes of that society, as well as to the ideological and strategic choices of the three collective social actors presented.

New social movement theory provided the archetype that constituted the main point of reference throughout the thesis, while resource mobilisation highlighted the strategic dilemmas faced by the organisations in their endeavour to introduce movement politics in a civil society non-receptive to autonomous grass-roots projects. New social movement theory on its own is inadequate to explain the different forms new politics has taken in Greece (EGE, FEAO), given that the ideal type is based on the specific structures of advanced capitalist societies. On the other hand, neither can resource mobilisation theory on its own account for the manifestation of new social movement politics (autonomous feminist groups) in Greek society, despite the limited resources and the rational calculation of political efficacy. The Greek case studies also show that the macro-question of movement emergence or development is linked to the micro-questions of individual participation. For instance, the Federation's decision to join the central political scene discouraged members from the provinces to remain active in the organisation, and led to a major change in its social base and subsequent course of action. Thus, the micro-question of individual participation, emphasised by collective theory, highlights the shifting identity of a movement. As already noted in chapter 1, new social movement theory focuses on broad structural changes; resource mobilisation analyses the preconditions for mobilising participants; and the classical model illustrates the participants' cognitive orientations. By presenting three different

answers to the question of the viability of movement politics, the Greek case studies exemplify the complementary character of those three levels of analysis.

The individual case studies were built around a common nucleus of strategic dilemmas, due to (i) statocracy and patrocacy, (ii) the political tradition of the Left, (iii) the open question of modernisation.

(i) Statocracy and patrocacy: The political tradition of a strong state dominating over civil society, the limited but polarised pluralism of the party system and its respective personalistic-particularistic features, as well as the lack of a political culture supportive of autonomous citizens' associations, seriously limited the strategic options available to social movements in Greece. Collectivities deprived of resources, while competing with others in the political arena, have either had to address themselves to influential allies to obtain access to the state apparatus and extract resources from factions of the elite, or to apply innovative practices and take advantage of unconventional resources in the framework of a weak and underdeveloped civil society. The solution of this strategic problem proposed by each of the three protagonists has been different. The EGE chose the socialist party as its alliance system, and after the party's election victory made extensive use of the state apparatus. The autonomous feminist groups applied innovative practices and used unconventional resources, in their efforts to actuate a feeble civil society. The Federation, while supporting ecological networks and initiatives, also associated itself with the party system and the state when divisions within the political elite and the prospect of electoral realignments revealed an increasingly positive political opportunity structure (1989-92). In terms of policy outcomes the most successful organisation was the EGE; in terms of movement politics, the autonomous feminist groups were the only ones actuating civil society and positing the issue of autonomy. If the two feminist case studies illustrate a zero-sum game with regard to autonomy and policy outcomes, the Federation opted for the political project of reconciling those two objectives. Its adoption of elements from each of the other two groupings did not, however, bring the desired outcome, since its organisational structure was not concordant with its political objectives.

Resource mobilisation theorists have asked which organisational forms are the most effective for mobilising and applying resources. In a society with strong patrocratic and statocratic elements they are those that are centralised and bureaucratised, since it is they that are best able to enter into negotiations with the

various institutions of formal politics (state, political parties). So it was the rigid organisational form of the EGE that enabled it to utilise the resources made accessible by its alliance with the governing Socialist Party. The autonomous feminist groups, on the other hand, adopted an organisational form befitting movement politics in civil society. As a result, they were the only network that succeeded in building an alternative feminist culture. The Federation adopted a decentralised organisational structure, while simultaneously participating in formal politics. This resulted in a political and organisational impasse in terms of its political efficacy vis-à-vis both the party system and civil society.

Patocracy and statocracy in Greek society, as well as the weakness of civil society, have posed a clear dilemma to social movement strategies: should they give up their anti-statist and anti-institutional ideology in favour of goal achievement, or should they adhere to the principles of new social movements at the cost of limiting their political appeal? This predicament – of whether to enter mainstream politics or safeguard movement politics – has been felt by all new social movements everywhere, but in Greece the influence of the state and the party system over civil society has been particularly acute and made the phenomena of social movements' party-dependency and semi-autonomy more common. This is very obvious in the case of the Greek second-wave feminist movement. A decisive factor reinforcing this tendency has been the political tradition of the Left.

