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Publisher: Routledge  
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## Mediterranean Politics

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fmed20>

### PASOK'S second chance

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Published online: 09 Nov 2007.

To cite this article: Michalis Spourdalakis (1996) PASOK'S second chance, *Mediterranean Politics*, 1:3, 320-336, DOI: [10.1080/13629399608414591](https://doi.org/10.1080/13629399608414591)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13629399608414591>

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# PASOK's Second Chance

MICHALIS SPOURDALAKIS

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PASOK's political behaviour and governmental performance since returning to power in 1993 and up to the resignation of its leader, Andreas Papandreou, may be related to key traits of the Greek social formation and especially to recent trends in the party system and in Greek politics in general. PASOK's new relationship to the state and society has altered the party's organizational and ideological features and has brought it closer to the programmatic 'realism' that characterizes its European counterparts. For some time now, and particularly since the 1993 general election, PASOK has possessed the characteristics of a 'cartel party'. Owing to PASOK's pivotal role in the Greek party system, the party has implanted these features in the system. However, these tendencies may prove short-lived.

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An overview of PASOK's government may lead to the conclusion highlighted in the lyrics of a Greek pop song: nothing has changed, and yet nothing is as in the past.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, although the PASOK government of the 1990s shares many traits of the party's previous administration in the 1980s, it has a new orientation and has followed a new course. In contrast to the 1980s when PASOK 'remained most distant from the mainstream of social democracy' (Padgett and Paterson 1991: 61), this course has brought Greek Socialists closer to the present day norms of their European counterparts.

A review of the strategy and practice of Papandreou's final government will reveal more than just a superficial similarity with the developing trends and orientations of, and challenges to, other European socialist parties. PASOK's recent organizational and ideological evolution seems to be catching up, although admittedly by a different route, with the adjustments made by mainstream social democratic parties.<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, this process has been neither smooth nor free of contradictions, for PASOK's 'short march to power' (1974–81) and its two successive terms in office in the 1980s marked party practice with a number of traditional and irrational patterns (Lyrintzis 1982; Mavrogordatos 1983; Clogg 1987; Spourdalakis 1988). However, it is a process that is bound to 'modernize' both PASOK and subsequently the Greek party system and politics. This is especially so within the current conjuncture in which both the party system and the politics of the young Greek democracy are experiencing the most serious

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Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Winter 1996) pp.320–336

PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON

crisis since the fall of the seven year dictatorship in 1974. With these remarks in mind, I will review the governmental performance of PASOK since its triumphant return to power in 1993, until the resignation of Andreas Papandreou – its charismatic leader – in January 1996, and relate this to the traits of the Greek social formation as well as to the new trends developing in the Greek party system and politics.

### **The 1993 Campaign**

The unpopular, inconsistent and overall dismal record of the New Democracy (ND) government of 1990–93, the official ‘proof’ of Papandreou’s innocence of corruption, the negative and biased image of Prime Minister Mitsotakis portrayed by a good part of the media, and the slender parliamentary majority of the government, in combination with a major split in its own ranks, put an early end to the ND government and paved the way for PASOK’s return to power. PASOK’s triumphant return to office through an early general election demonstrated the endurance of the Greek Socialists and established the Panhellenic Socialist Movement as a key factor, if not a hegemonic force, in the construction of party democracy in Greece. The change of government reinforced the post-1974 pattern of frequent transfers of power between parties and party coalitions of quite diverse if not contrasting political and ideological orientations (Verney 1990). This shows that the democratic order in Greece is rooted in very solid ground and displays a pluralistic political tolerance similar to that of its European counterparts.

The electoral campaign provided the first indications of the new government’s orientation and the new traits of Greek politics. The 1993 campaign was shorter than any other since 1974. Although it did not represent a complete break with the past, it was marked by a number of new behavioural, organizational and political patterns.

To begin with, the tones of political competition were more subdued. PASOK’s calls for the restoration of the rule of law did not produce extreme polarization, as ND’s call for catharsis had done in the 1989–90 elections. The two major parties’ programmes were in the same low key that had characterized the whole pre-electoral period. On the one hand, contrary to past practices and despite the real danger of losing power, ND did not abandon its neo-liberal, monetarist policies. On the other hand, PASOK seemed to adopt much more ‘realistic’ policies, compared to its past polarizing postures, thus becoming, although not consistently, a major contributor to the move away from the zero-sum logic that had characterized Greek politics earlier.

