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‘Out with the Bases of Death’: Civil Society and Peace Mobilisation in Greece during the 1980s

I.

The peace campaign against the Euromissiles constituted one of the biggest mass movements in modern European history, with a strong transnational and Pan-European dimension.¹ In their work, Lawrence S. Wittner and Benjamin Ziemann have provided both the interpretive backbone and the historical background necessary for the growing research in the field.² The recent declassification of archival material pertaining to NATO’s ‘dual-track’ decision and the ensuing upsurge of peace mobilisation has gathered the attention of historians, with a particular focus on the Western European countries that were earmarked to deploy the Euromissiles.³ However, this is not yet the case for Southern Europe.⁴ This paper aims to examine the neglected peace movements in Greece during the early 1980s, and attempts to offer a social and political history of Cold War Greece from below. It aims to do so while exploring the multi-layered complexities of its interaction with parties, government, international developments and mobilisation. In particular, it will examine why protests occurred and how they contributed to political participation, as well as how they were connected to political parties

¹ Benjamin Ziemann, ‘A Quantum of Solace? European Peace Movements during the Cold War and their Elective Affinities’, *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 49 (2009), 351.

² Lawrence S. Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford 2003); Benjamin Ziemann (ed.), *Peace Movements in Western Europe, Japan and the USA Since 1945* (Essen 2007).

³ The most recent examples include: *Green Politics in Germany*, special issue of *German Politics & Society*, 33, 4 (2015); Rasmus Mariager, ‘Surveillance of Peace Movements in Denmark during the Cold War’, *Journal of Intelligence History*, 12, 1 (2013), 60–75; Holger Nehring and Benjamin Ziemann, ‘Do All Paths Lead to Moscow? The NATO Dual-Track Decision and the Peace Movement – A Critique’, *Cold War History*, 12, 1 (2012), 1–24; Kristina Spohr Readman, ‘Conflict and Cooperation in Intra-Alliance Nuclear Politics: Western Europe, the United States, and the Genesis of NATO’s Dual-Track Decision, 1977–1979’, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 13, 2 (2011), 41–43.

⁴ Leopoldo Nuti’s research is an exception, but his work still emphasises government policy. See, for example, Leopoldo Nuti, ‘“Me Too, Please”: Italy and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons, 1945–1975’, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 4, 1 (1993), 114–48. See also an exhibition catalogue by Eirini Karamouzi and Christos Christidis, *Fighting for Peace: Greece-Italy-Spain in the 1980s* (Athens 2018).

and influenced by domestic developments and wider historical events. The paper also questions the ways in which these protests were entangled with other European peace movements and how they managed to encompass various segments of Greek society.⁵

While the transnational nature of Greek activism forms an important part of the country's story, following its cultural and historical idiosyncrasies will deepen our understanding of what popularised the peace message within wider society. The initial impetus for mobilisation was anti-nuclear fear, but peace as a concept continuously evolved – it consisted of 'communicative and symbolic debates and contestations' about the shape and form of the political and social order.⁶ Indeed, the use of conceptual frameworks for the analysis of 'new' social movements will shed light on the master frames that emerged in the Greek peace discourse of the 1980s, which brought together people from diverse political and social backgrounds.⁷ In his ground-breaking work on framing processes, David Snow states that 'the fear of nuclear holocaust is not immediately felt by the population and it had to be made "visible" by the media and ... defined, interpreted, and framed by politicians, scientists, and social movements'.⁸ In this context, the concept of framing is based on the constructive principle that shared meanings arise through interpretive procedures and are mediated by several contextual factors.

For a frame to be effective, it has to be 'empirically credible' – in other words, 'consonant with what the audiences know to be true'.⁹ In Greece, peace protesters fortified their

⁵ Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (2nd edn, Blackwell 2006). In this article, 'peace movement' refers to the protest against nuclear armaments and not nuclear energy, which is a substantial but different area of research. For more information, see Andrew S Tompkins, *Better Active than Radioactive! Anti-Nuclear Protest in 1970s France and West Germany* (Oxford 2016).

⁶ Holger Nehring and Helge Pharo, 'Introduction: A Peaceful Europe? Negotiating Peace in the Twentieth Century', *Contemporary European History*, 17, 3 (2008), 278.

⁷ Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (eds), *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis* (London and New York 1995).

⁸ David Snow, 'Framing Processes, Ideology and Discursive Fields', in Snow David, Soule, Sarah & Kriesi, Hanspieter (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Oxford 2007), 380–412.

⁹ Francesca Polletta, 'Storytelling in Social Movements', in Hank Johnston (ed.), *Culture, Social Movements, and Protest* (Aldershot 2012), 34.

message by drawing on the experience of the recent dictatorship, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, American involvement in the form of NATO bases on Greek soil, as well as a craving for dignity that permeated the narrative of the transition to democracy after 1974. The victory of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and its leader Andreas Papandreu in the October 1981 national elections further shaped this peace narrative. A version of reality rooted in tense emotional terms, it required foreign scapegoats and reinforced the country's burning quest for true sovereignty. As well as focusing on this dominant discourse and the ways in which anti-nuclear protest was framed, this paper examines the political conditions under which this discourse became accepted, thus subscribing to the concepts of frame alignment and political opportunity.

Paradoxically, the biggest threat to security that captured the Greek imagination was a NATO ally, Turkey, and not a country across the Iron Curtain. The fall of the Greek dictatorship in 1974 had been inexorably linked to the military junta's failed coup d'état against Makarios and the consequent Turkish invasion of Cyprus in that same year. Moreover, there was a unique political situation in Greece as the socialist government embraced the peace movements and Papandreu, its leader, progressively became the movement's public icon. As Saskia Richter notes, the peace movement usually 'took a sceptical view of political leaders. Notwithstanding its grassroots-inspired structures of decision-making, there were key players who succeeded in developing particularly high profiles with regard to certain issues'.¹⁰ Papandreu proved to be such a protagonist, reaching celebrity status within both the Greek and international peace movement. He also aided in shaping the national discourse on a version of peace that resonated with the Greek people.¹¹

¹⁰ Saskia Richter, 'The Protagonists of the Peace Movement', in Becker-Schaum, Christoph et al. (eds), *The Nuclear Crisis: The Arms Race, Cold War Anxiety, and the German Peace Movement of the 1980s* (New York and Oxford 2016), 189.

¹¹ Eirini Karamouzi and Dionysios Chourchoulis, 'Troublemaker or Peacemaker? Andreas Papandreu, the Euromissile Crisis, and the Policy of Peace, 1981–86', *Cold War History*, 19, 1 (2019), 29–61.

This paper will trace the peace movement's morphology and framing through a careful reading of a selection of five national newspapers – both centre-left and left-wing – and their coverage of the protests.¹² The focus will be on peaceful forms of protesting such as rallies, demonstrations and sit-ins, rather than confrontational or violent acts.¹³ The press remained an important source of information in the 1980s, and their value is highlighted by the fact that 74% of men and 51% of women in Greece used newspapers as their main source of information. The wider European average was 59% and 46%, respectively.¹⁴ As well as their usefulness in illustrating the extent of peaceful protest, these newspapers provide an interesting insight into which images and slogans were selected and distributed within the press.

