

Regime Change and the Second Wave of Feminism

6.1 Introduction

The Civil War spawned an autocratic socio-political order in which parliamentary power was only nominal. The post-Civil War institutions that constituted the real vestiges of power and authority, were the monarchy,¹ the military, paramilitary organisations, and the United States Embassy, which was central to the cohesion of the post-Civil War regime.² In such an environment of nominal democracy, the bourgeois-liberal establishment of Venizelist Greece failed to unite and present a viable alternative to the conservative right. Collusion with the latter during the Civil War made it difficult for this group to distance itself from the post-Civil War state or to forge a useful critique of its authoritarianism. The persecution of leftists continued at the grass-roots level, especially in rural areas, offering very few avenues for retreat or resistance. Some of the key mechanisms of oppression were the refusal of migration, access to employment, and hospital care. A generalised climate of fear, legitimised by the alleged threat of imminent communist reprisals, kept the population in check during the first and most difficult years of the post-war period. Unmitigated poverty that followed a decade of occupation and war—and which was projected against an atmosphere of suspicion, pessimism, fear, and authoritarianism—provided the basis for the large exodus of Greeks to Australia, Germany, Belgium, and Canada in the 1960s.

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In 1951, political remnants of the left attempted a resurgence with the formation of the Eniaia Dimokratiki Aristera (EDA) (United Democratic Left). As the Greek Communist Party (KKE) was illegal, and any such association was tantamount to national treason, EDA became the only organization in which declared leftists (e.g., many of whom had fought in ELAS and had already served in prisons and concentration camps) could coalesce. To the surprise of most, EDA won more than 20 percent of the popular vote in 1958 and became the official opposition, partly aided by the split in the ranks of the remnants of the Venizelist centre.

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By the time of the next election in 1961, the influence of EDA shrank to 10 percent, brought about by a blend of strong-arm tactics in the countryside and ballot-rigging, the outcome of which was another conservative victory.³ A gradual but crucial effect of anti-democratic politics in Greece was the radicalisation of the Venizelist centre. By the early 1960s, the Centre-Union (Enosis Kendrou) was formed under the leadership of George Papandreou, promising a wide range of democratic reforms, including the release of Civil War prisoners. In 1963 and 1964 the Centre-Union won two consecutive parliamentary elections, but Papandreou soon came into conflict with the establishment upon realising that his powers to govern were severely circumscribed by the ruling post-war establishment. In July 1965 the monarchy called for

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Papandreou's dismissal, causing widespread political chaos; a situation which paved the way to the colonels' dictatorship (1967–74), an event which in retrospect is regarded by many Greeks as the last incarnation of the post–Civil War regime.

The collapse of the colonels' dictatorship (or junta, as it is more commonly referred to) in 1974, signalled the establishment, perhaps for the first time, of an enduring liberal political culture in Greece, and the symbolic end to the Civil War. This period of democratisation came to be known as the *Metapolitefsi*, loosely translated as a 'passing from one regime to another'. The first symbolic act of the 1974 National Unity government a coalition between the right and the centre under Prime Minister K. Karamanlis, was the legalisation of the Greek Communist Party (KKE). Though excluded from actual government, the forces of the left experienced a cultural and political renaissance, which had a profound effect on the Greek polity in multiple ways, both culturally and politically. Within this climate of left-wing re-empowerment, a mass women's movement also emerged, bringing the 'woman question' into the mainstream of liberal democratic political discourse in Greece for the first time (since the Resistance).

From the perspective of the Greek state, it was the drive to enter the European Union (then the European Economic Community (or EEC) that focused 'official' attention on the issue of Greek women's national status, as entry prerequisites obliged the Greek state to integrate the equality ideology of the West into its constitution and its laws (Papagaroufali, 1995–96). This transformation began in 1975, with the drafting of the new constitution,⁴ which declared the civil equality of all men and women before the law, and which included provisions for further amendments to all discriminatory legislation within a time frame of seven years. The initial focus of the emergent women's movement was on maintaining the necessary momentum for the implementation of these legislative reforms, particularly in relation to what was an extremely oppressive (for women) Family Code. The radical transformation of family law in Greece was achieved in stages after the Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) won victory in 1981 under Andreas Papandreou, the son of elder statesman George Papandreou (Centre-Union leader/ Enosis Kendrou).

Like all political movements jostling for power in Greece after 1974, the women's movement was shaped by at least four recent realities: (1) the paradigm of reconciliation after the collapse of the military dictatorship and by extension the Civil War state; (2) the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and its ramifications; (3) the social cultural and political developments in the West, referred to in shorthand as 'May 1968', and (4) the urge to reposition Greece vis-à-vis Europe.

The relative importance of these phenomena varied within the women's movement, which was unprecedented in its political and generational heterogeneity, and as a result the movement was divided over issues of purpose and identity. The main division within the women's movement was a function of generational conflict, and the greatest point of departure was the issue of 'autonomy'. Autonomy from political parties, in the style of Anglo-American Western feminisms, was espoused by the younger generation, while older activists, who dominated the more influential mainstream women's organisations within the movement, aligned the project of

women's liberation with the broader cause of the Greek left. Indeed, not all activists identified themselves as feminists. The communist contingent, for instance, viewed the project of women's liberation and feminism as mutually exclusive. It is therefore perhaps more appropriate to refer to this wave of Greek women's activism as a series of women's movements rather than as one movement. Nevertheless, the period between 1975 and 1985 was a decade marked by social reform during which the legal constructions of gender difference were being radically transformed, and as Cowan (1996: 36) notes, '... feminism was a part of the scene, as a congeries of ideologies, a contested cultural symbol and a social movement'.

6.2 The Feminist Mainstream

Women's groups and organisations swelled almost immediately after the collapse of the junta in July 1974.⁵ The decision of women to organise separately from their affiliated political parties in the post-junta period was a compromise between Western feminist models of autonomous activism and the Greek left-wing tradition, which endorsed a women's wing that was both separate organisationally but fundamentally affiliated ideologically and politically with the core party. The overarching objective of the women's movement in the 1970s was to claim from the state and its institutions the legal and institutional reforms that were deemed integral to the improvement of women's social and economic status. 8

The largest and most influential organisations within the movement were those affiliated with the main parties of the left: Enosi Gynaikon Elladas (EGE) (Union of Greek Women), which was affiliated with PASOK; Omospondia Gynaikon Elladas (OGE) (Federation of Greek Women), which was linked with the KKE; and Kinisi Dimokratikon Ginekon (KDG) (The Democratic Women's Movement), which was linked with the smaller Eurocommunist Party⁶ that had formed prior to the collapse of the dictatorship.⁷ All three organisations drew members and participants almost exclusively from their respective political parties, and each determined to establish women's substantive participation in political life (Mihopoulou, 1995–96: 31). 9

The formation of the socialist EGE and the communist OGE in 1976 was the outcome of internal political frictions within the KDG, which led to the mass withdrawal of many KDG members. Of these three dominant 'mass' organisations, EGE was the largest and most influential, although all were relatively high-profile organisations, by virtue of their party-political associations, and enjoyed substantial mobilising potential, giving the women's movement its mass character. The high visibility and influence of these organisations, and the resources they had at their disposal, created the impression to observers that they represented, and indeed constituted, the official face of contemporary Greek feminism. This perception underpinned growing tensions within the movement between the three mass organisations and the smaller feminist groups that aspired to radically broaden the boundaries of Greek post-war feminism, but which remained marginal at a national level.⁸ 10