(ii) The political tradition of the Left: New social movement theory emphasises that a radical rupture with the Left usually precedes the formation of new social movements, but in Greece, there have never been mass-departures from left-wing political parties or organisations. As a result, the political forces of the Left exerted a marked effect on developments in the social movement sector. Within the period 1975-1992 under consideration in this work, a historical cycle of the Left came to an end (during the 1990s), concurrently with the reorganisation of social movements in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as the new form of interest articulation. The bulk of this thesis concerns a time in the history of the Left when polarities like reform and revolution, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary action, individual versus collective, market versus state were still politically valid. The political tradition of the Left marked the identity of the country's new social movements in terms of the articulation of grand narratives, the duality of particular versus general struggles and, a belief in humanism.

- *Grand narratives*: The Greek Left has traditionally favoured the articulation of modernist political projects, meaning larger emancipatory projects that have aimed at transforming or dismantling large centres of power (e.g. the state, the party, international institutions).¹ Thus, the dominant political discourse of the Greek Left has undermined the articulation of fragmentary political projects. Accordingly, new social movements in Greece have articulated alternative totalising projects. This means that in Greece the discourse of new social movements has been founded on ‘narrative’, ‘synthesis’, and on ‘transcendence’ in sharp contrast to the focus of NSM literature on fragmentation and ‘self-limited radicalism’. In brief, Greek new social movements have manifested the strong entrenchment of a political culture, where questions of a broader societal transformation remain still open.

A correlative dimension of the Left’s totalising projects has been its strong anti-capitalist identity. After following the fall of the junta in 1974, all three major political parties of the Left (the socialist PASOK, the Communist Party of the Interior, and the Greek Communist Party) outlined an alternative vision of societal organisation. In parallel there was a proliferation of political groups of the extra-parliamentary Left, also professing a strongly anti-capitalist stand and being committed to revolutionise the existing social order.

The Greek feminist and ecological movements took up this anti-capitalist ideology alongside their own feminist and ecological vision.

- *‘General’ versus ‘particular’ struggles*: In delineating an alternative societal organisation they had, however, to face a political culture that acknowledged only the left-wing political forces as the legitimate bearers of ‘general’ political projects. This political culture had its roots in a series of national historical events (e.g. resistance against the Germans, the civil war, the junta) that had temporarily incorporated social movements with the broader political struggles for the national cause. But aside from that, the political Left was also open to feminist and ecological demands, taking them

¹ According to Hart, Modernism’s ‘fundamental project cannot really be considered “fragmentary” in the post-modern sense, because modernism was so clearly tied to underlying myths and hopeful truths about social processes. At its core modernism was a “larger emancipatory project”’. Hart, J. (1996) *New Voices in the Nation: Women and the Greek Resistance, 1941-64* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press), p. 36.

up as more 'particular' issues into its 'general' agenda. In doing so, the Greek political culture opposed 'general' and 'particular' struggles with the latter secondary and less important than the former. Moreover, the political dimension of any 'particular' struggle was questioned as long as it remained autonomous from the 'general' project of the Left. This duality of the 'general' versus the 'particular' put the emerging new social movements on the defensive, and forced them to prove the political dimension of their endeavour and to interact with the left-wing political forces.

This is clearly illustrated by the EGE, which articulated its feminist vision in conjunction with the already 'legitimate' socialist vision of PASOK. In the case of the autonomous feminist groups the general-particular duality was exemplified by the high percentage of double militancy amongst their members. The Federation's cooperation with the extra-parliamentary Left also manifested it, and it later became conspicuous in the FEAO's internal ideological clashes over the 'political' or 'apolitical' nature of the ecological project. It was only some of the autonomous feminists who unambiguously disconnected from this political tradition by denouncing formal politics (including that of the Left) and focusing exclusively on civil society and feminist consciousness-raising. However, their ideology remained confined to a very small section of Greek society

The antithesis between 'general' and 'particular' issues is not a specifically Greek phenomenon. New social movements everywhere have had to confront it and redefine the meaning of the political. Nevertheless, in Greek society the relationship of new social movements and this political tradition has been more complex, since the category 'general' historically includes not only struggles targeting the political system, but also such matters as relocating the nation-state in the international world order. In this sense, 'general' political projects have always incorporated the question of modernisation.