This data will be juxtaposed with the outputs (campaign leaflets, journals, posters, photographs and memoirs) produced by activists. The visual and textual content that is available in both sources provides an invaluable tool in understanding not only the politics and culture of peace mobilisation, but also the definition that Greeks attributed to peace.¹⁵ This will be the first time that the three organised peace movements will be examined in depth following the ebbs and flows of their activity and the interaction with domestic parties and the international arena during the intense years of mobilisation from 1979 to 1986.¹⁶ Semi-structured interviews with the main protagonists and an analysis of Pan-European platforms such as European Nuclear Disarmament (END) will reveal the inner workings and transnational links of these

¹² *Ta Nea*, *To Vima*, and *Ethnos* are all centre-left, pro-government newspapers; *Rizospastis* (the official newspaper for the KKE) and *Avgi* (pro-KKE Esoterikou). The identification of protests and their volume is aided by the European Protest and Coercion Data project at the University of Kansas, which is available via: <<http://web.ku.edu/~ronfrand/data/>>, accessed 13 February 2020.

¹³ George Kassimeris, 'Greece: The Persistence of Political Terrorism', *International Affairs*, 89, 1 (2013), 131–42.

¹⁴ Stephanos Pasmazoglou, 'The 1980s in the Looking Glass: PASOK and the Media', in Clogg, Richard (ed.), *Greece, 1981–1989: The Populist Decade* (New York 1993), 94–112.

¹⁵ Benjamin Ziemann, 'The Code of Protest: Images of Peace in West German Peace Movements, 1945–1990', *Contemporary European History*, 17, 2 (2008), 237–61; Adrian Bingham, 'The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21, 2 (2010), 225–31.

¹⁶ The Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI) holds a collection on AKE. The Andreas Papandreou Foundation (APF) holds one on KEADEA. EEDYE is still in operation, but it now only provides access to its journal: *Δρόμοι της Ειρήνης* [*Roads to Peace*].

organisations, respectively.¹⁷ Finally, public opinion polls will be consulted at times (and with caution) to showcase collective emotions and sentiments within Greek society. As Michael Geyer puts it, ‘these polls reveal, as if in a supermarket surveillance video, elements of politics of everyday affect’.¹⁸

II.

Since the early post-war years, Greece has had a history of involvement in international peace mobilisation. In May 1955, the Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace (EEDYE) was created as the first organised peace movement. It was friendly towards the Soviet Union and was quickly incorporated under the aegis of the communist-led World Peace Council (WPC).¹⁹ Notwithstanding its benevolent attitude towards communism and the Soviet Union, EEDYE had made a conscious effort to create a politically non-aligned movement with transnational and international links. In the 1960s, high points of its activity included its marathon marches, where activists demanded the withdrawal from NATO, the abolition of American bases, a nuclear-free Balkan region and nuclear disarmament. These marches were

¹⁷ The collections on CND and END are held at the London School of Economics (LSE) Library; The interviewer conducted semi-structured interviews by following a pre-defined series of questions, which were finalized after thorough reading of the secondary literature, archival material and media content. The aim was to firstly grasp the perceptions of salient elite figures and secondly interviewees were treated as informants in order to fill in the gaps related to the research puzzle. For more on methodology, please see: Lewis Anthony Dexter, *Elite and Specialized Interviewing* (Washington 2006)

¹⁸ The European Commission’s Eurobarometer survey provides information on attitudes towards the USA and the Soviet Union. For more information on these polls, see Michael Geyer, ‘Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons’, in Hanna Schissler (ed.), *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968* (New Jersey 2001), 378.

¹⁹ For more information on the genesis of the Greek peace movement, see Evi Gkotzaridis, “‘Who Will Help Me to Get Rid of this Man?’: Grigoris Lambrakis and the Non-Aligned Peace Movement in Post-Civil War Greece: 1951–1964’, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 30, 2 (2012), 299–338. On the Soviet role in the WPC, see Gerhard Wettig, ‘The Last Soviet Offensive in the Cold War: Emergence and Development of the Campaign Against NATO Euromissiles, 1979–1983’, *Cold War History*, 9, 1 (2009), 79–110.

organised in honour of the first marathon peace-marcher and EEDYE Vice President, Grigorios Lambrakis; an anti-war activist who was assassinated on 22 May 1963.²⁰

During the years of military rule between 1967 and 1974, EEDYE had been prosecuted and all of its activities banned. Following the fall of the junta, however, the movement went back into operation. Its first President, General G Iordanidis, a Centre Union MP, was chosen on 16 May 1975. Officially, EEDYE was defined as a movement of the widest expression of public opinion, independent of party affiliation, with the participation of mass organisations and public figures representing almost the entire spectrum of the country's political and social forces. Indeed, it is true that in the first post-junta years, EEDYE did attract personalities from a wide political spectrum, despite its close ties with the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). Many of the most distinguished people in art, science and culture partook in the events organised by the committee.²¹ On a national scale, it established more than 150 local peace committees across the country. Furthermore, it published its own journal, *Roads of Peace*- first released in 1958 -which averaged a circulation of around 20,000 copies in 1984. Its central organs comprised a 21-member secretariat which met every fortnight, a 100-member presidium which convened every six months and an annual 300-member National Council. The National Congress was the supreme organ of the EEDYE, and it took place every three years.

In 1981, after 26 years of EEDYE as the sole, united expression of the organised peace movement in Greece, two other peace committees were created: the Movement for Peace, Human Rights and National Independence (KEADEA) and the Non-Aligned Movement of Peace (AKE). Their creation was part and parcel of the emergence of a mass-mobilisation

²⁰ Evi Gkotzaridis, "Who Really Rules this Country?" Collusion Between State and Deep State in Post-Civil War Greece and the Murder of Independent MP Grigorios Lambrakis, 1958–1963', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 28, 4 (2017), 646–73.

²¹ For more information, see EEDYE leaflet, '31 Years of Struggle', 1986, LSE Library, END/20/6. Yiannis Ritsos, Dionysis Savvopoulos, Vaso Katraki and Yannis Gaitis were amongst the artists taking part in peace events.

phenomenon that characterised the country's transition to democracy.²² KEADEA emerged as a result of some EEDYE members, with Christos Markopoulos – an individual with close ties to PASOK – at their helm, making the decision to leave EEDYE and form a new pacifist movement. According to a KEADEA member that would go on to become a foreign minister in the Papandreou government, this new peace initiative ‘was an attempt to create a pacifist movement, free from control of the Communist Party’.²³ In his memoirs, Markopoulos, the future President of KEADEA, recounted that ‘the people on the street only use red flags with slogans that are nothing but peaceful’. He further emphasised their ‘aggressive and revolutionary’ attitudes.²⁴ In the 1950s and 1960s, KEADEA organisers had felt that mobilisation was justifiably Soviet-friendly. However, in the climate of the 1980s, such an affiliation discouraged many people who simply wanted to mobilise against nuclear proliferation and ignored societal demands for the peace effort to be aimed at both superpowers.

A similar rationale was used in the creation of a third organised peace movement in May 1981. AKE sprang from an initiative of old members of the Lambrakis Democratic Youth and EEDYE, all of whom were disillusioned with the pro-Soviet line of the latter. AKE was closely linked to the Communist Party of Greece Interior (KKE Esoterikou), a Eurocommunist party that emerged after a split in the KKE in the late 1960s.²⁵ Both KEADEA and AKE called for political pluralism. Its implementation was disputed, however, in terms of both party organisation and protest mobilisation.

The intense competition amongst left-wing parties was echoed in the divergence of their goals and in their varied concerns on how different organised peace movements would overcome their differences as they developed along party lines. Panos Trigazis, a senior member

²² Giannis Voulgaris, *Η Μεταπολιτευτική Ελλάδα, 1974–2009* [*Greece in Metapolitefsi, 1974–2009*] (Athens 2016).

²³ Theodoros Pagkalos, *Με τον Ανδρέα στην Ευρώπη* [*With Andreas in Europe*] (Athens 2011), 24.