Barbara Caine (1997: 239) has argued that generational conflict was a common feature of post-war feminism in general, but nevertheless it is a problem that needs to be seen from a range of perspectives. Likewise, the specific conflicts and dynamics within the Greek women's movement need to be viewed in accordance with the specificities of the political culture and historical context in which the movement emerged. For instance, older women, feminists and non-feminists, many of whom participated or had vivid memories of the Resistance, generally identified with the formal liberal concept of equality and, by extension, espoused an equality-based feminism. Many younger women, who were students during the junta, became members of the so-called Polytechnic generation⁹ and were more concerned with the emancipation of difference and individual subjectivity, which according to Passerini (1994, 1996) and other scholars of '1968', were ideas which underpinned the student protests elsewhere in Europe and in North America. 11

By 1979 the KDG, EGE, and OGE had established a self-styled miniature bureaucracy around the cause of family law reform, and closely scrutinised all developments pertaining to women's legal status. In Mihopoulou's chronicle of the autonomous feminist movement in Greece (1995–96: 41), she describes these organisations as resembling 'a mass trade-union which issued demands to the state of a chiefly institutional nature'. Each organisation produced a monthly magazine. EGE produced *Anoikto Parathiro* (*Open Window*), OGE produced *Syghroni Gynaika* (*Contemporary Woman*), and KDG produced *Deltio* (*Bulletin*). These publications served as mobilising tools but also provided a forum for interorganisational dialogue, open criticism, and debate on key issues. All three organisations emphasised notions of cooperation and solidarity, operating and agitating in similar ways. They maintained open communication channels with the state and established a close relationship with the mass media (mainly the mass circulation newspapers), which ensured consistent coverage of women's issues. To that effect the feminist mainstream meticulously avoided narratives and strategies that risked what they referred to as the 'ghettoisation' of women's issues. 12

This was a particular concern of the communist OGE, which regarded autonomous feminist politics as '... a (thinly) veiled attempt to de-socialise the women's movement and to change it into a movement which is painless for official political powers, which could at best institute a few minor corrections to the lives of a few women' (*Contemporary Woman*, 1981). The necessity of alignment with the broader concerns of the left, and with men in general, was expressed thus by the women of KDG: 13

Women,

We are not turning against men, because we confront the illogic of sex discrimination on a daily basis. Our target is not the male sex, but the male-dominated establishment and the institutions which perpetuate discrimination. Our struggle against sexist stereotypes also contains the seeds of men's liberation from the stereotype of the aggressive and domineering male. Our vision is of a society, in which the true equality between men and women triumphs, in which the oppressive barriers that have prevented the pursuit and development of each individual's creative capacities, have been removed. The result will be the,

unprecedented in history, creation of substantive human relations. Perhaps for the first time, the term 'human' will be used to refer to both men and women. (*Bulletin*, February 1980)

The mainstream organisations did not interrogate the political foundations of the public and private domains as much as emphasise the importance of democratising the institutions of family and marriage through the application of the equality principle across all aspects of private life—equal partnership in the home, equal opportunity in the work place, dual responsibility for children, and mutual recognition of other family members' needs and interests. The former activist Papagaroufali (1995-96: 23) has argued that in the place of notions of fundamental natural differences between men and women, which justified women's exclusion from society, the alternative rhetoric proposed a '...classless, genderless abstract individualism; of individuals emptied of historical specificity, seen as equal and equivalent'.

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As former activists of the rival autonomous movement, Fragoudaki and Papagiannaki (1988: 6) argue that, '... the women of these [the mainstream] organisations fought to establish a balance between the general and the particular; the struggle for a society without oppression and exploitation generally, and the struggle for the liberation of women specifically'. Consequently, they became enmeshed in the notorious feminist conundrum of arguing for equality on the basis of women's humanity or sameness, while simultaneously leaving the political implications of women's unique attributes—their difference—unresolved. (This is also true of differences between current feminists, which has led to dominance feminism; see MacKinnon, 1988). The impact of this conundrum was relative to the degree to which each organisation subscribed to traditional left-wing orthodoxy. The communist OGE, most loyal to the central tenets of communist orthodoxy, focused on class exploitation. The women of OGE believed the problems between men and women stemmed from and would be solved by the dissolution of the capitalist class system. OGE also distinguished itself from the other two organisations through a sustained rejection of feminism as a term, a project, or an ideology, maintaining a traditional communist puritanism regarding sex and sexuality, and through a militant objection to all notions of autonomy from the political mainstream.

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6.3 The Autonomous Feminist Intervention

A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.

By the late 1970s, scathing criticisms of the ever-militant autonomous feminist community of mainstream feminist goals and methods were entrenched—fuelled by an overarching judgement that they could do little more than marginally modify traditional class-based understandings of women's predicament. It was argued that the populist platform of the mainstream organisations was a structural impediment as it compelled them to perpetuate conventions and ideals, which fundamentally undermined the feminist project. For example, continual addresses to Greek women as mothers, wives, housewives, farmers, or

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wageworkers, terms with which the great majority of Greek women identified, was considered by radical feminists an important if subtle acceptance of antiquated and unjust formulations of women's citizenship status. More importantly, autonomous feminists challenged the very popular notion at the time that equality politics was a cure-all for the predicament of women, or that such institutional changes could impact substantively on the social contract between Greek men and women.

According to Papagaroufali (1995–96: 19), a social anthropologist and former autonomous feminist activist, if the concept of equality dominated the political landscape in Greece during the 1970s, the catchphrase of the 1980s was individual freedom. Organisations not directly involved in jostling for government, unlike the three party-affiliated women's organisations, began to emphasise 'difference' in a reaction to the levelling of identities and objectives associated with the 'equalising' drive under PASOK. The idea that feminism could be simultaneously autonomous, pluralist, and democratic gained ground, and many women, particularly younger women, shifted their allegiance from a class-based politics to a gender-based political perspective and altered their organisational membership accordingly. They shed their dual identities (e.g., simultaneous membership of EGE and PASOK, or KKE and OGE, or KKE-ES and KDG) and became absorbed exclusively into the feminist splinter groups which emerged around 1975. The first such group to emerge was Kinima gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Gynaikon (Movement for the Liberation of Women), which staged its first public protest in July 1976 on the issue of contraception.

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The autonomous feminist movement was by definition heterogeneous and fragmented, but nevertheless it managed to create significant momentum by the late 1970s as the women's movement grew and the main differences within it were clearly articulated. Autonomy permeated all aspects of the autonomous feminist utopia—organisational structure, decision-making processes, forms of agitation—and its intellectual preoccupations were many and diverse. These radicalised splinter groups sought a departure (albeit never fully realised) for Greek feminism from hegemonic theories of oppression and liberty that privileged class. They sought to extricate Greek feminism from the male-dominated Greek left with which the ideals of social justice, freedom and equality, and progress were synonymous in Greek political life for the better half of the twentieth century. Autonomous feminists regarded the edifice of left-wing thought and practice as constitutionally androcentric and thus incapable or even averse to establishing the necessary analytical tools to better interrogate the relationship between gender and power. In contrast to the interwar organisations (e.g., the League, the National Council, the Lyceum), which were also non-aligned, the autonomous feminists of the 1970s did not renounce or underestimate the relevance of class to the project of women's emancipation but made gender and patriarchy the central analytical categories. The emphasis on individual experience and the identification of the institution of the Greek family as a central locus of women's oppression linked the autonomous feminist project in Greece with international feminist campaigns of the period that emphasised the *personal as political*.