- *Humanism*: The Greek new social movements reproduced one of the major contradictions of the political Left. Their social constructionist view that the individual is moulded by his/her social and cultural environment went hand in hand with an essentialist perception, seeing all human beings as sharing a common identity. While the belief in social constructionism demands political emancipation, the humanistic viewpoint reinforces the belief that such a project will liberate society in

its totality. In other words, the humanistic identity of Greek new social movements accords with their grand political projects to revolutionalise society and to liberate human beings from exploitation and domination. In the ideology of all three groupings studied, capitalism was rejected not only on the basis of economic exploitation, but also on the grounds of distorting the true 'essence' of human beings. This strongly entrenched humanism also clearly manifested in the total absence or very limited presence of gynocentrism in the feminist movement, and eco-feminism or ecocentrism in the ecological movement.

(iii) The question of modernisation: As already mentioned, new social movement literature focuses on the national context in isolation from its global environment. New social movement theory is built on the assumption that nation-states are able to define and materialise policy issues autonomously. The theoretical absence of the international context endows the nation-state, the main unit of analysis, with uncontested power to formulate its own internal policy. In Greece, however, the feminist and ecological movements unfolded in a political culture, which embodied international dependency rather than autonomy. Accordingly, the identities of the Greek new social movements include attributes not mentioned in new social movement literature and, which refer to the open question of modernisation in the context of the global community.

Modernisation or development has been a major subject in Greece ever since the modern nation state was founded. Greece has been a late-developing society and, as Mouzelis has noted,

'...most late-developing societies suffer from a marked split between two mutually antagonistic political cultures, which results in two different conceptions of what is or should be, the core national identity. The one points to a more traditionally oriented, indigenously based, inward-looking political orientation hostile to Western values and the institutional arrangements of modernity (seen as Westernisation). The other is a modernising, outward-looking orientation that tries to catch up with the West by adopting Western institutions and values as rapidly as possible. Although different groups or parties tend to opt for one or the other of these two orientations, in actuality,

there are different mixtures of the traditionalist and modern discourses, rearranged in a variety of combinations'.²

Greece's two antagonistic political cultures are founded on two different geopolitical visions, which have projected either a zero-sum view of international relations by stressing issues of dependency and lack of national self-determination, or an international context of mutuality by underlining the need to modernise and become integrated in the international community.³ Moreover, peak experiences in the history of the Greek nation-state have strengthened either one or other of these perspectives and so led to a political geographical socialisation with long-term political effects.⁴ For instance, events after World War II - the civil war, the junta, and the Turkish occupation of part of Cyprus - have accentuated the geopolitical view of national dependency, since all of these conflicts were decisively affected by foreign intervention.

During the 1970s the left-wing political forces allocated Greece's problem of dependent development to world capitalism. The Communist Party stressed the need to overturn the capitalist relations of production via an alliance with the countries of 'actually existing socialism'. The Socialist Party developed an anti-imperialistic political agenda founded on dependency theory and the Communist Party of the Interior argued for the joint transformation of Greek society and the European Community according to the political guidelines of Euro-communism. All three explicitly denounced the conservative government, then in power, for acting on behalf of foreign interests and undermining national self-determination. In other words, in

² Mouzelis, N. (1995) 'Modernity, Late Development and Civil Society' in John Hall (ed.) *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparisons* (Cambridge, Polity Press), p. 239

³ According to Dijkink's definition, a 'geopolitical vision' refers to 'any idea concerning the relation between one's own and other places, involving feelings of (in)security or (dis)advantage (and/or) invoking ideas about a collective mission of foreign policy strategy...One might include in the category of geopolitical visions assumptions about impersonal...forces. This may include laws of change and forces organising the world that can be taken advantage of or that require containment, such as modernisation.' Dijkink, Gertjan (1996) *National Identity and Geopolitical Visions: Maps of Pride and Pain* (London, New York, Routledge), p. 11 and 14.