²⁴ Christos Markopoulos, *With Andreas Papandreou and the World Peace Movement* [in Greek] (Athens 2005).

²⁵ ‘Eurocommunism’ called for independence from Soviet Communism and a promotion of a reformist, moderate, pro-European with elements of political liberal agenda. See more in Ioannis Balampanidis, *Eurocommunism. From the Communist to the Radical European Left* (London and New York 2018).

of EEDYE, admits that ‘there was intense politicisation of the Greek peace movement in contrast to other ones in Western Europe that maintained its grassroots and non-aligned character’.²⁶ All three organised movements were closely associated with parliamentary parties, receiving financing and guidelines on issues of mobilisation. Instead of moderation and unity, however, these parties opted for intense polarisation. After the fall of the dictatorship, party patronage and polarised political culture pervaded mass movements in Greece in the 1980s.²⁷ As Kalyvas notes, ‘parties literally colonised civil society by assuming control of professional, local, cultural and even high school student’s association’.²⁸ Even AKE – which aimed to distinguish itself from its ideological opponent, EEDYE, and refrain from any rigid manipulation of protest on the ground – allowed its affiliated party, KKE Esoterikou, to coordinate its actions. In contrast to the Greek feminist movement that saw the formation of several autonomous group, peace mobilisation struggled to escape party patronage.²⁹ In one of AKE’s publications, the relationship between the party and protest movements was compared to the dependent and oft-problematic relationship between father and son.³⁰

Whereas in parts of Western Europe some forms of protest were largely autonomous, in Greece, ‘rigidly structured left-wing organisation did not wither away’ for most social movements in the 1980s.³¹ In her study on Greek social movements, Simiti showcases how the salience of

²⁶ Interview with Panos Trigazis, 8 February 2018.

²⁷ Dimitri Sotiropoulos and Evika Karamagioli, *Greek Civil Society: The Long Road to Maturity*, CIVICUS – Civil Society Index Shortened Assessment Tool, Report for the Case of Greece (Athens 2006).

<http://europe.cidem.org/documents/CSI-SAT_Greece_Report.pdf>, accessed 14 February 2020; Takis Pappas & Zina Assimakopoulou, ‘Party Patronage in Greece: Political Entrepreneurship in a Party Patronage Democracy’, in Kopecky, Petr et al (eds.), *Party Patronage and Party Government in European Parties* (Oxford 2012), 144-162.

²⁸ Stathis N. Kalyvas, ‘Polarization in Greek Politics: PASOK’s First Four Years, 1981–1985’, *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 23, 1 (1997), 90.

²⁹ Konstantina Vaiou (ed.), *Εννοιολογήσεις και Πρακτικές του Φεμινισμού. Μεταπολίτευση και «Μετά»* [Meanings and Practices of Feminism. Metapolitefsi and After] (Athens 2018).

³⁰ Declaration by AKE Thessaloniki, November 1984, ASKI.

³¹ Nikolaos Papadogiannis, ‘Red and Purple? Feminism and Young Greek Eurocommunists in the 1970s’, *European Review of History: Revue européenne d’histoire*, 22, 1 (2015), 17. The exception in Greece’s peace mobilisation was the extremely small group advocating for conscientious objectors that formed around Michalis Tremopoulos and Michalis Maragakakis. Interview with M. Tremopoulos, 04 April 2018.

the left-right cleavage undermined the development of an autonomous social movement.³² For example, KEADEA – with the support of PASOK, as Yannis Voulgaris, Professor of Politics and prominent intellectual of KKE esoterikou confesses – emulated the communist party’s rigid and all-controlling process for the organisation of mobilisation.³³ In a letter to Papandreou, the leaders of KEADEA underlined the importance of PASOK’s organisational edifice in mobilising the people to get on the streets.³⁴ Albeit with some exceptions, the party was at the epicentre of the peace protests. This discouraged many people from joining a peace protests as they questioned the reasons for joining ‘when it just serves party purposes’.³⁵ As a leading figure of AKE confesses, ‘there was barely any spontaneous mobilisation since all three parties were investing resources and energy in mobilising their voters and respective constituencies’.³⁶ During EEDYE’s ninth Panhellenic conference in 1984, party infiltration became the main topic of concern: ‘It is inconceivable that we are wasting time trying to overcome party differences. The peace movement by its nature should be unified otherwise it will lose its appeal to the masses’.³⁷ The lack of autonomy in the mobilisation for peace was also party attributed to the deafening silence of the Church. With the exception of some archbishops in Crete who were quite active in mobilising in areas near American bases, ‘the official stance of the Orthodox church was rather non-committal as peace initiatives were still stigmatised in ecclesiastic circles as communist inspired’.³⁸ Unlike the Catholic church, the ‘nationalisation of the Greek Orthodox Church’, with its secured funding from the state, hindered civic engagement.³⁹

³² Marilena Simiti, ‘Social Movements’, in Featherstone, Kevin & Sotiropoulos, Dimitris (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Greek Politics* (Oxford 2020)

³³ Interview with Yannis Voulgaris, 13 December 2017.

³⁴ Letter by T. Markopoulos, April 1983, AFP, Box 10.

³⁵ Declaration by AKE Thessaloniki, November 1984, ASKI.

³⁶ Interview with X activist, 22 February 2018.

³⁷ Report on the 9th Panhellenic EEDYE conference, 2–4 November 1984, ASKI.

³⁸ Interview with Panos Trigazis, 8 February 2018.

³⁹ Constantine P. Danopoulos, ‘Religion, Civil Society, and Democracy in Orthodox Greece’, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 6, 1 (2004), 48.

At the same time, the Greek situation echoed a general phenomenon of the wider peace movement against Euromissiles, where ‘unlike 1968 that challenged the ruling political and social order and shocked the establishment’, this specific wave of protests ‘extended to the establishment ... From communists to social democrats, many left-leaning citizens in the 1970s and 1980s acted according to double loyalties. Consciously they saw themselves as members of the traditional organization and of a new social movement at the same time’.⁴⁰ This lack of distinction between the establishment and civilian protest partially explains the volume and intensity of the peace movement in Greece. The popularity of peace was such that even the centre-right party, New Democracy (ND), encouraged the creation of an affiliated peace committee: the Movement for Multilateral Disarmament, Freedom and Security (KIPAEA), with Andreas Andrianopoulos, a former minister in the ND government, as its President. This movement was, however, based on a completely different concept of security than the others, in that it accepted nuclear weapons as a deterrent.⁴¹

Despite the ‘partitocracy’ of the movements and a vivid nationalistic agenda,⁴² the Greek mobilisation for peace was driven by the widely shared goals of preventing all-out nuclear war and achieving nuclear disarmament. This anti-nuclear sentiment was highlighted in an international opinion poll in 1983 and 1984, which asked participants to respond to the idea that ‘the use of nuclear weapons is not acceptable under any circumstances, not even if we are attacked with nuclear weapons’. Greece returned one of the highest approval rates with 51%, third after Spain and Japan.⁴³ As in the rest of Europe, the possible introduction of the neutron bomb and the 1979 ‘dual-track’ decision precipitated a new wave of campaigning in the face of a

⁴⁰ Jan Hansen, Christian Helm and Frank Reichherzer (eds), *Making Sense of the Americas: How Protest Related to America in the 1980s and Beyond* (Frankfurt 2015), 17.

⁴¹ Interview with Andreas Andrianopoulos, 6 March 2018.