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It was no coincidence that many activists in this group spent the years of the colonels' junta as students elsewhere, in Europe primarily, and had thus witnessed or participated in the events of 1968 which transformed the cultural life of those countries. Passerini (1994, 1996) has written extensively on the centrality of individual subjectivity in conceptions of emancipation that emerged from the student protests of the 1960s and 1970s and that continued to shape post-1968 feminist movements. As the Greek feminist historian and former activist Avdela (1989a: 76) described it, autonomous feminism borrowed from the 'Spirit of May' the habit of '... questioning bureaucratic and hierarchical structures of traditional political culture, and denouncing the complex of systemic power structures in society'. Greek feminists, like the protagonists of 1968, identified the unity of a system of power and domination, but what was at stake was '... less economic interests than the power to make decisions, culture and individuality' (Touraine, 1971 in Avdela, 1989a: 76). More specifically, Greek autonomous feminists focused on the institutions of the family and the state, the politics of representation within popular culture, and on traditionally taboo issues such as abortion and sexuality, all of which reflected a new type of Western feminist influence. 19

The new ethos was evident in the autonomous feminist press. They included titles such as *Skoupa (Broom)* (1979–81), which was the first and most important theoretical journal of the movement; *Sfigga (Sphinx)*; *Katina*;¹⁰ *Poli ton Ginekon (City of Women)*; *Epanastatiki Pali ton Ginekon (Revolutionary Women's Struggle)*; *To milo kai to fidi (The Apple and the serpent)*; and the lesbian-feminist journal *Lavrís (Labrys)*, most of which had short lifespans. At this time, Greek lesbian women also moved out of obscurity and mobilised into a distinct social and political entity. 20

The expressive titles of these journals distinguished 'real feminists' from the 'antiquated, timid, dull, and conservative' publishing conventions to which the mainstream women's organisations were bound. The alternative political culture and practice of autonomous feminists also extended to the abandonment of the traditional 'united front' strategy endorsed by political parties and the political establishment in general. Instead, they favoured a consensus-based, flexible, and egalitarian mode of organisation and activism even though the absence of structure thwarted the consolidation of ideas and the spread of political influence: 21

Because the undertaking [note: feminism] developed out of the capitalist system which is based on hierarchy, power, and antagonism, and because the male-dominated parties cannot serve the interests of women, feminist publishing has devised totally different methods and comprises an alternative to the male capitalist party model . . . the feminist press takes the form of a collective (either an open or a closed one). Sometimes they appoint an 'editorial board' . . . others dismiss this system as unfree and prefer a system which emphasises the need for balance between spontaneity and organisation, and between collectivism and individuality. . . . As the women/editors of these journals have stopped playing the game of social respectability and legitimacy, they have developed their own theories and ideologies and their journals are leading lights in intellectual culture. (*City of Women*, May 1983)

These groups attracted women from all political persuasions, for example, 'defectors' from the KDG and EGE, liberal pluralists, as well as right-wing women and 'uncommonly radical' women who were drawn to a woman-friendly politics unburdened by male or left-wing bias. Autonomy was more broadly defined to encompass '... not only autonomy from men, political parties, and the state but an entire world view, which had direct relevance to the daily lives and practices of feminists' (Repousi, 1988: 14). Although they retained an empathy for class-based politics, the dominant narratives emphasised the gulf between men and women rather than their common problems and interests. This departure on the most basic notion of gender complementarity, as the opening slogan of this chapter exemplifies ('A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle'),¹¹ demonstrates clearly the influence of Western feminisms at this time. In contrast to the classic religious and secular humanist belief in the essential complementarity of men and women, which the large organisations EGE, OGE, and KDG shared, autonomous feminist discourse suggested that men and women were not only at odds culturally but were also natural enemies. Beyond the task of extricating women's liberation from the straightjacket of male-conceived leftist 'certainties' concerning emancipation, 'neofeminists', as the mass organisations sometimes referred to them, emphasised the distinct, equally systematic exploitation of women by men, adding women's sexuality and reproductive function as key sites of a power struggle, in addition to the relatively well-theorised impact of the capitalist mode of production on gender relations. The former, according to autonomous feminists, had been '... long appropriated and distorted by the dominant male culture' and this subordination held the key to the crisis of feminine subjectivity (see Avdela, 1989a: 56). In this view, the dominant political culture, its institutions, language and logic were male-dominated and male-defined, and hence structurally incapable of accommodating feminist politics. The ultimate objective, according to Avdela, was to establish feminism as a *total politics*, in the image of their contemporary Western sisters.

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6.4 Compulsory National Service

The 1970s saw another interesting twist in the nexus between gender, nation, and citizenship that was without precedent in modern Greek history: the increasingly loud calls for compulsory military service for women on the basis of the familiar argument that equal rights require equal sacrifices. As we examine the shifting historical relationship between Greek feminist nationalism and war in this book, it is instructive to consider the main feminist responses to these government proposals of 1976 for women's conscription. The debate invited feminists, and women and men in general, to engage directly with the question of women's relationship to war and violence and the appropriate role of women in the nation, in short, the specific boundaries of their citizenship.

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In 1976 the Greek press circulated a rumour that the conservative government would open the military bureaucracy to women as a career option. The debate peaked in September 1977 when Bill 705/1977 was tabled and passed in Parliament without debate against a background of public outcry. I shall not focus on the government's objectives in pushing this bill through Parliament,¹² but I will outline here the bill's basic details, which are as follows: **24**

All Greek women between the age of 20 and 32, and in some cases up to the age of 50, would be subject to compulsory service during periods of war and/or mobilisation for a 14-month period in an auxiliary capacity. The minister of defence reserved the privilege to call upon all Greek women at any time, and to extend service to 24 months, without parliamentary approval (the approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff being sufficient). Exempt from this obligation were (1) mothers; (2) orphans of parents with an under-aged or disabled child; (3) the eldest or sole daughter of a family of four children, one of whom was underage or whose mother was widowed, or whose father was a casualty of war (service to the nation); (4) daughters whose parents were both over 70, or one of whom was disabled; and (5) nuns. **25**

Finally, the law allowed for the voluntary enlistment of women aged between 18 and 32 for a 14-month period of service, which could be extended either by mutual consent or, in the context of mobilisation or war, by ministerial decree. In practice, it was this last provision that made the difference. Since the army has not mobilised since 1977, there has been no call to arms. Thus, the real outcome of Bill 705/77 was that it gave women the option of choosing a military career for the first time, excluding combat duty. In fact, the great majority of women entering the military bureaucracy took up secretarial positions. **26**

In the effort to attract as many women as possible, a clause allowed for the possibility of professional advancement. Women who decided to remain in the armed forces after their 14-month contract had expired could be registered as 'paid-volunteers' (a contradiction in terms, of course) for an additional three years. Their contract could be extended even further following the decision of the defence minister. Although the positions which they occupied in practice were strictly auxiliary, the legal status of women as employees of the military was identical to that of men. **27**

The different responses by feminists again reflected, to some degree, the generational gulf. The left-identified mainstream organisations rejected the proposal outright on the basis of national history. They appealed to Greek women's *special* relationship to the nation and to war, which historically hinged on the notion of 'spontaneous revolt'. The feminist left appealed to an 'unwritten law' by which Greek women's patriotic 'mobilisation' was located outside the state/military apparatus, informal and unofficial. Leftist feminists drew attention to the informality of women's induction into the Revolution and the Resistance to outline that women's patriotism is distinct from men's, that it is characterised by an innate distaste for war and a reluctance to raise arms, but there is the firm capacity to do so in the instances of 'just war' and for defensive purposes only. **28**

These organisations, however, were initially confounded by the conservative Bill 705/1977 and did not oppose it immediately. When the rumours first surfaced of the government's intentions a year earlier (1976), the initial reaction of some was positive, especially amongst those feminists inspired by the logic of equality. In her statement to the left-wing newspaper *Avgi* (*Dawn*, 12 September 1976), KDG president Iro Lambrou asserted: 29

If the laws enshrining women's equality are advanced, which presupposes reform of the Civil Code and the Family Code in particular, and motherhood is protected by the state, then we can negotiate the added burden of new obligations. We would only be too glad to be enlisted if equal rights were practised rather than some form of constitutional evangelism.