In its 140-page programme under the neutral title ‘For the Present and

Future of Greece: Regeneration Everywhere', PASOK made virtually no reference to its past socialist ideals. It tried to present itself as a 'responsible' party, very much in the same spirit as the post-1987 British Labour Party, especially under Tony Blair's leadership, or the French Socialists since 1984 and PSOE since the late 1980s; it claimed to have learned its lesson from its past mistakes.<sup>3</sup> What was most striking in PASOK's 1993 electoral and then governmental programme, for those familiar with Greek politics and PASOK in particular, is that there was an economic over-determination of politics. In the 1970s and most of the 1980s, political and ideological issues were overplayed and dominated the political discourse. By the late 1980s, however, economics and particularly market economy logic were becoming prominent. As elsewhere in Europe since the late 1970s and almost everywhere in the world since 1989, the country's political discourse seemed to adopt this new emphasis, initially during PASOK's second term in office in 1985–89 (Spourdalakis 1988: 237–42; Tsakalotos 1991) and then especially following the subsequent rise to power of ND. PASOK's programmatic premises were in tune with this trend. PASOK was elected on the promise that it would take care of the monetary and fiscal difficulties of the country (in particular, reduce inflation and the public deficit) more efficiently than the ND government, that it would be less statist and that it would not put a halt to privatizations.

Of course the programme made reference to the unemployment problem, which was to be dealt with through economic growth. The document promised that the main economic policies would be carried out in a spirit of 'social solidarity', that workers' incomes would be protected against inflation and that privatizations would go ahead so long as they did not 'lead to private monopolies' and did no damage to national interests. The electoral campaign and PASOK's own programme addressed a number of other issues, especially institutional and administrative modernization, and made vague references to the reinstatement of social policies that were under attack. Finally, the country's turbulent foreign policy did not escape PASOK's pre-electoral attention. In relation to so-called 'national questions', PASOK adopted a discourse which, like the one on economic policy, was similar to that of ND. In fact, without risk of exaggeration it could be argued that PASOK superseded all the other parties in terms of nationalist overtones. Its main slogan of 'Greece is unnegotiable' and the complementary call for 'National Awakening, Patriotic Unity and Hellenism's Rallying' are cases in point. However, given that nationalism has been generated by a number of agencies that go far beyond the party system and has been subjected to conjunctural events, one must qualify this affirmation. PASOK's contribution to the nationalist overtones of political discourse has been crucial, but not pivotal. Where it was pivotal, with its

programme and electoral rhetoric often going beyond those of New Democracy, was in giving priority to economic issues and in establishing market logic within economic and social policies.

The technology used for electoral mobilization was also new. Traditionally, electoral mobilization was based on party machines and labour-intensive techniques. Parties' electoral effectiveness was based on their mass membership, which in its turn was called upon to organize canvassing at the local level and to mobilize voters for central or regional mass rallies. In fact, these two activities – door-to-door canvassing and mass rallies – were the parties' principal means of attracting electoral support. The use of other means, namely television, radio or billboard advertising, was rather marginal and in any case supplementary to the techniques employed by the parties' own organizations, which were based on membership volunteer labour and, in some cases, creative imagination.

In the 1993 election, radio and especially television were elevated to the main means of conducting not only PASOK's but all the parties' campaigns. Television and radio time was bought at will by the parties' advertising contractors. The air waves and TV channels were flooded with messages that aimed not so much to advertise the parties' programmes but to impress the electorate by promoting their leading individuals as capable members of the future government, which had to guarantee the effective participation of the country in the European Union. The primacy of the media as the main vehicle of the parties (especially of ND and PASOK), the electoral campaign, and the simultaneous undermining of the traditional patterns of electoral mobilization resulted not only in unprecedented spending by the parties but finally in the parties' budgets accumulating tremendous deficits. When voluntary and individual member initiatives are largely absent or have been undermined, capital-intensive techniques and expensive technocrats take over; and they proved incapable of generating funds from the membership which traditionally had been the main source of party financial support.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Government: An Old Spirit in a New Bottle**