⁴² Asteris Huliaras, ‘The Dynamics of Civil Society in Greece: Creating Civic Engagement from the Top’, *The Jean Monnet Papers on Political Economy*, 10/2014.

⁴³ Connie de Boer, ‘The Polls: The European Peace Movement and Deployment of Nuclear Missiles’, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 49, 1 (1985), 125.

fragile détente and the possibility of ‘limited nuclear war’.⁴⁴ These developments were cited as motivation by the leaders of all three Greek pacifist movements, albeit for different reasons. For example, the KKE-led EEDYE – despite its declaration of non-partisanship – blamed the US for rendering Europe its outpost and creating an imaginative danger through its opposition to the SS-20 missile. Ultimately, as an EEDYE member claimed, the ‘USA and NATO escalated the tension while the Soviet Union has consistently evoked the spirit of détente in both words and deeds’.⁴⁵ The presidents of KEADEA and AKE on the other hand, while sharing the concerns about US actions, thought that the genuine reason behind mobilisation was a desire to fight against nuclear armaments, notwithstanding their origins, and freeze further deployment. In demonstrations, people shouted: ‘not another cent for missiles, not another Kopek for missiles’.⁴⁶

In contrast to Belgium, Italy, West Germany, Britain and the Netherlands, however, Greece did not face the prospect of Euromissile deployment. Therefore, its peace movement quickly redirected its struggles to the pressing needs of the country. Alkis Argyriadis, EEDYE’s President in 1983, explained that in order for the peace movement to be the ‘great movement of our times, a movement of the whole people ... it must be linked with the people’s daily problems and struggles’.⁴⁷ Given the demands for Greece’s withdrawal from NATO and for the removal of foreign military bases, the fight against the imperialist schemes of the superpowers and calls for national sovereignty dominated the Greek peace agenda.

III.

⁴⁴ April Carter, *Peace Movements: International Protest and World Politics Since 1945* (London and New York 1992), 109; Nuti, Leopoldo et al. (eds), *The Euromissile Crisis and the End of the Cold War* (Washington 2015); Lawrence Freedman, ‘Note of the Month: The Neutron Bomb Returns’, *World Today*, 37, 3 (1981), 81–87.

⁴⁵ Report on the 9th Panhellenic EEDYE conference, 2–4 November 1984, ASKI.

⁴⁶ *Ta Nea*, 2 December 1981.

⁴⁷ Address by the President of EEDYE, Alkis Argyriadis, at the Extraordinary National Conference of EEDYE, 3–4 June 1983, LSE Library, END/20/6.

In Greece, the upsurge of protest activity found support from major trade unions, professional associations and thousands of everyday people. It is important to understand the political background for the rising popularity and the messaging of the pacifist movement. The resurgence of peace mobilisation coincided with the changing political context that brought PASOK, a socialist party, to power for the first time in the post-war period. The socialists' election victory in 1981 represented a radical break with the past, pointing to a transformative period in domestic and foreign policy.⁴⁸ PASOK secured its overwhelming majority with a nationalist agenda, declaring Greece a victim of NATO and the EEC – the alleged embodiments of the Western imperialist design. Once in government, Papandreou broke his electoral promises and mostly followed a pragmatic pro-Western foreign policy. Unsurprisingly, this reversal was not reflected in his rhetoric and public declarations. From the beginning, he set the tone for a polarised political climate which allowed the peace movement to flourish. He welcomed the creation of the affiliated peace movement, KEADEA, in the summer of 1981, stating that 'for the Greek people, the issue of peace acquires special meaning. We are hosting the American military bases as well as nuclear weapons, with the acquiescence of the Right. At the same time, we are facing Attila in Cyprus and the expansionary policies of Turkey in the Aegean'.⁴⁹ Thus, from early on in his first term, Papandreou interpreted peace along nationalist lines, including an attack on the political right, a strong anti-American sentiment and by pointing to Turkey as the major enemy. He had made it repeatedly clear that he viewed Ankara as the main foe:

We really have a unique problem in Greece, which really you do not meet in any other country member of the alliance. We sense a threat from an ally on our east, Turkey. One of the major problems in Greek defence over the last seven years has been the

⁴⁸ For Andreas Papandreou's rise on the political scene, see Stan Draenos, *Andreas Papandreou: The Making of a Greek Democrat and Political Maverick* (London 2012). For details on his foreign policy, see John C. Loulis, 'Papandreou's Foreign Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, 63 (1984/5), 375–91.

⁴⁹ *Ta Nea*, 16 June 1981.

preparation of defence in case Turkey, beyond words, decided to actually make good on its claims.⁵⁰

It is only against this background that Papandreou was able to get away with excessive defence spending (around 7% of GDP), a policy that rested on a broad consensus across political parties.⁵¹ This spending was framed as a way to protect peace – in other words, to provide security against the perceived threat posed by Turkey. The Turkish threat gave rise to a 'leftish expression of nationalism in the context of an anti-imperialist rhetoric'.⁵² This was accompanied by a deep-seated anti-Americanism that drove peace movements in the period in Greece and across wider Europe, facilitating the broad coalition of activists from diverse backgrounds.⁵³ Activists rallied against the US and its decision to install Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe – a move they interpreted as a desperate effort to rally support around a non-existing threat. All three Greek peace movement organisations – KEDEA, EEDYE and AKE – accused the US of jeopardising peace and of cancelling the spirit of détente with one stroke.

In Greece, diverse cultural, political and ideological factors determined the nature of anti-Americanism during the post-war years. After 1974, political discourse centred on Cyprus, the Turkish threat, demands for national sovereignty, the fight for national dignity and anti-right rhetoric.⁵⁴ According to Dinas, a cleavage in Greek political culture soon developed. In this, the right was projected as representing the post-civil war system; one which lacked legitimacy and

⁵⁰ *New York Times*, 26 October 1981.

⁵¹ Dionysios Chourchoulis, 'Greece, Cyprus, and Albania', in Meijer, Hugo and Wyss, Marco (eds), *The Handbook of European Defence Policies and Armed Forces* (Oxford 2018), 313–29.

⁵² Efi Gazi, 'Μεταπλάσεις της Ελληνικής Εθνικής Ιδεολογίας και Ταυτότητας στην Μεταπολίτευση', in Avgeridis, Manos et al (eds), *Μεταπολίτευση. Η Ελλάδα στο Μεταίχμιο Δοο Αιώνων* [*Metapolitefsi. Greece between Two Centuries*] (Athens 2015), 260

⁵³ Brendon O'Connor and Martin Griffiths, *The Rise of Anti-Americanism* (London and New York 2005), 3.