In 1977, SEGES (the Coordinating Committee of Women's Organisations) was formed as the official mouthpiece against conscription and for family law reform, comprising 14 of the largest women's organisations. The members of the SEGES committee issued a press statement in August 1977, which proclaimed '... that under the existing social, political and economic conditions of our country, NO to the enlistment of women, NO to the additional unequal treatment of women by the Polity . . . and NO to the divisive nature of institutionalised privilege for some, which can only divide women as well as undermine the unity of workers in the pursuit of rights which belong to all'. 30

Where North American feminists argued that the exclusion of women from the military and combat roles undermined the efforts of women to enjoy the same citizenship rights as men (even if they have secured equal formal political and legal rights), the women of SEGES latched onto the absence of such formal equality in daily life in order to argue against additional military duties and responsibilities. In a matter of months, however, this vaguely liberal perspective gave way to a unanimous objection based on the particular mode of women's participation in war since the foundation of modern Greece. SEGES invoked familiar images of female heroism during the Greek Revolution and the Greek Resistance (*adartisses*) to argue against conscription, as they represented for many Greek feminists the innate and autonomous patriotism of women, a patriotism defined by its 'outsider status'—that is, outside state organisation and control. 31

The multiple ironies escaped even the shrewdest feminists—that women's historic estrangement from the nation-state enterprise ought to be idealised and preserved, or indeed that one set of militaristic/nationalist images were being exchanged by feminists for another. The history of women's (informal) armed participation in the latter—that is, in key nation-building conflicts since Greek Independence, especially in the context of defensive war—permitted Greek feminists and other women to argue that women were amongst the first to raise guns and the last to lay them down without recourse to the military structures of a bourgeois state. Moreover, the overwhelming presence of women in these wars as opposed to their absence in state-sanctioned conflict differentiated the just from the unjust wars. 32

To be sure, Greek women, at critical historical moments, fought and struggled with daring and bravery without any legal obligation. They declared their inclusion, besides men, and not just in auxiliary services *but armed at the front line*. There is no doubt that they would do it all again if necessary. It is not conscription which will awaken their national consciousness, or their commitment to the defence of territorial integrity and national independence. (*Open Window*, 23 January 1977) (Emphasis my own.)

Rural women were particularly vocal in their objection: S. Gaitanidou, a farmer and OGE member, said: 33

Greek woman gave all she had during the last war. She is therefore capable of giving as much, and more, today. I remember during the Resistance my mother risking the safety of her own children by sending messages hidden inside our clothes. What does this show about women? When the need arises, they will once again be at the front line. . . . But she must first be given her full rights and equality in social, economic and all other affairs. (*Contemporary Woman*, 1977)

The objections of autonomous feminists were more directly shaped by the recent experience of dictatorship and the legacy of the student movement with its May 1968 undertones, as well as 'nationalist' disillusionment following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. The dictatorship itself, by definition hierarchical and authoritarian and founded on (sexualised) notions of dominance and subordination, provided the strongest argument against women's enlistment. Indeed, the dictatorship's attempts to liquidate the student occupation of the Polytechnic campus in November 1973 (by sending tanks into the campus to quash the occupation) included plans to impose conscription on troublesome 'progressive' female students. The junta first tabled the issue of women's conscription in 1970. Lieutenant-Colonel Kolovos had written that the main reason for this measure was 'that it enabled women to contribute to the internal security of the nation . . . and to the reinforcement of the rear, in the face of the communist threat'.¹³ It was largely from within this student resistance culture that the autonomous feminist movement emerged after the collapse of the dictatorship. 34

In 1977, the MLW claimed that war and militarist culture were inextricably linked with the social construction of gender. They organised a demonstration which was promoted on billboards across the country as being against 'equality in exploitation and oppression', which, they argued, was what the legislation really signified: 35

We shall not accept to be absorbed into a fundamentally reactionary and repressive patriarchal machine, which is geared to crushing every social conscience, every inkling of critical thought. We shall fight in every possible way not to acquire the 'right' to participate in the culture of 'grassing', the right to participate in oppression . . . the right to be macho! At a moment when women have risen to fight for their freedom, this legislation attempts to stifle their radicalisation and to reinforce the traditional female roles of housewife, mother, servant of society. We reject the dilemma 'mothers or soldiers'. We do not see

motherhood as a national duty, but as the personal choice of individual women.
(*Movement for the Liberation of Women*, 8 August 1977)

In February 1979 the MLW representative, Mimi Botsi, pointed to the clause in the *Military Bulletin* which claimed that the army would leave the tasks assigned to women to the '... discretion of the unit commander so that they would not conflict with their bodily capacities and/or sex'. Botsi said that

... women should go to the army but as total equals, not as helpers. I doubt that this will happen though, and we'll be condemned as we always have been to the kitchen and to the onions. They have already stated explicitly that they will place us in positions which are 'compatible with our nature'. We should go to the army but be subject to the *same* training as men *in weaponry*—and of course with no special privileges. (*Vima*, 12 May 1977) (Emphasis my own.)

After 1979 the issue of conscription subsided in line with diminishing nationalist fervour upon the realisation that (1) a war was not imminent—a fear which defined the years immediately after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and which prevailed till 1979; (2) women's conscription was never intended to be of real military consequence as their duties were primarily administrative; (3) a change of government was imminent (which finally occurred in October 1981 with the ascent of the socialist PASOK to power); and (4) the transformation of the Family Code, which PASOK had promised and which was a more important battleground for feminists.¹⁴

6.5 Negotiating History and Identity

Generational conflict within Greek feminism expressed itself not only in the contrast between aims, goal, and methods but also through differing views of feminism's historical legacy. The majority of women in the mainstream organisations sympathised or identified closely with the parties of the party-political left, all of which drew on the powerful legacy of EAM to varying degrees, in an effort to obtain legitimacy. Similarly, mainstream women's organisations cultivated an association between the unsung but historic achievements of women in EAM-ELAS and the contemporary movement. By contrast, factions within the (increasingly divided) autonomous feminist community were oriented towards the currents and trends of feminism in the 'West' and favoured a more inward-looking feminism that was released from epic national histories and Marxist politics. Others constructed an alternative canon of Greek feminist history, which took note only of women's efforts that could only be described as feminist, thus excluding the mass movements of the 1940s in which women were radicalised as members of the disenfranchised poor or as leftists, rather than as women.

The ubiquity with which New Left organizations co-opted Resistance imagery and slogans gave rise to accusations of political opportunism at this time. The most outstanding example resided with PASOK, the newly emergent socialist party, founded on 3 September 1974 by Andreas

Papandreou, whose rhetoric owed much to the Resistance. In fact, PASOK's initial support base was drawn largely from members of this generation. Its founding document was a shrewd synthesis of new Western values (women's liberation, solidarity with the 'Third World', economic analyses based on a critique of the role of multinational companies), with traditional left-wing positions that appealed to the anti-imperialist (and particularly the anti-American) sentiments of a people only recently liberated from the US-supported colonels' dictatorship (1967–74).