PASOK's victory bordered upon a real triumph.<sup>5</sup> The party won 46.88 per cent of the popular vote and 171 seats in the 300 member parliament (see Appendix). This gave the government security and flexibility, and promised an administration that would serve out its full term of office. All the political tendencies<sup>6</sup> within the party were included in Papandreou's government and both party and government displayed a great degree of unity. This should not be taken to mean that there were not significant differences within the cabinet. In fact, in some cases important differences were noted within the

same department and between ministers and their deputies.<sup>7</sup> However, these differences, which were not only political but sprang from individual aspirations concerning the replacement as party leader of the ageing Papandreuou, did not appear initially to be dysfunctional to the government. The positive vibrations from the party's victory, the presence in key posts of individuals who enjoyed great popularity within and outside the party (for example, Giorgos Gennimatas and Melina Merkouri) and finally an approaching party congress all helped to maintain unity. The forthcoming congress gave rise to hopes of settling some long-standing differences over policy and/or institutional and organizational questions relating to the party-government relationship, as well as the issue of Papandreuou's succession.

In this context, at least in the first year and a half of the new Papandreuou government, the party to a great extent seemed to have overcome the cavalier and often voluntarist, if not opportunist and populist, tactics of the 1980s. In the 1990s, under pressure from EU directives and as a result of the overall change in the political discourse of the country which had been grossly de-ideologized as economic and market logic took prominence over political and social issues, PASOK has adopted a very 'realistic' strategy. The main thrust of the Greek Socialists' realism has been the management of the economy according to the spirit, and to a great extent the timetable, of the Maastricht agreement: economic and fiscal stability through restrictions on public spending and incomes, and extensive privatization programmes that will increase the competitiveness of the economy. Within this realistic strategy, technocratic rather than social concerns take precedence while economic policy becomes the priority and the main axis of governmental performance.

By late 1996, PASOK's governmental performance remained faithful to this strategy. This was also evident from the composition of the political leadership of the important government departments (National Economy, Finance, Industry and Trade). With the principal exception of the late minister of national economy, Giorgos Gennimatas, whose popularity and alleged sensitivity to social issues functioned for the first seven months as a defence against social pressures, all the economic portfolios of the government have been held by parliamentarians with technocratic backgrounds and orientations. The only other exception to this rule is the Labour portfolio, which for historical reasons has been closely associated with the trade unions. In any case, labour issues and concerns do not seem to enter the economic decision-making picture, which is a further indication of the 'technocratic economism' of the government. This has in fact been a point of intra-governmental friction, and complaints by labour ministers regarding their exclusion from the planning of economic policy have been frequent (in one case leading to resignation).

*Policy Initiatives*

Without exaggeration, PASOK's performance in the field of economic policy may be encapsulated in the dictum, 'when the books are in the black, the people are blue'. None the less, the monetarist, supply-side economics of the Greek Socialists have been rather successful. In 1995, inflation dropped to a twenty-five year record low of 8.1 per cent. The budget guidelines were followed faithfully and new tax regulations increased state revenue, generating a budget surplus for the first time and contributing to a reduction in the budget deficit of 2.8 points as a percentage of GDP. However, there was little progress in tackling the problem of the grey economy. In other words, by the middle of its term in office, the government had managed to 'stabilize' the economy. To this end, it employed high interest rates and other policies to strengthen the drachma, restrictions on public spending, and severe wage and income controls. These policies were a far cry from the Socialists' promise that they would stabilize the economy through simultaneously stimulating growth while maintaining principles of social solidarity.

In 1995 the growth rate was 1.7 per cent, while the average figure for the rest of the EU countries was 2.7 per cent. The official unemployment rate meanwhile rose above 10 per cent, an unprecedented high for Greece, especially when one considers the measuring techniques and the composition of the figure. Moreover, with the possible exception of the 1987-89 period, 1995 marked the tenth anniversary of austerity measures and wage controls, which ironically were initiated by the Socialists in the mid-1980s. While PASOK had promised to protect the real incomes of wage earners, the increases given to those employed in the public sector were only a small proportion of the inflation rate: less than 6 per cent in 1994 (inflation 13 per cent) and less than 5 per cent in 1995 (inflation 8.4 per cent). These measures severely curbed the purchasing power of wage earners, whose participation in GDP declined.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the hopes for economic development and growth seemed to have been left to the mega public projects (such as the new Athens airport, the Athenian subway and the Acheloos river redirection) which, thanks to endless bureaucratic red tape, were running way behind schedule.