⁵⁴ Konstantina E. Botsiou, 'The Interface Between Politics and Culture in Greece', in Alexander Stephan (ed.), *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy and Anti-Americanism after 1945* (New York and Oxford 2006), 280.

was associated with American infiltration.⁵⁵ Quickly, anti-Americanist sentiment became a unifying factor that superseded the Cold War consensus of the pre-junta years and ‘no longer presupposed causal events but constituted a popular interpretive framework for the construction of meaning’.⁵⁶ This sentiment soon became institutionalised, and was further exacerbated by Ronald Reagan’s ascendancy to the US presidency in 1981. In addition, most Greeks believed that Americans had facilitated the imposition of the Greek dictatorship and had remained silent during the Turkish invasion.⁵⁷ It is no surprise, therefore, that the Eurobarometer polls reveal that anti-American attitudes in Greece were consistently higher than the EU average. In 1982, 80.6% of Greek participants expressed unfavourable feelings towards the US, whereas the EU average was 45.21%. At its peak, this difference reached approximately 40% in the early 1980s. It is clear, therefore, that Athens consistently held the most pronounced negative stance vis-à-vis the US.⁵⁸

As part of this anti-Americanism, the main preoccupation in the Greek political imaginary was the perceived threat posed by the foreign bases stationed in the country. These bases did not just serve a military function – instead, they had wider political, economic and cultural ramifications. Military bases are generally ‘embattled garrisons: strategically important but politically vulnerable’.⁵⁹ This political vulnerability is easily heightened when host governments undergo a democratic transition, as Greece was experiencing at the time. Since 1953, the country had been hosting four American bases: the Souda Bay naval base on Crete that could anchor the whole Sixth Fleet, the Hellenikon air base, and the Nea Makri and Heraklion

⁵⁵ Elias Ntinas, ‘Ο λαός ξεχνά τι σημαίνει Δεξιά: Η αντιδεξιά προκατάληψη ως (φθίνον) στοιχείο της ελληνικής πολιτικής κουλτούρας’ [‘People Forget What the Right Means: Right-Wing Prejudice as a (Declining) Element of Greek Political Culture’], *Επιστήμη και Κοινωνία: Επιθεώρηση Πολιτικής και Ηθικής Θεωρίας* [Science and Society: A Review of Political and Ethical Theory], 25 (2015), 65–94; Nikos Demertzis (ed.), *Η Ελληνική Πολιτική Κουλτούρα Σήμερα* [The Greek Political Culture Today] (Athens 1994).

⁵⁶ Zinovia Lialiouti, ‘Greek Cold War Anti-Americanism in Perspective, 1947–1989’, *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 13, 1 (2015), 43.

⁵⁷ Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos, ‘The Authoritarian Past and Contemporary Greek Democracy’, *South European Society and Politics*, 15, 3 (2010), 459.

⁵⁸ Eurobarometer, 1981–84.

⁵⁹ Andrew Yeo, *Activists, Alliances, and Anti-US Base Protests* (Cambridge 2011), 5.

communication installation bases.⁶⁰ During the intense mobilisation of peace movements in Greece, the government was negotiating the renewal of the 1977 agreement covering US military activities and bases in Greece as well as US military assistance to Greece. Almost all rallies during that period were running on a platform which called for 'sole national choice' and the 'removal of foreign bases'. An information bulletin distributed in 1982 by EEDYE warned that 'any negotiation could not and should not deal with any subject other than the speediest possible withdrawal of these bases. Any other solutions could mean nothing other than ceding our basic national sovereign rights, limiting our national independence and posing danger for the democratic course of our country'.⁶¹

The protesters mocked the so-called fraudulent guarantee of borders promised through NATO membership, 'as it is offered by those responsible for the imposition of the 7 year dictatorship in Greece, for the invasion and the maintenance of Turkish occupation in Cyprus and the incitement of the chauvinist adventurist claims of Turkey in the Aegean'.⁶² KEADEA's President, Christos Markopoulos, a nuclear scientist and later a PASOK MEP, emphasised that the presence of foreign military bases was incompatible with national independence and posed a threat to peace in the country. Peace activists tapped into and perpetuated the Greek discourse of victimisation, with the US as the main culprit. In August 1982, Papandreou referred to the 'colonial character' of the bases, echoing statements by EEDYE and KEADEA that had interpreted the country as 'the 53rd star in the American flag'.⁶³

Greece was framed by the protesters as a victim of US imperialist design. Many of the banners displayed in demonstrations compared the fate of the Greeks to the struggles of the people of Salvador and Lebanon. In June 1982, in the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon,

⁶⁰ Irene Lagani, 'U.S. Forces in Greece in the 1950s', in Duke, Simon & Krieger, Wolfgang (eds), U.S. Military Forces In Europe (Boulder, 1993) 308-320.

⁶¹ EEDYE Information Bulletin, Athens, No. 4/1982, LSE Library, END/20/6.

⁶² Front cover of *Rizospastis*, 15 May 1982.

⁶³ EEDYE Information Bulletin, Athens, No. 4/1982, LSE Library, END/20/6.

tens of thousands of protesters of all ages marched outside the US Embassy, shouting slogans such as ‘throw the Zionists out of London’ and ‘no to the genocide of the Palestinians’. These conflicts sparked a protest language in Greece that was not only pro-Arab but brought forward a transnational narrative of victimhood with America and Israel as the culprits. It was this correlation between victimhood and antisemitism that manifested at times within the peace movement, not religious in character but as a grievance against what was considered attempts for domination.⁶⁴ The marches were organised by EEDYE and the Local Union of Towns and Municipalities of Attica. On the initiative of the Greek peace movement and under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, with the participation of many known artists, a concert of solidarity to Lebanon was held at the Panathenaic stadium, with more than 80,000 people in attendance.⁶⁵ At the concert, there was a forceful use of anti-imperialist terminology. Earlier that year in April, outrage was caused by the appearance of the US Sixth Fleet and the conduct of some of its soldiers on the island of Skiathos and in Piraeus. Likening them to pirates, protesters felt that the American presence insulted their national pride and dignity. The soldiers’ actions ignited public indignation (‘Piraeus is a port of peace: out with the Sixth Fleet’). When they disembarked on Greek soil, they were described as ‘boys chewing gum and smoking marijuana, regulars in an infamous bar, fornicating, drinking and committing adultery with prostitutes while destroying Greek property’.⁶⁶

In February 1983, all three peace movements cooperated with the Association of Workers in Greece (GSEE) and the Lawyers’ Association to organise a Panhellenic protest against what they perceived as pressure from the Americans. With banners reading ‘no to blackmails, national independence’ and ‘out with the bases of death’, the activists called on all

⁶⁴ Giorgos Antoniou et al, *Antisemitism in Greece today: Aspect, causes and tackling the phenomenon* (Thessaloniki 2017); Lamprini Rori, ‘Study of the Greek anti-Americanism: the case of PASOK from 1974 to 2002’, Master Thesis (Paris 2002).

⁶⁵ *Rizospastis*, 28 April 1982.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Greek people, regardless of party affiliation, to join in their fight against the foreign bases and to resist American provocation of the proud and democratic Greek nation.⁶⁷ The protest was primarily organised in response to a decision made by the US Congress to increase military aid to Turkey disproportionately to Greece. Several weeks later, on 3 March 1983, Athens experienced one of the largest mass demonstrations with the support of all three organised peace movements. With the exception of the ND, all political parties also showed support. All the banners, flags and posters were in white and blue to reflect the unified voice of the activists and the tens of thousands of people that had packed the Constitution Square in front of the parliament building in Athens. It was ‘one of the few moments that attracted people beyond the parties’.⁶⁸ According to Panos Trigazis, ‘there was intense prior consultation amongst the three peace movements on the slogans utilised in the demonstration and a huge disagreement over the mention of the SS-20s. So, the compromise was “no new missiles in Europe”’.⁶⁹

Joining the activists were 200,000 people from diverse bodies and associations, municipalities, popular artists and the Committee of Intellectuals and Artists for Peace. Even from the elevated steps leading to the parliament building, it was impossible to see where the demonstration ended. From 7 pm, the crowd began to swell. By 10 pm, many were still streaming into the Square. All the main streets were full of people who were protesting against the foreign bases and the American policy in the sensitive region of the Mediterranean. The first of three speeches, by EEDYE and its leader, Alkis Argyriadis, denounced the American bases as a huge mistake:

In 1953 with the US–Greek agreement we gave the Americans the right to come in, move around our country, do whatever they want without asking anyone. We reached a

⁶⁷ *Ta Nea*, 28 February 1983.