PASOK claimed to represent the plight of all progressive forces—past and present; it presented itself as the belated crystallisation of the Resistance vision but also the embodiment of the more recent anti-dictatorship struggle. Characteristic resistance values and objectives, which passed into the rhetoric of PASOK and which became synonymous with PASOK, included national independence, popular sovereignty, social liberation, and democratic process. When PASOK won office in 1981, the new government granted the EAM-ELAS Resistance movement official recognition by the Greek state, a gesture which had a profound resonance in Greek society at this time. 40

Similarly, the progressive gender politics of the Resistance became intertwined with the purpose and image of the contemporary movement, as far as the mainstream women's organisations were concerned. Women's unprecedented participation in the Resistance had yet to be claimed and placed on the 'official' historical record and this prerogative was swiftly adopted by the mainstream women's organisations, affiliated with the Old and New Left. 41

One of the many symbolic steps taken by the new socialist government to grant national legitimacy to the Resistance was the issuing of four different stamps, all of which donned Resistance images. One of those stamps featured the image of the ELAS partisan Titika Panayiotidou (see chapter 4) brandishing her rifle. In fact images of armed partisan women featured heavily in partisan memoirs (mostly male) that proliferated during this period of democratisation, but in all cases the images were allegorical—no names or explanations were provided.¹⁵ Nevertheless, this was important symbolism in this era of left-wing re-empowerment, and such images furnished the imaginations and narratives of many of the protagonists of the women's movement. 42

All three mainstream organisations (EGE, KDG, and OGE) converged on the notion that class struggle (social liberation) and women's liberation were inextricably intertwined if not synonymous; a logic that posited feminism as a subset of a broader and more total struggle, especially in the earlier phases of the movement. Indeed, early narratives were remarkably similar to the mobilisational narratives of EAM-ELAS; namely, a blend of class-based notions of freedom, left-wing patriotic idealism, and a commitment to women's emancipation inextricably linked to a national memory of collective struggle. These historical factors account for the significant differences between the Greek feminism, as represented by the KDG, EGE, and OGE, and Western feminism, particularly hegemonic Anglo-American feminisms, in which, for instance, the economic basis of social power relations played a minor role. As Greece began to 43

emerge from a political and social order that dated back to the Civil War, these three organisations fashioned a platform that reflected the burdens of the recent past and that included a critique of 'peripheral capitalism'.¹⁶

In the early phase of the women's movement, and typical of the traditional left-wing parties' sensibilities, were the campaigns of the KDG, the first women's organisation to emerge after the collapse of the junta. These campaigns were concerned primarily with the need to entrench the basic principles of social democracy in Greece. The emphasis was on social equality, national independence, democracy, and peace; all of which featured heavily in the rhetoric of EAM-ELAS. Indeed, many of the members of the KDG at this time had been members of the Panhellenic Union of Women (PEG), which was founded in 1945 by women who had been in the Resistance and who were members of the then illegal KKE.¹⁷ The importance of democracy to the KDG was evident in its very name (the 'D' standing for 'Democratic') and, at this point, the importance of women's equality was in its usefulness as an effective barometer for measuring the democratic 'depth' or credentials of a society. In turn, the emancipated woman would provide another 'line of defence' against internal threats to democracy. In this view, the war-torn past was the result of an unstable democratic tradition in which the secluded, un-politicised Greek woman—conservative by nature—was implicated:

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The painful memory of post-war Greece has taught us a great lesson: that Greece's independence as a national and political entity, requires the establishment of genuine democratic institutions. . . . Contemporary democracy by definition, demands active citizens, who participate at all levels of the political, social and economic life of the nation . . . we note that women in general, and Greek women in particular, do not participate in public affairs; at least not to the same degree as men. An outstanding example is the overwhelming minority of women in the today's parliament. (*Deltio*, February 1979)

The efforts of these feminists to cultivate a close association with Resistance history was, in an important sense, both legitimate and inevitable. Feminists affiliated with the left shared the conviction that the achievements and sacrifices of the Resistance generation had to be rescued from historical oblivion if there was to be any hope for national reconciliation. By extension, the contributions of women also had to be acknowledged. EGE, OGE, and the KDG assumed this role. Indeed, for mainstream feminists, the character and importance of the Resistance was defined to a large degree by the mass mobilisation of Greek women into political life. As such, it was regarded by many, especially communist women, as the golden age for Greek women's liberation and as an example of the undisputed importance of mass politics for the cause of women's liberation. The women of EGE—who were affiliated with PASOK through its leader Margaret Papandreou, who was the wife of PASOK leader Andreas Papandreou—travelled often to the most remote regions of the country to mobilise support for the cause of family law reform, the right of women farmworkers to their own pension, and so on. On these excursions to rural communities in Greece, they frequently reinvoked the spirit of EAM, a social group with whom EAM resonated particularly, to establish a meaningful

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connection, a normally impossible task given the vast cultural gap Papandreou and the rural women she appealed to. A sample of EGE's attitude towards this history can be gleaned from this extract from *Open Window*:

How can one write about the Greek Resistance and particularly about the women of the Resistance without feeling a shaky apprehension, an intense emotion? . . . Until now, especially in Greece, many factors impeded the free expression of what our people had experienced and achieved. The resistance was literally muled and its fighters slaughtered, persecuted, buried in prisons or in exile. The memory of the Resistance was . . . pushed underground. This was of a greater significance for women who exited the home, becoming fighters or responsible organisers with a new political and national consciousness. The Resistance was not just about pushing back the foreign invaders. This conflict gave women the opportunity to imagine a more complete and just life, and the desire to change her predicament. The experience of the Resistance left a deep mark in [the people's] soul. That spirit survives until today . . . and places women as natural allies of all peoples who struggle for national liberation, cooperation and for world peace. So that there will be no more exploitation of humans by humans; so that we stride forward hand in hand, men and women, for our social liberation. (O. Tziata-Hatziavgousti, in *Open Window*, December 1983)¹⁸

By the 1981 general election, many members and supporters of EGE voted for PASOK, creating the conditions for a landslide socialist victory after decades of conservative rule. But the blurry divide between EGE and PASOK operations came at a price for EGE leader, Margaret Papandreou, whose fight to defend the credibility of the organisation became increasingly futile up until its demise in the mid-1980s. 46

The identification of the women's movement with the Resistance was of the greatest importance to the women of the communist OGE for whom communism and the Greek Resistance were synonymous. In the rhetoric of OGE, the relationship between the contemporary Greek women's movement and the forgotten partisan women of the Resistance generation was linear. Indeed, OGE conceived of itself (as did the other two organisations) as the successors of the 1940s umbrella organisation Panellinia Enosi Gynaikon (Panhellenic Union of Women/PEG). Numerous citations can be given to that effect from their journal *Contemporary Woman*: 47

If we turn back the clock to WW2, we shall remember the most significant event in the history of the women's movement in Greece. . . . During the period of the legendary Resistance, Greek women ceased to be the ignored, silent, timid creature who had grown accustomed to undervaluing herself . . . she walked beside men courageously and confidently toward the creation of a free Greece. This shift [in consciousness] paved the way towards the creation of the first mass women's movement . . . when women such as Imvrioti, Hatzivasileiou, Zevgou, Svolou, Partsalidis founded the Panhellenic Union of Women in September 1945. . . . With the collapse of the junta the women's movement has been reborn. The continuity has been recognised; with its deep roots in the Resistance it has

succeeded in spreading nationwide and remaining alive despite the misfortunes of our nation. (*Contemporary Woman*, 1978)

For OGE, the Resistance was the key turning point in the history of gender politics in Greece. Numerous articles in various issues of *Contemporary Woman* were dedicated to this heritage. Peacetime (bourgeois) feminist efforts, outside these moments of armed struggle (e.g., Parren and *The Ladies' Newspaper*, the League for the Rights of Women), were dismissed briefly as failed and misguided bourgeois projects. 48