Despite their pre-electoral anti-statist rhetoric, the Greek Socialists returned to power on the promise that they would reinstate the welfare state. However, PASOK's record by mid-term in their period of office was rather poor in that department. When welfare policies as well as a number of other reforms were introduced in an unorthodox and unorganized fashion during the 1980s, in some cases they caused more problems than they resolved (Tsoucalas 1986; Petras 1987; Kazakos 1990; Lyrintzis 1993). By contrast,

in the 1990s the Socialist government has seemed wiser in this regard. Well advertised research and planning have taken place before the introduction of a social programme or reform. However, final plans have been accompanied by vague and grossly inadequate proposals for the financing of these programmes, the reform of the National Health System being a classic example. Thus, the social policies and reforms of the Greek Socialists have often amounted to no more than political rhetoric. This pattern, on the one hand, keeps society's hopes for social policies alive, as the government seems to recognize officially the need for such policies. On the other hand, an alleged scarcity of funds contributes to a consensus in support of the government's fiscal policies, an important aspect of which are the austerity measures.

The government seems to have been following the same pattern in the extensive reforms introduced in the organization of the state bureaucracy and the state apparatus. In this case, however, governmental performance has been more effective as reforms to alter the existing (partisan) type of recruitment of civil servants and important steps towards the decentralization of the state have been introduced, despite some shortcomings. However, although these modernizing reforms have not involved any significant cost, the inertia of traditional structures and relations – namely the infamous over-centralization of Greek state power and the persistence of clientelistic modes of political recruitment – have undermined them (Sotiropoulos 1993; Spanou 1995).<sup>9</sup>

In short, so far as domestic policy is concerned, PASOK seems in effect to have accomplished very little. There has been a lot of talk and in some cases actual legislation has been introduced, but nothing that demonstrates or even indicates that a reformist party has been occupying the structures of state power. The few reforms introduced have been either drachma-free or their actual application has depended on the availability of funds, which are scarce or non-existent. Thus, the only front on which government performance has been really effective is the economy, where the government can do nothing but follow EU directives.

Finally, on the foreign policy front, the performance of the Greek Socialists has been, to say the least, controversial. As already mentioned, in its electoral campaign PASOK jumped on the very popular nationalist bandwagon. Its policies in government have been conducted in the same spirit. On the question of Macedonia, the government followed a very uncompromising line until 1995, refusing to commit itself to direct dialogue with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). This cost Greece a lot in international influence and diplomatic leverage, especially following the declaration of the embargo against FYROM. Equally damaging was the government's often irrational and stubborn determination

to align itself with Serbian interests. Only after pressure was applied by both the Americans and the EU were significant steps finally taken in 1995, aimed at a settlement of the dispute between FYROM and Greece.

The strong and widespread nationalist sentiments, which had initially inspired PASOK policy, had clearly been counter-productive for the country's relations in the region. Greece had not only failed to take advantage of the international conjuncture to improve its diplomatic status and power in the region, but had also created further friction with some neighbouring countries (such as Albania). However, by late 1995 the tide seemed to be turning, as relations with Albania improved and a tentative settlement was reached with FYROM.

### *Public and Internal Party Responses*

PASOK's governmental 'realism' meant in effect its tuning in to the new developing trends in the country's political and party discourse which involved putting aside the grand political and ideological debates and focusing instead on economics. The shift to economics not only means that economic policies have come to determine politics, contrary to what happened in the decade following the fall of the dictatorship, but also that the government has been in complete accord with the current free market spirit.

The liberal, anti-statist and market-oriented policies of the Greek Socialists may be similar to those of European social democratic and labour parties but they have not come about without serious political costs. Indeed, after a long honeymoon period PASOK was confronted with a serious loss of political support. This reaction came not only from those who for a long time have enjoyed a number of irrational and clientelistic privileges (examples being the mobilizations by farmers against an attempt to tax them for the first time, and lawyers' strikes with similar origins) but also from those who have constituted the backbone of the party's electoral support, namely wage earners and pensioners. By September 1995, positive opinions about the government reached a record low for the past ten years of 14.2 per cent, this figure being comparable only with the standing of the New Democracy government (19.7 per cent) just before it lost the election in autumn 1993.<sup>10</sup>