⁶⁸ AKE Information Bulletin, January 1984, ASKI.

⁶⁹ Interview with Panos Trigazis, 8 February 2018.

point where in every ministry there would be an American consultant. The bases form a kind of dictatorship, a heavy web that is spreading throughout the country that is keeping Greece hostage.⁷⁰

For protesters, the bases had been a persistent source of national distress, with interventions having had a huge impact on political and social life. As stated in a joint declaration by EEDYE, KEADEA and AKE in 1983, in which Greeks were called on to take part in peace rallies, the role of the foreign bases 'is not to serve our national defence and security. It is to serve American military ambitions which are in opposition to our national interests, to Greek foreign policy and to our relations with the neighbouring countries of the Balkans and the Mediterranean'.⁷¹

The main sentiment expressed by the crowd was a determination to end the operation of the bases. The demand for their removal was meant to ensure that Greece would not get involved – either by mistake or by design – in any confrontation between the two superpowers. Some protesters carried homemade banners that read 'national independence, peace, foreign bases out', 'we love life, that is why we fight for peace' and 'people remember: Greece, 1967, Cyprus, 1974, Turkey, 1980'. The demonstrations were not isolated events confined to the capital. On the contrary, the whole country was experiencing high levels of mobilisation: around 25,000 Cretans demonstrated against the bases in Heraklion, while in Thessaloniki more than 50,000 assembled in the main square. Several days later, activists protested against the base at Nea Makri and formed a human chain, laying on the floor to depict the image of a thousand dead bodies as victims of nuclear war. During the protest, Nikos Kaisaris, a member of AKE, shouted: 'This is not a base. It is a huge electronic ear, that eavesdrops on the Balkans and the

⁷⁰ *Ta Nea*, 4 March 1983.

⁷¹ EEDYE Information Bulletin on the Five Continent Conference for Peace and Disarmament, Athens, 13–17 December 1986, Zappeion, LSE Library, END 20/6.

Mediterranean. It played an incremental role in the invasion of Cyprus'. Kaisaris' statement drummed up support for Greece's national struggle and framed peace in nationalistic terms.⁷²

Even when PASOK finally signed a five-year agreement with the US on defence and economic cooperation in September 1983 – which continued the operation of the four existing American bases and included a payment of \$500 million in US military aid to Greece – Papandreou declared that 'the struggle has been justified'.⁷³ The renewed accord was presented as an agreement for eventual withdrawal, and the peace movement embraced this logic. Athens was plastered with slogans which declared that 'at last an end of the dependence ... the struggle is being vindicated'. *Exsormisi*, the party's weekly magazine, trumpeted that the bases would close in 1988.⁷⁴ Thousands of people wrote to the Prime Minister to congratulate him on a 'major foreign policy success that restored national pride'.⁷⁵ EEDYE and AKE did express concern and lamented the government for not removing the bases as promised immediately after its electoral victory. But their disappointment was not vocal, and it did not translate into further protests against the government. This was largely due to respective party instructions, as they did not want to fracture left-wing unity and were focusing on a strong drive against the right.⁷⁶ Moreover, the tone of dissent that accompanied the US–Greece negotiations seemed to satisfy protesters in its own right. Even in the absence of concrete results and the continuation of American bases on Greek soil, Trigazis admitted that 'we were not disappointed, as at least our voices were heard for the first time'.⁷⁷ Instead, they were more interested in voicing their grievances and developing a narrative of defiance. Another former activist stated in an interview

⁷² *Ta Nea*, 11 June 1984.

⁷³ Peter Pappas, 'The 18th October of Andreas Papandreou: Some Thoughts on a Democratic Cult of Personality', in Kariotis, Theodore C.(ed.), *The Greek Socialist Experiment: Papandreou's Greece 1981–1989* (New York 1992), 60.

⁷⁴ Richard Clogg, 'PASOK in Power: Rendezvous with History or with Reality?', *The World Today*, 39, 11 (1983), 439.

⁷⁵ Reactions to the Agreement on Bases, AFP, Box 12.

⁷⁶ Stathus N. Kalyvas and Niko Marantzidis, 'Greek Communism, 1968–2001', *East European Politics and Societies*, 16, 3 (2002), 665–90.

⁷⁷ Interview with Panos Trigazis, 8 February 2018.

that: ‘for the first time, we felt Greece was an equal partner in global affairs. Despite the results, we felt really good protesting for peace, motivated by indignation and the need to have more control and have a say in our own life, for a better life’.⁷⁸

IV.

Nationalism was a key source of motivation for the Greek peace protests of the 1980s. As with other peace movements around the world, however, the protests also emphasised the horrors of nuclear destruction.⁷⁹ Following Reagan’s decision to restart the production of the neutron bomb in 1981, scientific associations and trade unions demonstrated in front of the US Embassy in Athens with banners which read: ‘The catastrophe that prefers humans over buildings’. In November of that same year, a large demonstration took place against the neutron bomb. As organiser of the event, the famous composer Mikis Theodorakis declared:

Only cannibals could produce a weapon that kills people and leaves intact the products of their work. And this is what the American government is doing now. It’s zero hour, with a danger of a nuclear holocaust at our door. There is no time for illusions. Each sane person needs to stand up.⁸⁰

In an interview, the president of the KEADEA, Markopoulos, expressed similar concern for the urgency of the situation: ‘[W]hat is at stake here is the very belief in progress, in the ability and will to live with the possibility of annihilation’.⁸¹ He was worried that the whole edifice of progress was in peril if nuclear weapons technology was applied in practice.

⁷⁸ Interview with Y activist, 20 February 2018.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Ran Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima: The Origins of Global Memory Culture* (Cambridge 2014).

⁸⁰ *Ta Nea*, 12 August 1981.

⁸¹ *To Vima*, 13 August 1981.

On 17 May 1982 – celebrated as a day of peace, as well as the anniversary of Lambrakis’ death – all three peace movements (KEADEA, EEDYE and AKE) cooperated to hold a marathon walk with 30,000 participants and well-known athletes from around the world in Pedion Areos. The main slogan was ‘yes to life, no to the arms of death’. There were three floats, one with SS-20s and Pershing II missiles, another with Brezhnev and Reagan holding the globe on their fingertips and a third with depictions of pollution and environmental destruction. Activists, appalled by the cost of the military build-up which had skyrocketed to a global expenditure of \$500 billion in 1980, were demanding this money to be spent on health care, food and education instead.⁸² ‘Out of the military wing of NATO, so Greece does not become Hiroshima’, noted one activist statement. ‘My name is Eirini [Peace] and I want to live peacefully’, wrote a 50-year-old woman. A resistance fighter told reporters: ‘I am joining the rally as I don’t want my children and grandchildren to go through what I had to: two wars. I know very well the value of peace’.⁸³

The Greek peace movement employed similar collective action and pressure group tactics to Western Europe. The message of peace may have been deeply nationalistic in its framing, but the mode of protest was truly transnational. As well as capitalising on the importance of locality in projecting peace demands, Greek advocates for peace took advantage of different protest methods that had proved effective in other European countries. These transnational entanglements were a result of multiple factors, including platforms such as the END, international conferences that allowed for the exchange of ideas as well as festival of communist parties, with the World Youth Festival surfacing as an important transmission belt of ideas.⁸⁴ It was also the simple fact that Greek protesters were equally concerned with how to

⁸² *Ta Nea*, 17 May 1982.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Roads of Peace*, April 1984, ASKI

keep up momentum and involve various social actors in their mobilisation. In an information bulletin, EEDYE warned:

We must keep public opinion informed more systematically, to convince the population that there is an immediate danger of war, so that the different social strata in their daily life can understand and better link the demands of peace and national independence with the people's problems, and with the cultural and peace traditions of our country.⁸⁵

In their publications, they used strong images to drive home the urgency of collective action, rally media attention and provoke an emotional reaction. One of the most prominent photos was that of an activist marching alone towards the American base in Nea Makri, proudly carrying the Greek flag.⁸⁶ It was perfect in showcasing how the small and proud Greek nation was standing up to the big bully. The circulation of journals and information bulletins – along with the organisation of rallies, demonstrations and human chains – was meant to encourage local actors to become pacesetters of the peace movement. The movement for nuclear-free cities found some of its roots in Greece, making it another contribution of local government to the cause for peace. As in other countries, peace protesters addressed issues of defence at the local level, debating elite decisions on the nuclear arms race and the procurement of armaments, which for the most part were both inaccessible to public review. Greek municipalities and parks were declared nuclear-free in an effort to localise peacebuilding efforts. Despite contempt for the efficacy of such actions, this decision made decentralisation a key element of political action.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Report on the Greek peace movement during the period 1981–1984 and its prospects, 2–4 November 1984, Athens, September 1984, LSE Library, CND/2008/6/15.

⁸⁶ *Roads of Peace*, April 1988, ASKI.

⁸⁷ Susanne Schregel, 'Nuclear War and the City: Perspectives on Municipal Interventions in Defence (Great Britain, New Zealand, West Germany, USA, 1980–1985)', *Urban History*, 42, 4 (2015), 564–83.

One of the most famous images of the peace movement was taken in the largest demonstration of this protest cycle. Taken in November 1983, it shows a boy carrying a sign that read ‘I want to live ... I wonder, tomorrow, will the children of the world be able to wake up?’. Behind the sign, a detonating Pershing II is pictured.⁸⁸ The centrality of children and their innocence was evident in murals designed to honour peace. For example, a famous mural in Zografou depicted the protest of young students. By showing a close-up of their faces, everyone could discern their agony in juxtaposition to an old lady sitting on a porch surrounded by pigeons, symbolising a free and peaceful life.⁸⁹

Unlike the protests of the 1970s, which had students as their main constituency, the mobilisation of the 1980s cut across generational lines and was more heterogeneous in terms of age, education, class and gender. All three peace movements of the 1980s, like their European counterparts, situated the individual and her needs at the centre of politics of peace. Across the board, activists promoted disarmament and feminism as linked issues. The image of the female activist was reproduced innumerable times in publications and campaign material. Furthermore, in Greek peace discourse, the social and political role of the mother was central in opposing war. Holding a banner, she is portrayed as an integral contributor to the peace process. In the spirit of Balkan cooperation, the Federation of Greek Women (OGE) organised a demonstration on the Greek–Bulgarian border with the slogan ‘Balkans Without Nuclear’. In the neutral zone of the border outposts, there was a meeting of 80 OGE members with the corresponding Bulgarian women’s movement. This peace rally took place to celebrate Women’s Day. ‘We believe that the women’s federation in both our countries should and have to contribute positively to the safeguarding of peace, given the positive attitude of both of our governments on the

⁸⁸ *Ta Nea*, 4 November 1983.

⁸⁹ *Ta Nea*, 18 November 1983.

denuclearisation of the Balkans and the stabilisation of peace'.⁹⁰ It was mainly the two organised feminist movements, OGE and Union of Women of Greece (EGE) that made inroads in peace mobilisation largely because of their links with the KKE and PASOK respectively.⁹¹

Spatial politics – attempts to connect political messages to specific spaces – were widely practiced in Greek protest, as with the rest of the European mobilisation. Significant peace initiatives were linked to local problems and traditions to maximise public attention and to resonate emotionally with local audiences. The geographic structuring of collective action formed an integral part of Greece's contentious politics.⁹² In Crete, peace was linked with the struggles against the foreign bases and the celebration of the Battle of Crete of 20 May 1941, a major reference point for the national resistance during the Second World War. In the port of Piraeus, peace was linked with the struggle against the visits of the Sixth Fleet. On the island of Rhodes, mobilisation was directed against the Voice of America substation that was posted there.⁹³

In 1984, Athens cast itself as a city of peace. From the Acropolis, an ancient symbol of world civilisation, Greece initiated a minute of silence for peace, which had been unanimously accepted by UNESCO. In the presence of the Minister of Culture, renowned actress Melina Mercouri, a plaque was engraved with the phrase 'Athens – Peace – Culture' and positioned under an olive tree, a symbol for unity. In her statement to the press, and full of emotion, she proclaimed that it was the 'first day of spring, and it is a huge day, the beginning of ... peace ... We are experiencing an amazing moment here under the Acropolis, this monument of

⁹⁰ *Ta Nea*, 3 March 1983. For more information on women's prominent roles in peace movements over time, see Linda Etchart, 'Demilitarizing the Global: Women's Peace Movements and Transnational Networks', in Baksh, Rawwida & Harcourt, Wendy (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements* (Oxford 2015).

⁹¹ Maria Repousi, 'The Feminist Movement', in Vamvakas, Vasilis & Panagiotopoulos, Panagis (eds), *Η Ελλάδα στη Δεκαετία του 80'. Κοινωνικό, Πολιτικό και Πολιτισμικό Λεξικό* [Greece in the 1980s. Social, Political and Cultural Lexicon] (Athens 2014), 624-626

⁹² Javier Auyero, 'Spaces and Places as Sites and Objects of Politics', in Goodin, Robert & Tilly, Charles (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis* (Oxford 2006), 564-77.

⁹³ Report on the Greek peace movement during the period 1981-1984 and its prospects, 2-4 November 1984, Athens, September 1984, LSE Library, CND/2008/6/15.

freedom'.⁹⁴ Athens was officially declared a city of peace and East–West dialogue on 6 August 1984, the 39th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing. Thousands of people held candles and formed a protective human chain that lit up the monument, and slogans such as ‘Save the Acropolis, life and civilisation from nuclear destruction’ featured. The Dean of the University of Athens, Michalis Stamatopoulos, exclaimed:

We are all here to declare our faith in our monuments and the values of our civilisation, the faith to the human being itself, and declare our strong will to avoid at any cost another Hiroshima ... Today, we are spending 2 billion dollars a day on nuclear armaments while 40 million people die from starvation every year.⁹⁵

The choice to hold this event at the Acropolis gave the peace movement a clear visual identity and helped the diverse committees mobilise alongside one another. Furthermore, the event symbolised the need to fight to preserve ancient monuments from the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. The Acropolis, alongside other ancient sites in Athens, became the backdrop to the peace rituals, embedding the activists in a joint social framework.

The peace committees opted for such cultural spaces, loaded with political meaning, to mitigate their scant budgets and problems of visibility.⁹⁶ Several rallies were organised along the symbolic road from Marathon – a place of voluntary sacrifice, freedom of speech and the defence of democratic principles – to the Field of Ares, linked to the eponymous god of war and renamed by activists as ‘the Field of Peace’. As the leader of AKE, Argyropoulos noted the Greek peace activists showed ‘with actions the idea that history is not written on the battlefield

⁹⁴ *Ethnos*, 23 March 1984.

⁹⁵ *Ethnos*, 6 August 1984.