The KDG's leadership drew a similar line connecting the women's movement of the 1940s to the 1970s second wave of feminist activism. This is of no surprise when one considers that the KDG shared the same communist origins as OGE (up to the Communist Party split in 1969 following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia). While in the early post-junta years, the KDG's narratives resembled those of OGE, it was increasingly problematised and radicalised by the concerns for feminist politics raised by the autonomous movement. This led to a re-evaluation of the history of Greek feminist activism, which was far less rigid than previous assessments and those of the OGE. The KDG acknowledged all phases of feminist activity since the creation of the Greek state, including Parren's collective, the interwar 'avant garde' feminists (in spite of their incapacity to attract large numbers of women), as well as the wartime formation of PEG (which it still considered to be the most significant milestone for gender politics in Greece). In spite of the influence of autonomous feminists, the KDG continued to share with EGE and OGE a belief in the value of mass politics and in a feminism that appealed to a broad cross-section of women—united by attention to both gender and class. Typical of this conviction is the following extract from a KDG seminar, held in February 1979. Contemplating the importance of mass politics for the modern women's movement, the participants ruminate on the experience of the Second World War: 49

Pre-war [feminist] activists saw that this was not the right time for claiming rights but for exercising obligations. Women in Liberated Greece fought alongside and among men as equals, gaining not only equal political rights but also the social and political conscience of a responsible citizen. . . . After liberation [that is, prior to the outbreak of Civil War] women who had actively participated in the Resistance . . . sensed the need to fight so that women did not return, as they had done after 1821, to a position of dependency imposed on them by patriarchal society. Their aim was to consolidate in post-war Greece the position which they had gained in Liberated Greece under the occupation. Women's organisations were founded nationwide, and for the first time engaged not just a handful of educated progressive women, like the feminists of the pre-war period had done, but all women. (KDG pamphlet, February 1979)

Finally, EGE also maintained a reverent attitude to the Resistance, but like the KDG, it did not grant the Resistance exclusivity. Instead EGE, which saw itself as feminist-socialist organisation, paid an even-handed tribute to the past efforts of all women/feminist activists—both peacetime bourgeois feminist movements and progressive wartime populist movements. But that Resistance history weighed heavily on all three mainstream organisations is beyond 50

dispute, and its legacy was sufficiently powerful to keep tensions inspired by autonomous feminist activity at bay till the 1980s. In the early years of the post-junta women's movement, a feminism that neglected national history (the *patrida*) was inconceivable for left-identified activists, as was a feminism detached from the left, which by the late 1970s had regained a prominence that rivalled the 1940s.

Autonomous feminists were negatively predisposed to these events which defined the *metapolitefsi*. At a time when the Greek left was recouping its place in politics and history, autonomous feminism launched an assault on every aspect of the structure of Resistance-style politics, notwithstanding its unprecedented emphasis on gender equality. By extension, the mythologised partisan women and the revival of images of weapon-clad *adartisses* in Resistance iconography, which may have excited older party-affiliated feminists, stirred up a remote sympathy amongst younger feminists who were cognizant of women's historic second-class status within male-dominated leftist revolutions, and particularly their fate after the war was over. 51

Autonomous feminists were preoccupied with the politics of sexuality and representation and the impact of both on feminine subjectivity. The result was an alternative, critical engagement with this historical legacy. It would not be unreasonable to argue that autonomous feminists perceived the events of the Second World War as an 'interruption' to the course of Greek feminist politics, which had commenced in the interwar period, rather than as a significant milestone. 52

Skoupa was the first Greek feminist theoretical journal. It was run by an editorial collective, circulated between 1979 and 1981,¹⁹ and engaged with the question of feminist history and historiography more seriously than any of its contemporaries. *Skoupa's* editorial board constructed a feminist time line which incorporated Parren's efforts in the nineteenth century and which included the interwar feminist movement as embodying a properly feminist tradition, the 'ancestors' of the 1970s autonomous movement. The gender-political narratives which flourished in the context of important nation-building conflicts, such as the Resistance, were deemed irrelevant to the history of Greek feminism and women's struggles for liberation in general. Indeed, *Skoupa* contributors considered the male-centred (and male-dominated) nationalist/patriotic framework of the Resistance (and the Revolution before it) to be inherently problematic for, in their view, such episodes eventually legitimised the dominance of men over women. *Skoupa* thus subscribed to the view that nationalist/patriotic ideology was a male construct which reflected male desires, and thus one in which women always featured as pawns, symbols, and 'others' and rarely as architects of their own roles and lives. 53

The few direct references in the autonomous feminist press to the role of women in the Resistance and the Civil War illuminate their view that the emancipatory potential of women's participation in 'male power games' is limited. The following quotation appeared in *Dini* in 1988: 54

Despite the deeply sexist character of the prevailing political culture and its perpetual preservation of women's social position, in history women were not and are not absent. In auxiliary positions, as a rule, usually on the margins, and rarely at the epicentre, silent or distant; the contribution of women to political life, buried, devalued, underestimated, was and remains present, especially in periods of social upheaval and crisis . . .

At this point the article offers examples of the Resistance experiences of women and some from the Civil War. It continues:

This fact, however, never impeded their return to the family hearth in the aftermath, as if to demonstrate that participation in public affairs was acceptable as long as it was temporary. Moreover this contribution never facilitated a shift in the perception of gender roles. The only achievement was the confirmation of the belief in women's inability to grapple with public affairs, or to demonstrate that the problem of women in political life is the will of women themselves. (Repousi, 1988: 13)

The text conspicuously overlooks the controversial and prominent role of women in the Civil War, especially their extensive participation in armed warfare, and emphasises instead the inescapable maleness of war and its unremarkable consequences for women in the demobilisation phase, once their contribution has been exploited. Repousi (1988: 14) concludes, for example, that the ' . . . active [that is, physical] participation of women in politics has on most occasions only served to legitimise or preserve the political status quo and has on no occasion acted as the impetus for the subversion of its sexist structure. The latter would have been, in any case, impossible since women have always been incorporated on other's [men's] terms'. Autonomous feminists disparaged also the symbolic universe attached to this history in which images of armed women were only of allegorical significance, while the dominant morality was more accurately conveyed in images of a 'selfless, sexually neutered' femininity, traditionally idealised by the left (particularly in its wartime iconography). This observation fed into the feminist critique of communist puritanism inherited by OGE from the KKE (evident in OGE's responses to the issue of sexuality)²⁰ and of KKE's veneration of female self-sacrifice, which made them obvious adversaries. Autonomous feminists were fundamentally forward-looking, and as scornful of 'retro' feminist mythology and iconography as they were of the 'antiquated' methods of political agitation and organisation adopted by all three mainstream organisations.

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Mihopoulou (1995-96: 37), foregrounding the genesis of *Skoupa*, confirms the antipathy felt by many readers towards the preponderance of Resistance literature which, in her assessment, 'masqueraded' as feminist literature. Mihopoulou cites the poverty of the 'Recommended Reading' section of various autonomous feminist publications as emblematic of the poverty of Greek feminist literature and the insidious way in which the Resistance/Civil War legacy acted as a disincentive for 'serious' engagement with contemporary feminist issues. The women that formed the Movement for the Liberation of Women were among the first to endorse an anti-hierarchical organisational structure to counter the monolithic organisational structure of the

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parties of the left and the left's satellite organisations. Amongst them were Trotskyists, anarchists, and some anti-junta activists, women who regarded themselves as 'non-aligned' leftists. Nevertheless, in the first edition of their newspaper, of the ten books advertised, two were KKE and EAM documents dating back to the Resistance and the Civil War, while another six were about the legal rights of women as workers. The promotion of brochures, documents, and memoirs of the Greek Resistance and the Civil War, according to Mihopoulou, marked the obvious 'readiness' of Greek society for the 'journal, which came to be known as *Skoupa*'.