The reactions to PASOK's governmental policies were bound to affect the party itself and serious waves of internal party opposition were evident by 1995. The conservative nature of the government's economic policies, its controversial foreign policy and especially the Byzantine style of the actual functioning of the government, as exemplified by the Prime Minister's Office under Andreas Papandreou's wife, generated strong reactions within the party. These reactions have not been strictly political, but rather have

been bound up with the leadership succession struggle, involving a number of prominent party figures. In fact, the poor health of the ageing Papandreou, the absence (after the deaths of Giorgos Gennimatas and Melina Merkouri) of widely accepted personalities who could either guarantee a smooth transition to the post-Papandreou era or even rise to become the leader themselves, and finally the atrophy of collective organizational practices capable of dealing with the leadership problem, led many to talk not of one but of many PASOKs – an issue that was only resolved in January 1996 with the resignation of Papandreou and his replacement by Costas Simitis.

The internal party disputes, which have taken place primarily through the media, have been so extensive that they have contributed to, or perhaps generated, dysfunctions in the government. Phenomena such as a cabinet minister boycotting the initiatives of another department simply because of his differences with the other department's head have been daily events. Thus, the apparent lack of co-ordination within the government has been, among other things, a reflection of the situation within the party. The challenge met by the government from within has been so great that it is not far from the truth to claim that the government has constituted PASOK's only opposition. For New Democracy has not only faced the same internal problems but in effect has expressed no real differences with or distinct policies from PASOK. Meanwhile, other parliamentary parties which do represent an alternative to the government's orientation have had no short-term prospect of office.

PASOK's leadership was not able to remain indifferent to this opposition to the government, since it became a real threat to its own performance and stability. Thus, in addition to a number of extra-institutional initiatives, aimed at containing and/or neutralizing it, PASOK tried to deal with the problem internally, both during its Third Congress (April 1994) and at its Panhellenic Organizational Conference (July 1995). However, these attempts were unsuccessful and only generated even more friction within the party. In fact one could argue that they caused a further deterioration in the government's popularity, which in any case was based in part on an already feeble consensus concerning its unpopular economic policies.

### **Party Crisis and the Development of Cartel Politics**

However, the most significant result of PASOK's governmental performance was not so much the crisis it generated for the party of the Greek Socialists but the effect it seems to have had on the whole party system. The experience of the socialist government seems to have contributed to an unprecedented crisis in the party system. This is a crisis

that has been expressed in various ways. The most striking examples of this development are: a drastic drop in party membership; a relative increase in electoral abstention and spoilt ballots;<sup>11</sup> and, finally, the wholesale debunking of parties as institutions, with only 2.2 per cent of Greek citizens apparently willing to trust political parties.<sup>12</sup> It is clear even to the superficial observer of contemporary Greek politics that political parties, which in the post-1974 period were instrumental in the transition and consolidation of democracy, have recently experienced a serious loss of legitimacy. Although this does not seem to affect the popular consensus in support of democracy, there is no doubt that it has serious implications for the nature and quality of that democracy. For despite theoretical differences concerning their actual functions, political parties are key actors in the dominant (functionalist) definitions of democracy. Parties are both the backbone and the life-blood of democracy, either as mechanisms that offer the citizens political choices, which through the decision-making process are translated into public policies, or as safety apparatuses that control political elites and are capable of removing (and replacing) them whenever they introduce unacceptable policies (Ware 1987: 24-7). Thus every significant change affecting parties will result in changes in the functioning of democracy.

Owing to the idiosyncratic construction of the public sphere, this observation is even more valid in Greece than elsewhere. Indeed, the construction of party democracy here has preserved a role for parties that goes well beyond the experience of western democracies in which, through electoral competition, parties secure the unity of state power and enjoy a significant regulating capacity in the mediation process between the society and the state. In Greece the rapid transition to democracy from above which was initiated by the fall of the junta (Diamandouros 1984, 1986; Spourdalakis 1995) and especially the long-standing inability of civil society to produce its own independent institutions have led the parties to dominate both society and the state. Party and state control has been strong enough to limit, if not to prevent completely, the development of autonomous collective activity and institutions of society. This achievement of the political parties has been facilitated by a number of modernizing measures which they themselves introduced. The post-1974 parties bear very little resemblance to the pre-junta parties. Their organizational structures have been institutionalized and their practice has gone beyond the personalized and extra-institutional patterns of clientelism. Modern party practice has been characterized as 'bureaucratic clientelism' (Lyrintzis 1984).

