Abstract
This session aims to bring together scholars interested in New Social Movements in general and developments in Southern European Politics in particular. The limited number of works concerning the development of new social movements in the newly democratised countries of Southern Europe has often given the wrong impression that these processes are only the privilege of a ‘post-materialist’ North with a strong civil society. In addition to this, the term ‘Southern Europe’ itself unavoidably suggests a cross-national set of shared characteristics which stand opposed to a set of supposed Northern characteristics. A deep investigation on the formation and development of ‘new’ social movements in these countries seeks to investigate the validity of such claims. The filling of this gap in the literature is of immense importance, since it will enrich our understanding of such social phenomenon across Europe, especially now when we are witnessing the emergence of works dealing with similar processes in countries of the former communist bloc. In addition, the proposed investigation will complement the existing research regarding the stabilisation and consolidation of democracy in Southern Europe.

New Social Movements and Protest in Southern Europe

Workshop Proposal for the 2003 ECPR Joint Sessions, Edinburgh, Spring

Organizers: John Karamichas (University of Kent at Canterbury) and Yota Papageorgiou (University of Crete, Rethimno)

This workshop has three major goals:

1) to gather systematic information about the formation and development of ‘new’ social movements in Southern European countries
2) to promote a comparative perspective, both across these countries as well as across the different types of new social movements (e.g. environmental, peace and women’s movements)
3) on the basis of the above, to contribute to and refine existing views regarding the stabilisation and consolidation of democracy in Southern Europe.

The state of the art

The newly democratised countries of the European South, Greece, Spain, and Portugal are characterised by intense unconventional political participation, during the last two decades (e.g. Barcena and Ibarra, 1995; Koopmans, 1996; Aguilar, 2001; Jimenez, 2001). Nevertheless, the rise of research on social movements as parts of their political culture occurred rather late. New social movements, specifically the women’s and environmental movements surfacing after the end of the dictatorships, have only been researched since the eighties (Louloudis, 1987; Diani, 1995; Jimenez, 1999; Demertzis, 1995; Gil Nave, 2001; della Porta, Valiente and Kousis, 1997).

Recently a number of works have been published that compare Southern European countries on various dimensions, mostly related to the broader field of “transitology”
and naturally focusing on. While there is a significant body of literature examining the most formal aspects of political processes in these countries (institutions, political parties, policy making) little attention has been paid to the development of ‘new’ social movements (NSMs). In fact the only available compilation attempting a comparison of this kind focuses exclusively on the environmental movement and in particular on environmental mobilizations (Eder & Kousis 2001; Kousis 1999a, 1999b, 2001). Current attempts (Kousis, della Porta and Jimenez, 2001) to compare environmental protest across southern and northern countries indicate the need for works to proceed with further examination of these issues. This is also seen for the women’s movement as well. A comparative study of the women’s movement across Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal is long needed. The first work of this type shows that in these countries, the women’s movements, which developed in the seventies and appear in different forms, contribute to the large social transformations in these regions (dellaPorta, Valiente and Kousis, 1997). Works on the peace and gay movements are rare in any Southern European country.

There are also significant disparities regarding the development of this field of study in each of the Southern European countries. Naturally, Italy holds the lead as the only country in the area with a stable democratic regime since the end of WWII as well as the one receiving the most attention from foreign scholars, contributing to a wealth of available literature. It is simultaneously the only country of the European South which is better incorporated in comparative studies with other major societies of Western Europe. The environmental movement has been studied earlier for Italy than for the rest of Southern European states (Diani, 1995; Donati, 1996). The Italian women’s movement underwent diversification in the eighties, leading to the growth of many specialized groups (Guadagnini, 1995 as cited in della Porta et al, 1997).

NSMs in the newly democratised countries of the region have received much less attention but the amount varies from one country to another. A comprehensive literature review covering Spain and Greece suggests the study of new social movements in Spain is more advanced than in Greece. Various works have appeared over the past decade in English language journals and books while at the same time there is ever-increasing literature in Spanish (e.g. Aguilar 2001; Jimenez 1999; Barcena and Ibarra, 2001; Larana 1999). Spanish feminism flourished after the end of the dictatorship, especially until the early eighties, aiming toward legal reforms (Folguera, 1988; Escario et al, 1996).

The literature concerning the environmental movement in Greece is small on both fronts which suggests a rather limited development of this field of study (e.g. Dede, 1993; Demertzis, 1995; Botetzagias, 2001; Karamichas, 2001; Kousis, 1999a). The women’s movement in Greece appears to have been studied more in comparison to the environmental. Research in the nineties indicates that in the eighties state feminism developed via PASOK’s Union of Greek Women (EGE) (Varika, 1992; Kyriazis, 1995), whereas in the nineties the movement experienced diversification (Papageorgiou-Liberes, 1992; Papageorgiou, 2002).

A few works have also appeared on Portuguese ‘new’ social movements but the overall conclusion is that the field is in its infancy. As far as the Portuguese environmental movement is concerned, the political ecology and protest action groups formed in the late seventies and early eighties have made room for newly emerging environmental associations (Figueredo, Fidelis & Pires, 2001; Gil Nave,
The women’s movement in Portugal, which also surfaced after the 1974 revolution, has been affiliated with political parties of the left (Barbosa, 1981).

We feel that a meeting gathering scholars who have done research on new social movements and protest in Southern Europe is long overdue. Their works will assist in elucidating the foggy picture around new social movements and protest in the new democracies, as well as in delineating the role of contemporary civil society vis-à-vis state and non-state actors.

*The comparative dimension*

Our aim to promote a comparative and theoretical approach to address the proposed theme properly, will assist not only in the location of points of convergence and divergence between similar or different new social movements in Southern European states but to identify as well, the underpinning factors within theoretical perspectives which best interpret the Southern European experience in new social movements. Are there evidences of weak civil societies? Are similar factors involved in the making and development of these movements in Southern Europe? Which countries tend to have similar experiences?

*Contributions to the workshop*

On the basis of the aforementioned discussion, although we would welcome strong research papers on case studies, we are especially interested in comparative contributions of two types: 1) comparisons between new social movements (e.g. women’s and peace movements) within a Southern European country; 2) comparisons between new social movements across Southern European countries (e.g. Portugal and Greece). Priority will also be given to contributions with general theoretical implications for the research area.

Our aim is to have a balance of papers across the above categories. However, our selection may be affected by the type of submissions made.

*References*


Larana, E., 1999 *La Construccion de Los Movimientos Sociales, Madrid : Rustica*.


Papageorgiou, Yota, 2002 (forthcoming) *Feminism and Hegemony: The Case of Greece*, Athens: Gutenberg (in Greek)


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**Type of paper:** Case studies as well as papers with a comparative perspective are welcomed. However priority will be given to contributions with general theoretical implications for the research area.

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1994: **Greek Professional Women and Work**: Athens: Pantion University of Social Sciences (in Greek)

1993: **Greek Women in Politics**. Athens: Foundation of Mediterranean Studies (in Greek)


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