Hence, according to Mihopoulou, the journal's main motivation was to begin to redress the vacuum in contemporary Greek feminist literature. *Skoupa* went on to become the main vehicle for the dissemination of the most important ideas in Greek feminist thought and criticism of the period (Mihopoulou, 1995–96: 33–37). But the effort to create an autonomous feminist culture in Greece was, however, in vain. The specific historical moment that catapulted feminism into the forefront of Greek politics was the same moment that spearheaded a left-wing revival—simultaneously the strength and weakness for second-wave feminism in Greece. An entire generation of women whose political orientation was shaped in the context of left-wing liberation movements had yet to be accounted for and was picked up at this post-junta historical juncture. As such, feminism became easily linked with the momentum of left-wing resurgence, and while women benefited institutionally, feminism as a self-contained movement failed to establish itself.²¹

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6.6 The Triumph of Equality and the End of an Era

Local histories matter. In the imperialist countries of pre-1947 Britain and the United States, feminist campaigns to include women in all facets of militarism had an internal logic: they were intended to extend women's realm to hitherto forbidden 'areas' of activity and were thus judged according to radically different concerns and criteria than those relevant to a country which had been on the receiving end of imperialist conquest (equal opportunity/equal duties for equal citizenship rights). In the USA and the UK, the question of military enlistment has generally inspired two types of feminist response: objections on the basis that the military forms the bedrock of patriarchal power and should be fought (see Enloe, 1983), or approval on the basis that women's incorporation corrects an important aspect of their unequal citizenship status (e.g., the NOW campaign).

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In Greece, the recent past of foreign and local military occupation/intervention (whether Ottoman, Italian, German, Bulgarian, British, or American) was central in formulating feminist protests against women's conscription. The anti-Ottoman Revolution, which led to the formation of the modern Greek state, was a struggle in which men and women fought spontaneously, motivated by a shared identity and the vision of an independent Greek nation. The tripartite Axis occupation of the Second World War also saw the mass mobilisation of previously marginalised men and women into the political arena, in the name of national liberation and of

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the alternative vision of a popular democracy. The subsequent Civil War continued this tradition, albeit in a tragically more complicated manner brought about by the Cold War.²² As we saw in chapter 5, women made up 20 to 25 percent of partisan armed forces in the DSE during the Civil War, a war that would have not assumed the mammoth proportions that it did without US involvement. The Civil War can be said to have ended with the collapse of the colonels' junta, a regime which would have collapsed years earlier without the active support of the United States. Its eventual collapse some years later was partly brought about by the junta's violent quashing of the Polytechnic student protests in November 1973, followed by the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July 1974, which once again enjoyed US support. These landmark events could not but feature centrally in the construction of Greek feminist discourses and identities

The long history of foreign interference and military dictatorship in Greece rendered the image of the professional, obedient, and subservient nationalist female soldier unattractive to all feminists ultimately. While the Revolution and the Resistance with its special legacy of female participation provided the strongest argument for leftist feminists to oppose conscription, younger autonomous feminists' protest to the legislation was underpinned more potently by the recent experience of dictatorship (which enjoyed US support). The influence of Western feminisms (which often locate the crux of this argument on notions of equal rights and opportunities) was therefore sidelined by the impact of local experience. In the Greek order of things, women's organisations could simultaneously celebrate the patriotic achievements of armed women as partisans and condemn the nationalist militarism drive of the oppressive Greek state to conscript women into its military apparatus. 60

The last of these, the colonels' junta and the ensuing Turkish occupation of Cyprus, had demonstrated the insidious and intimate relationship between state power and the military, the relationship between 'bad' nationalism and the state. For older feminists, the history of women's spontaneous patriotism and armed participation (in the context of national liberation moments) was the paradigm of female patriotic participation which best defined their sentiments. The women of OGE extended their protest by reinvoking the (still taboo) legacy of the Civil War as sufficient reason to obstruct Bill 705/1977. In the communist newspaper, *Rizospastis* of 6 August 1977, *KP* (a civil servant) exclaims: 'First their army defeats us [a reference to the defeat of the DSE by the Government Army], they imprison us and torture us in concentration camps for years, and then they want to enlist our daughters. No way!' She then asks: 'How is a woman supposed to serve beside an officer of the gendarmerie who tortured her?' 61

In adopting this line of argument, that is, in endorsing the view that feminine armed subjectivity was legitimate and empowering as long it was spontaneous, informal, and defensive, leftist feminists returned to the 'Just War' paradigm first utilised by Parren in the nineteenth century to reconcile the belief in women's innate pacifism with their heroic feats in the Revolution. From the point of view of the mass organisations, women's absorption into the military distorted the Revolution/Resistance tradition and thus posed a threat to the historical edifice upon which 62

Greek women's political identity rightfully rested. This was central to the spirit of the campaign against militarisation that was waged within the ranks of SEGES. The women of OGE were quick to remind others that the idea of women's conscription originally surfaced as a junta initiative and thus served as a reminder of the compatibility of militarised womanhood with the junta's triptych of nation (fatherland), religion, and family. Conscription into the right-wing nationalism of the Greek military was viewed (by OGE in particular) as a perverse distortion of Greek women's patriotism and of their relationship to politics and the nation in general.

Many younger feminists, who had witnessed closely or participated in the anti-junta student movement, were ill disposed to arguments linking citizenship with wartime participation and military service for the masculinist orientation of the state and its institutions as well as of the idea of the nation itself. 63

Second-wave feminism also showed that just like national mythologies shift constantly so do feminist symbolic orders and mythologies according to the greater political context. Nationalist warrior imagery featured once again in the narratives of some of the most important protagonists of second-wave feminism, underscoring not only the allure and the empowering potential of such imagery but also the greater importance of the broader political and cultural climate in determining politically expedient narratives and images for feminist strategists. But it is also a question that goes beyond expediency and speaks rather to cultural identity. In the 1970s, the resurgence of the Resistance and the left created at least two significant impulses—the political reinvigoration of the Civil War generation which made its impact on the contemporary political stage, including within feminism, and the invitation to newer generations of political activists and feminists to situate themselves according to this historical resurgence. Such a connection was not only astute politically but also empowering in multiple ways for left-leaning feminists in 1970s and 1980s Greece. 64

The autonomous feminist objective to extricate feminism from the left-wing paradigm and the constraints of male-defined party politics and culture, and to establish independent and indigenous feminist thought, led to a distancing between them and this historical legacy. Thus this group was divorced from the single most important historical reality of the era. As a result, its significance within second-wave feminism in Greece notwithstanding, it was a force which remained marginal throughout, especially impeded by the reluctance of the majority of Greek women to sever links with the left-wing political establishment. 65

Some commentators have viewed this reluctance as 'peculiar' to Greek feminist politics. Lamenting this peculiar reluctance, Kotsovelou and Repousi (1989: 20) agree that, even though Greek feminism scrutinised both the content and practice of mainstream politics, it never led to a massive retreat (of women) from it. Kotsovelou and Repousi note that this peculiarity emerges in sharp contrast to other Western European feminisms whose autonomy (from the political establishment) was far more extensive. 66

Former feminist activists and scholars Papagiannaki and Fragoudaki (1988: 10) make similar judgements: **67**

In other countries, the autonomy of women's activism (beyond and outside political parties) is taken for granted. In Greece, a rupture with the political establishment and political parties did not occur to any great extent, and those women who did champion the cause, have remained a minority.