In this transformation of the Greek party system, PASOK unquestionably played a key role. It was the first governmental party in

modern Greek history to develop an organizational structure with some institutional permanence and to set the framework and a concrete example for other parties (especially ND) to follow. The modernizing transformation of the Greek party system, despite its contradictory trends and its often alternating course, with traditional behavioural and organizational patterns still present (Spourdalakis 1988: 131–223; Pappas 1995: 90–293), has led it to display the same tendencies as European counterparts that have evolved under different historical conditions. These tendencies relate to the functioning of the parties according to the needs of the state's reproduction and the preservation of their own power.

To be more specific, it has been observed that a new type of party has been developing during the last couple of decades. This is the cartel party. The main traits of this 'ideal type' of political party, which seems to belong to a fourth stage of development in party history,<sup>13</sup> are the outcome of both the interpenetration of party and state and of a rapidly developing pattern of inter-party collusion. The model of the cartel party (Katz and Mair 1995: 17–21) and its by-product of cartel politics have huge implications for the party system – the heavy reliance of parties on state resources has made its renewal difficult and in effect prohibits the development of new parties with some effective substance – as well as for the organizational structure and practice of individual parties.

Indeed, these new organizational patterns have led to a rapid professionalization of party work; a move away from labour-intensive modes of political mobilization to capital-intensive ones (which is also a result and a cause of decline in party membership); and the atomization of party membership as certain individuals with social status now affiliate themselves directly with the central party and are given more formal power. Owing to these organizational patterns, which could be characterized as 'centralized fragmentation' since there is a mutual respect of autonomy between the central and the local party, the leadership can no longer be challenged or effectively controlled by the membership. The rise of cartel politics has led also to an overall centralized structure with a local organized presence, in which party elite and local officers are connected through a mutually autonomous relationship.

Moreover, the cartel party seems to be changing the nature of contemporary politics. As parties depend more and more on state resources and subventions for their survival, political differences and inter-party competition, particularly among governmental parties, wither away and become mere differences of opinion and low-key debate about managerial skills and efficiency. In this type of technocratic politics there is little or no room for politics that are inspired by visions of social reform. And since the organizational articulation and content of (new cartel) politics are changing,

it is only natural to expect that their technology is also changing. The uneven power and the often biased role of the mass media in present day politics cannot but be seen in this context. Finally, needless to say, cartel politics alter the normative conception of democracy. Democracy is increasingly perceived as a service of the state towards civil society and not as a process through which society controls and is protected from state power.

Having looked both at the developing trends within the Greek party system and at PASOK's organizational and political practice, one could easily argue that Greek politics displays signs of cartel politics. More than any other Greek party, PASOK has been instrumental in developing these trends within Greek politics towards cartel structures and relations.

In fact, in just twenty years PASOK has developed organizational structures and patterns that other European parties took over a century to develop, evolving from cadre to mass to catch-all to cartel party. In trying to periodize PASOK's development, it can be said that PASOK's cadre period lasted only a few months from its establishment by Papandreou and a coalition formed by old political elites and others that emerged out of the anti-dictatorship struggle (September 1974), until the first free election (November 1974). The period between the first and the second post-junta election (1977), when PASOK became the leading opposition party, saw the emergence of the structures of a mass party. During the period that preceded its first electoral victory (1981) and first term in office, PASOK, without abandoning its mass party characteristics, clearly developed the organizational patterns of a catch-all party. Finally, after its second electoral victory (1985), under tremendous pressure from an unstable economy, PASOK became more a party of the state, increasingly displaying the traits of a cartel party as described above. Of course, it goes without saying that in practice these ideal types of party organization have not had the same manifestations in Greece as elsewhere in Europe, as they were formed in a different social and political context. Moreover, the stages of PASOK's organizational and subsequent political practices have not been completely distinct. Key elements of each one of these organizational-political models persist, at least as a result of behavioural inertia, well after the end of their period of dominance.