⁴ Dijkink, *ibid.*

the 1970s the political agenda of the Left was built around the dualities of: right-left, centre-periphery, and imperialism-national self-determination, which meant that it blended national political projects with the country's position in the international community. The transformation of Greek society was seen to go hand in hand with the relocation of the Greek nation-state in world politics. During this period, anti-imperialism was one facet of the multi-dimensional political project of any social movement or political party for achieving collective emancipation and self-determination.

This being so, the Greek feminist movement, which emerged in that decade, incorporated a strong anti-imperialistic stand into its political agenda. Both the EGE and the autonomous feminist groups stated their opposition to foreign domination and penetration, and declared their support for national-liberation movements around the world. In the case of the EGE this anti-imperialistic identity was strongly nationalistic and state-centred, while the autonomous feminist groups were opposed to imperialism as one form of domination among others (including the institutional power of the state).

During the late 1980s/early 1990s the inward-looking, anti-Western aspects of Greek political culture came to the fore once more, although in rather a different guise: this time they manifested as a rise of nationalism over the question of national identity.

The nationalism of this period was not an opposition to specific forms of economic and political dependency, but rather opposition *tout court* to any modernisation that was also westernisation. There were two camps: for one, modernisation and integration in the global community meant expansion of choices, for the other modernisation was a foreign imposed process that eradicated accepted traditions and so eliminated choices. The latter questioned the superiority of Western values and institutions, and strove to redefine the Greek national identity. While, the nationalism of this period challenged processes and institutions like globalisation and the European Community; however, its main feature was the redefinition of the Greek identity outside and beyond the west-European context implicit in the process of modernisation. Furthermore, this type of nationalism cut right across the political spectrum, including right and left-wing political forces.

The ecological movement witnessed the rise of this nationalism and, as mentioned in chapter 6, the ecological groups of the Federation vividly denounced it

and formulated a political program presenting a significant rupture with the country's entrenched geopolitical elements. The ecological groups in the Federation focused predominantly on the local and international level, thereby diminishing the nation-state as an essential unit of political life. In opposition to this, the groups of the extra-parliamentary Left in the FEAO took a clear stand in favour of the nationalistic movement, and in favour of Greek expansion in the Balkans. Their traditional interpretation of geopolitics strongly criticised the ecological forces as being 'apolitical'.

The Greek nationalism of the 1980s could not have been so effective and widespread without the latent nationalism in the anti-imperialistic culture of the 1970s. Both periods believed that national self-determination was incompatible with global integration. The nation-state was the only political unit still promising a viable alternative modernisation. Thus, both these cases illustrate the predominance of a political culture that constantly reflected on the political opportunity structure of the global context, even if this was often translated defensively-negatively.

The characteristics of new social movements in Greece that were specific to the political environment, can be classified under two main headings: (i) the borders of collectivity, and (ii) autonomy, self-determination

(i) The borders of collectivity: The advent of new social movements has been associated in the literature with the increased fragmentation of post-modern or post-industrial societies and a radical reformulation of the previous notion of collectivity as the heterogeneity of previous unified political subjects became apparent (e.g. black feminism against white domineered feminism). In the Greek feminist and ecological movements, however, collectivity persisted firmly as an essential principle of their ideological identity. It was not only fundamental for the attainment of any political goal, but also an authoritative principle in its own right.

In the case of the feminist movement, collectivity meant above all the firm self-definition by the EGE as well as the autonomous feminist groups as trans-class in character. Although both organisations introduced a class analysis and an anti-capitalist stand in their discourse, they never divided the subject 'woman' into classes or different subgroups on the basis of women's different identities and experiences.

In the Federation too collectivity persisted as an authoritative principle. Although the organisation acknowledged the existence of many different social

conflicts and consequently the fragmentation of the political subject into as many sub-groups (pacifists, ecologists, leftists, feminists, anti-militarists, anti-racists, etc.), they still affirmed collectivity as an indispensable component of any substantial political change.