However, when seen against the background of the past two hundred years of female participation in total war occurring on the 'home front',²³ the reluctance to denounce such a history (and espouse instead radical critiques that bypass the history of those struggles) seems far less puzzling. The mass character of the mainstream women's organisations suggests a political reality independent of feminist will. The reasons for the limited retreat of feminists from political parties remain to be explored. **68**

The momentum of the women's movement began to decline in the mid-1980s, a period which coincided with the implementation of critical social and legal reforms by PASOK after its electoral victory in 1981. The second wave of feminism had all but faded out by the 1990s. As these lines are being written, feminist voices are markedly absent from the corridors of high politics and from the realm of cultural criticism. It is as if Greek feminist sensibilities can only be harnessed in the context of broader political or nation-building movements. **69**

Notes

Note 1: The monarchy, unlike other constitutional monarchies, played a central role in determining not only the composition of government but also of policies ranging from the broad outlines of foreign affairs (e.g., membership of NATO) and military matters (e.g., the appointment of Chiefs of Staff) to the mundane.

Note 2: During the Civil War, the effective control of the National Army rested primarily in the hands of American military personnel. After the conflict ended, the US Embassy had the final word on all major decisions; for example, the government budget had to be approved formally by the US ambassador before it was presented to Parliament. Later, with the commencement of the Marshall Plan, the role of the US Embassy was strengthened further.

Note 3: See Clogg (Ed.) (1972).

Note 4: In 1975 a referendum proclaimed Greece to be a Republic. Shortly afterward, the Parliament undertook the task of drafting the country's new constitution. This was hailed as a grand opportunity to reshape the legal framework in a consensual manner and to break cleanly from the past, but the governing conservative party passed the constitution through Parliament without the consent of any of the opposition parties (including the Centre Union, the Socialist, or Communist Party).

Note 5: The author's current project is to substantiate the assumption that the roots of the women's movement can be found in the Polytechnic student movement.

Note 6: The Eurocommunist faction was the outcome of a split within the Greek Communist Party (KKE) after Prague. In a fateful plenum held abroad, a conflict between KKE delegates from Greece (whose entry was illegal) and those from the socialist countries (representing the exiles) resulted in the subsequent formation of the KKE of the Interior (KK-Esoterikou). It was initially defined by a critical stance towards the USSR and, in time, adopted a Eurocommunist outlook in line with the French, Italian, and Spanish communist parties. After the legalisation of KKE in 1974, the two parties competed fiercely against one another before reemerging under the banner of the Coalition of the Left for Progress in the late 1980s.

Note 7: It is important to note that while this study focuses on the differences between the three mainstream women's organisations and the autonomous groups, there were also divisions within each camp and within each constituent group. Conflict was also a productive force and acted as a training ground for smaller, peripheral groups. Moreover, some of the core ideas of autonomous feminism, concerning the nature and solution to women's liberation, penetrated the wider movement and ultimately succeeded in extending the parameters of feminist discourse to include, for example, the issue of sexuality which was traditionally regarded as private and outside politics.

Note 8: The post-junta political renaissance also reinvigorated long-dormant women's organisations which were central to interwar feminism. They included the League for the Rights of Women, the National Council, and the Greek Women's Lyceum. The League played a pivotal role in the campaigns of the following years, motivated by its historic commitment to the advancement of women's legal, social, and economic rights. However, all three veteran organizations remained outside the 'centre-stage' of the post-war feminist scene and its defining controversies.

Note 9: The 'Polytechnic' pertains to the anti-dictatorship student movement whose organisational nucleus was the Polytechnic University in central Athens. Though the movement's social composition broadened to encompass workers and trade unionists, nostalgic views of the period centre on the five days of the 'Polytechnic uprising' (in November 1973) when students staged an occupation of the campus. In response, the junta sent tanks into the campus to quash the protest which resulted in a still undisclosed number of student deaths. Recent histories of the student movement under the Colonel's Greece include Yannaris (1993); Vernikos (2003); Darveris (2002); and Gatos (2002).

Note 10: Katina is a woman's name which acquired derogatory connotations over the past three decades in Greece, not dissimilar to the resonance of Sheila in Australia or Tracy in the UK.

Note 11: This phrase appeared in the May 1983 edition of *City of Women*.

Note 12: Widespread cynicism about the military's enlistment of women hinged on the fact that it was the simplest (and cheapest) means of 'liberating' male officers and privates from desk jobs and relocating them to combat units.

Note 13: See *Military Review*, June 1970.

Note 14: Subsequent feminist historiography, whose practitioners are amongst the more prominent representatives of the former autonomous movement (see the journal *Dini*), has resisted a substantive analysis of the relationship between the state, PASOK, and feminism, in anything but disparaging and dismissive terms. In fact, the institutional reforms of the 1980s (1982–86) marked a radical change in women's formal citizenship status. They were rushed through Parliament during the peak of PASOK's early radicalism, guided by the forceful intervention of the then-prime minister's wife, Margaret Papandreou, who was also the head of EGE. These reforms included:

1. The legal sanctioning of civil marriage—Bill 1250/ 7/4/1982.
2. The decriminalisation of adultery—Bill 1272/82 article 6 and the abolition of article 357 of the Penal Code.
3. The establishment of rural women's state pension, as sovereign individuals.
4. Bill 1329/1983, which entailed a confirmation and codification of the Green Paper that had foreshadowed the implementation of the constitutional principle of gender equality in civil law, in the Civil Law Prelude, in commercial law and in the Code of Jurisprudence.
5. Radical reforms to family law annulling the women's secondary status (even as wife and mother) that had been enshrined for generations.

Note 15: See for example the two-volume work of Petros Andaios (1979) on the history of EPON, which, although replete with photographs of women fighters, does not mention them in the text.

Note 16: By 1974, the left-wing critique of the Greek state and the Greek bourgeoisie shifted from an orthodox Marxist narrative to one influenced by the emerging neo-Marxist school of thought, which was influenced by the view of world capitalism as split between a developed North (the 'metropolis') and an underdeveloped South (the 'periphery'). The leader of PASOK, Andreas Papandreou, was significant in the dissemination of these ideas within Greece. Meanwhile, his wife Margaret Papandreou, founder and leader of EGE, was responsible for the blending of such neo-Marxist narratives with feminism.

Note 17: The Panhellenic Union of Women dissolved during the Civil War and regrouped in 1964. It was disbanded once again by the junta in 1967. Its main objectives were equal pay for equal work, maternity support, family law reform, the improvement of women's education, and vocational training.

Note 18: The process of reconciliation focused exclusively on the Resistance years (1941–44). The political turbulence of 1945 and the subsequent Civil War were excluded from this discourse as 'too recent and too divisive'. The men and women of the Greek left adhered to this unspoken agreement, which only began to see a shift in the 1990s.

Note 19: *Skoupa* was the predecessor of *Dini*, a feminist journal established in the 1980s with a significant although highly irregular output. Greek feminist historiography is one the many issues treated with seriousness by the contributors amongst whom are feminists/scholars Efi Avdela, Angelika Psara, Eleni Varika, Marina Papagiannaki, and Maria Repousi, who also comprised the founders and chief contributors of *Skoupa*.

Note 20: Current KKE leader, Aleka Papariga has stated: '[God help us] if the chief motivation of women factory workers was their sexual liberation . . . Can anybody imagine the outcome of placing sexual liberation on par with the unemployment problem? The struggle would shift from the factory floor to the home, which would be of great benefit to employers, the ruling class and monopoly power alike'. From *Rizospasti*, 7 February 1980, cited in Alevizou (1990): 44.

Note 21: For further discussion of this peculiarity, see Poulos (2007).

Note 22: Incidentally, the Greek Civil War has been widely acknowledged as the first conflict of the Cold War.

Note 23: All three episodes of war discussed in this book (Revolution, Resistance, and Civil War) were instances of total war; that is, war without a clearly demarcated front line. In such wars, the home (to which women had been traditionally confined) becomes part of the battle zone and, for this reason, makes it more likely that women will get involved as fighters.