### **PASOK and the Future of Party Democracy in Greece: Consolidating Cartel Politics**

To put it in different terms, PASOK's pattern of development has been similar to that of other socialist and labour parties: from mass/(potentially) class party (Spourdalakis 1988: 65–70), to party of the whole nation, to

cartel. The cartel tendencies of the Greek Socialists are exemplified by detachment from their social base and the social concerns of the electorate with a parallel move towards the state. These tendencies have weakened the party's organizational structures and exacerbated minor intra-party differences – particularly evident in disputes over Papandreou's succession – which constitute a real threat to PASOK's unity and future. Although the crisis was more evident in PASOK as the party tried to come to terms with its leadership question, it is certainly not restricted to that party. On the contrary, it embraces the entire political and party system. The increasingly widespread popular disenchantment with politics and politicians and the intensity of disputes within New Democracy, as in all the other parties, are cases in point. Political parties are in a hegemonic position in the articulation of the state-society relationship and in the organization of the Greek polity. This in turn has left very little room for the autonomous development of the representational institutions of civil society. Consequently this crisis is not limited just to parties but in effect has become a more profound political one.

The pivotal role of PASOK in this apparently generalized political (and party) crisis is not accidental. On the contrary it can be attributed to: (a) PASOK's vanguard role in modernizing the Greek party and political system; and (b) the fact that the parties that occupied the left of the political spectrum have traditionally acted as a barometer if not a model of developing political and organizational trends (e.g. EDS and the United Democratic Left, in the 1950s and 1960s).

However, the situation is not so gloomy for the future of parties and consequently for democracy. Cartel politics and its organizational articulation are neither air-tight nor permanent. Political parties are institutions whose key trait is the dynamism of their structure. They have an endurance that goes well beyond the pressures they experience from the reproductive inertia of the state. They cannot be subsumed completely by the state and its resources. That would mean destroying their *raison d'être* and thus bringing their death. But no institution commits suicide. This is more true of political parties than any other institution. Parties continue to be the unique institutions capable of articulating in a unifying fashion the dispersed social concerns and interests and channelling them into the decision-making of the state. Moreover, the voluntary nature of their social composition creates the conditions for effective resistance to the absorption by the reproductive dictates of the state and its resources.

Thus, the developing trends of cartel politics are neither as stable nor as irreversible as they appear. At least so far as PASOK and the Greek party system are concerned, there are already signs of resistance to these essentially undemocratic politics. The frequent intra-party disputes over the

leadership's political choices and the denial of internal party democracy (as on the occasion of the October 1994 municipal elections)<sup>14</sup> are cases in point. In fact, given the relative weakness of other state and/or societal institutions (such as the bureaucracy or the unions), which could assume some of the representational functions of parties, the likelihood of turning the current situation around is great. However, something like this presupposes that parties assume their more traditional role – that is, that they move closer to society and their membership, and move away from the state and state dependence. More concretely, with regard to party policies it means bringing society back in, and for party organization it could mean integrating individual members in an effort to promote new patterns of political mobilization. If one considers that the recent leadership contest has forced the Greek Socialists to relax some of their cartel practices, it seems a good bet that these practices within PASOK will be short-lived. It remains to be seen what Costas Simitis will do in the wake of his and PASOK's new electoral victory in September 1996.

## NOTES

1. The author benefited from discussion following the presentation of part of an earlier version of this article at a Hellenic Studies Seminar, Princeton University and at the Center for European Studies, Harvard University. He would like to express his gratitude to P.N. Diamandouros for constructive comments and to Richard Gillespie, whose editorial comments and encouragement were crucial.
2. There is a growing literature on the state of social democratic parties. See in particular Piven 1991; Lemke and Marks 1992; Gillespie and Paterson 1993; Anderson and Camiller 1994.
3. Andreas Papandreou's speech at an electoral rally in Athens, 3 Oct. 1993. Even mild self-criticism by party leaders has been a rather rare phenomenon in Greek politics.
4. According to one estimate, the five major political parties spent \$12m. The level of party spending was even higher if one adds spending by individual candidates. The change in the nature of party electoral campaigns, combined with the fact that less than 20% (19.8) of party finance comes from membership contributions (*Kathimerine*, 6 Aug. 1994), has led some observers to search for the roots of political corruption in party financial problems. In Sept. 1995 Parliament voted unanimously to increase the financial support for political parties from 0.1 to 0.13% of the total budget, which in real terms meant an overall 50% increase.
5. The size of PASOK's victory was also influenced by the new electoral law which was crafted by ND in a way designed to undermine the parliamentary gains of the second most popular party. However, in the end this worked against ND.
6. I have suggested elsewhere that one of the main characteristics of PASOK and in fact the secret of its success is the articulation within its party structure of three political tendencies, each possessing a social base. These tendencies are the Left (or the socialists), the conformist (*palaikommatikoi*) and the technocratic. See Spourdalakis 1988: 276–87; 1991: 163–5.
7. For example the uneasy co-existence of Carolos Papoulias and Theodore Pangalos in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
8. According to the Labour Institute, in 1980 wage and salary incomes in businesses with ten or more employees, as a percentage of GDP, was 50% while the corresponding figure in 1993 was 33%. If one takes into consideration the fact that these figures refer to those employed only in the formal economy and that the so-called black economy according to some estimates represents up to 40% of the country's economic activity, then the severe problems