⁹⁶ James Doeser and Melissa Nisbett, *The Art of Soft Power: A Study of Cultural Diplomacy at the UN Office in Geneva* (London 2018).

but in the conscience of the people'. Argyropoulos tapped into Lambrakis' legacy, who had become the icon of peace mobilisation in Greece, by stating that:

... we are walking in [his] footsteps ... on the side of the non-aligned peace movements, against bipolarism, hegemonism and the weapons of death. 21 years ago, today, the frontrunner of peace, Lambrakis was fighting for his life, heavily wounded, wounded by the parastate, which detested the vision of people for a better life. And it was this blood that watered the tree of Peace and Democracy in our tortured country.

Piraeus also turned into a port of peace for three days in July 1983.⁹⁷ The most popular and important rallies took place on the anniversary of the student uprising of 1973, with a customary march towards the US Embassy. John Karamichas has offered what he calls a 'memetic explanation' of the power and lure of specific sites in inciting protest, noting a 'self-reproducing, culturally legitimised pattern of youth rebellion in Greece' that goes back to the student struggle against the military junta.⁹⁸ The peace mobilisation was, therefore, effectively appropriating public urban spaces to spread its message.

On an organisational level, the Greek peace movement had varied and intensive transnational links with other peace organisations across Europe. All three Greek peace movements took part in the Pan-European meeting of independent peace movements on the issue of disarmament in Brussels. This took place between 2 and 4 June 1983, with 1,500 representatives from 19 countries. On numerous occasions, Greece acted as a host to transnational peace initiatives. In October 1983, the International Peace Forum was organised in Rhodes and was attended by 80 foreign delegates with a series of plays, exhibitions of Greek art,

⁹⁷ *Ta Nea*, 21 May 1984.

⁹⁸ John Karamichas, 'The December 2008 Riots in Greece: Profile', *Social Movement Studies*, 8, 3 (2009), 291; Kostis Kornetis, *Children of the Dictatorship. Student Resistance, Cultural Politics and the 'Long 1960s' in Greece* (New York and Oxford 2013)

traditional and popular concerts and a ‘shadow theatre’. A lively concert by the popular composer Dionysis Savvopoulos and readings by the famous poet Giannis Ritsos captivated thousands of people in the audience. An END report highlighted the benefits of celebrating cultural creativity, noting that the two-and-a-half day event was an imaginative way to talk about peace ‘that did much to counteract the rather arid official proceedings’.⁹⁹

The first international conference ‘for the denuclearisation of Europe’ was indicative of this spirit of cooperation. It was organised by KEADEA in Athens in December 1982, in coordination with the International Peace Communication and Coordination Centre (IPCC), a Dutch peace movement. It attracted a great number of peace movements as well as well-known personalities from across the globe, all of whom contributed collectively to ‘the spirit of Athens’.¹⁰⁰ In the same spirit two years later, in December 1984, KEADEA organised a second conference ‘for establishing the East–West dialogue’. It comprised of representatives from 64 peace movements and 30 countries, as well as the US and USSR. It was the first time that representatives from both Eastern and Western European peace movements discussed the challenges for peace and denuclearisation. In his opening statement, Markopoulos said that ‘with this conference, KEADEA becomes the connecting link between the peace movements of East and West’.¹⁰¹ The conference’s primary objective was to come up with practical steps to freeze nuclear proliferation and to restore the dialogue between East and West.

These conferences saw the rise of Andreas Papandreou as the leader and star of the peace movement, as well as the launch of the Six Nation Initiative.¹⁰² His participation was heralded by the press as a legitimisation of the peace movement, and other activists believed that

⁹⁹ END on the International Peace Forum in Rhodes, 16–23 October 1983, LSE Library, CND/2008/6/26.

¹⁰⁰ Conference on Nuclear Free Zones, Athens, 10–12 December 1982, AFP, Box 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ta Nea*, 8 December 1982.

¹⁰² Eirini Karamouzi, “‘At Last, Our Voice is Heard in the World’: Andreas Papandreou, Greece and the Six Nation Initiative during the Euromissile Crisis”, in Crump, Laurien and Erlandsson, Susanna (eds), *Margins for Manoeuvre in Cold War Europe: The Influence of Smaller Powers* (London and New York 2019), 224–40.

it brought the peace movement out of obscurity.¹⁰³ In his address to attendees, Papandreou proudly noted that ‘Greece was the only Western European country that embraced the peace movements and ceased to consider them in opposition’.¹⁰⁴ While the delegations were enthusiastic about his speech, the leader of the opposition in Greece, Evangelos Averoff, did not share the enthusiasm. Commenting on Papandreou’s performance, the leader of ND noted that:

[Papandreou] continues be the only European leader to support the Soviet proposal of denuclearised zones. Everyone knows that the need for armaments is a result of the Soviet actions. Even the socialist governments accept that ... The Prime Minister should stop playing this game of impressions while in reality damaging the international prestige of the country’s reputation.¹⁰⁵

However, for KEADEA and the other Greek peace movements, the example set by Papandreou would be pivotal in convincing more Western politicians to embrace their cause. In END and CND documents, Greece is applauded for successfully establishing a strong link between the civilians who struggled for peace and the government.¹⁰⁶

By 1986, the wave of transnational anti-nuclear weapons protest had peaked in terms of its scale, the diversity of groups participating and the volume of disruptive activity.¹⁰⁷ Greece’s peace mobilisation, partly a local expression of a global phenomenon of protest against Euromissiles, had followed this transnational trend. Its strength had, however, diminished a little earlier. Indeed, there was a dramatic decline in the amount of anti-nuclear and anti-American protests after the signing of a US–Greek defence agreement that provided for the continuation

¹⁰³ *Ta Nea*, 3 March 1983.

¹⁰⁴ *Ta Nea*, 11 December 1982.

¹⁰⁵ *Ta Nea*, 8 February 1984.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from END to KEADEA, Athens, 9 January 1986, LSE Library, END/20/6.

¹⁰⁷ Becker-Schaum, *The Nuclear Crisis*, 340.

of US bases on Greek soil.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, PASOK's second victory in the elections of 1985 and the continuing links with both the EEC and NATO weakened the polarised and nationalistic climate of the early 1980s on foreign policy issues and deprived the peace movements of new interpretive frames.

V.

As in Western Europe, the Greek mobilisation for peace in the 1980s surged as a result of the Euromissile crisis. Greeks became part of a transnational movement and tapped into similar organisational resources to express dissent, emulating wider continental protest tactics. While the Pan-European framework is relevant, a better understanding of the popularity of the peace movement and its dynamics lies in analysing such acts of protest in their specific cultural and national circumstances. Although it grew out of international developments, the Greek peace movement was primarily embedded in a culture of protest and polarisation that related to the national political scene of the period. PASOK's rise to power played a key role in the institutionalisation of protest, at the same time leading public contestation side-by-side with movements on the street. In Greece, the centrality of the socialist party and other left-wing parties in social mobilisation defined both the nature of the protests and their development. The close association between the peace movements and the political left was a huge source of strength and legitimisation in a period of democratic consolidation.

The fight for peace was framed as an appeal for national sovereignty. It was rooted in anti-Americanism and a fight against imperialism, and struck a responsive chord amongst activists following the fall of the dictatorship and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. The emphasis on

¹⁰⁸ According to the European Protest and Coercion Data project, Greece went from 15 nationwide protests with anti-American and anti-nuclear character in 1983 to five in 1984 and one in 1985.

national pride and resisting foreign pressure figured frequently in the rhetoric of the peace movements. Most importantly, peace protesters reframed and reconfigured the Cold War narrative. They emphasised their own national needs, resorting to local vernaculars and spatial politics to bring their message home. In a time of heightened tensions between the superpowers, the success of the peace movement in Greece stemmed from its ability to distance itself from the Cold War paradigm, prioritising national interests in its place.