The two movements' ideological adherence to the concept of collectivity is also shown by their endorsement of a social conception of citizenship.⁵ They both underlined the positive freedom of the community, disputing thereby the interpretation of citizenship as the individual exercise of civil, political, social or cultural rights. They both acknowledged the significance of the community, while they took a critical stand towards concepts (such as personal development) that underlined the empowerment of the individual.

(ii) *Autonomy and self-determination*: One of the main ideological features of new social movements is the quest for an autonomy that will allow the unobstructed development of their identity. Without autonomy there can be no new social identities to critically question the norms of social reproduction and legitimation. In the literature this demand for autonomy is identified with the creation of political spaces not subject to the state, the political parties or the economy. Accordingly, new social movements are located within civil society in juxtaposition to the state and the established institutions of the political system. While this is the theoretical pattern in the relevant literature, in practice new social movements in Greece formulated a discourse that signifies a complex relation with the established institutions of the political system. In the Greek context, new social movements tried not only to create political spaces for themselves within the nation-state, but also for the nation-state within the global community. Consequently, their struggle for self-determination took two forms: a) to defend their space vis-à-vis the State, and b) to create a political space on behalf of the state in the international community. As autonomy and self-determination became polysemic subjects, this led to a variety of political strategies.

⁵ I refer here to the perception of civil society as 'a society of citizens understood in the more republican, participatory sense of the positive freedom of the community, rather than the negative (liberal) freedom of the individual'. See Gideon B., 'From Structuralism to Voluntarism: The Latin American Left and the Discourse on Civil Society and Democracy', *Contemporary Politics*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1998, p. 403.

When the EGE chose to link its statist political project of social change with its national project to establish an autonomous course of development, the state became the vehicle for achieving both social transformation and national self-determination. Anti-imperialism was followed by statism. The focal point of the autonomous feminist groups remained movement politics, within the national context as well as the international community. It was civil society, national or global, that became the main vehicle of social change. Their political identity was founded on anti-imperialism and movement politics. The Federation's ecological groups adopted a political stance similar to that of the autonomous feminists. They focused on civil society, national or international, and they were anti-imperialistic, but not outright anti-state. For them, the state and the political parties were simply some of the many actors in the political arena. The groups of the extra-parliamentary Left, on the other hand, developed an anti-imperialistic stance, founded on nationalism and including an opportunistic attitude vis-à-vis the state.

Overall, the case study with findings closest to the properties of new social movements as presented in the literature is that of the autonomous feminist groups. However, in order to fully account for the politics of social protest in the Greek context one must also take into consideration the EGE and the Federation. Only a complete reading of these oppositional forces can provide an understanding of the various forms of movement politics during the period 1975-1992. Even where the case studies show some divergence from the ideal type of new social movement, these groups did introduce novel elements into Greek politics and became the main bearers of the second-wave feminist and ecological movements respectively. Their specific attributes remind us that social movements always interact with their political environment, and therefore manifest a heterogeneity that suggests that the last word on new social movements has not yet been written.

List of Abbreviations

CREP	Centre for Planning and Economic Research
EAM	National Liberation Front
EAR	Greek Left
EB	Eurobarometer
EC	European Community
EGE	Union of Greek Women
EKKE	Greek Revolutionary Communist Movement
EKO	Alternative Movement of Ecologists
EOG	Group of Women in Publishing
EPCP	Environmental Pollution Control Project
EPOIZO	Association for the Quality of Life
FEAO	Federation of Ecological and Alternative Organisations
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GRÆEL	Green Alternative European Link
KAG	Movement for Women's Liberation
KDG	Movement of Democratic Women
KKE-es	Communist Party of the Interior
KKE-es-AA	Communist Party of the Interior- Renovative Left
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEP	Ecological/Alternative Union of Citizens
OEG	Federation of Greek Women
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement
RIXI	Rupture
SEGES	Coordinating Committee of Representatives of Women's Organisations
SEOPP	Coordinating Committee of Organisations for the Protection of the Environment
SMO	Social Movement Organisation
SYN	Coalition of the Left and Progress
UN	United Nations

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