of social inequality even among wage earners become more than clear.

9. For example, the introduction of elected councils of self-government at the prefectural level has not been operationalized as jurisdictions of the central government have not been transferred to them. The modernizing Act 2190, concerning the process of hiring civil servants, has suffered a similar fate. Indicative of the situation of the civil service is the fact that 35 acts and legal degrees have been issued in the last 20 years (seven in the period 1990–92 alone)! See Georganakis 1994: 272.
10. The figures are from a series of surveys conducted by the Market Research Bureau (MRB) and Tases (a public opinion research company) between 1998 and 1995. See *Kathemerine*, 10 Sept. 1995.
11. Despite the compulsory nature of the right to vote, the rate of abstention and spoilt ballots taken together are on the increase: 22.7% in the 1993 election, 24.7% in the European election and 31% in the municipal election in 1994.
12. Survey organized by and published in *Eleftherotipia*, 31 July 1995. It is interesting and indicative of the emerging political trends in the country that according to the same survey the armed forces and the Church topped the list of the institutions most trusted, with 34.4% and 29.5%, respectively.
13. The first stage (in the nineteenth century) being characterized by the cadre, elite party, the second (1880–1960) by the mass party, and the third (post-1945) by the catch-all party.
14. In many cases the lists for the municipal elections caused tremendous intra-party turbulence which in some regions and cities reached the extreme of rebellion. The conflicts were often settled by means of the unprecedented resort to an official or unofficial endorsement of two lists from the same party.

## APPENDIX

### Greek Election Results 1974–94

	PASOK % / Seats <sup>b</sup>	ND % / Seats	Left % / Seats	POLAN <sup>a</sup> % / Seats
1974	13.58/13	54.37/219	9.47/8 <sup>c</sup>	
1977	25.33/93	41.85/172	12.08/13 <sup>d</sup>	
1981	48.07/172	35.87/115	12.27/13 <sup>e</sup>	
1981 (European)	40.29/10	31.53/8	17.83/4 <sup>f</sup>	
1984 (European)	40.59/10	38.04/9	15.06/4 <sup>g</sup>	
1985	45.82/161	40.84/126	11.73/13 <sup>h</sup>	
1989 / June	39.15/125	44.25/145	13.12/28 <sup>i</sup>	
1989 (European)	35.94/9	40.45/10	14.30/4	
1989 / November	40.67/128	46.19/148	10.97/21	
1990	38.61/125	46.89/150	10.28/21	
1993	46.88/171	39.29/110	7.48/9 <sup>j</sup>	4.88/10
1994 (European)	37.62/10	32.65/9	12.52/4 <sup>k</sup>	8.67/2

a *Politiike Anixe* (Political Spring), a party formed primarily but not exclusively by a small number of MPs who left New Democracy in the summer of 1993.

b There are 300 seats in the Greek parliament. Greece's share in the European parliament was 24 seats until 1994, when this figure was increased to 25.

c United Left and electoral coalition between the two communist parties.

d 9.39% and 11 seats were won by KKE and 2.72% and 2 seats by the Alliance of Left-wing

- and Progressive Forces.
- e 10.93% and 13 seats were won by KKE and 1.34% and no seats by the Communist Party of the Interior.
- f 12.68% and 3 seats were won by KKE and 5.15% and 1 seat by the Communist Party of the Interior.
- g 11.64% and 3 seats were won by KKE and 3.42% and 1 seat by the Communist Party of the Interior.
- h 9.89% and 12 seats were won by KKE and 1.84% and 1 seat by the Communist Party of the Interior.
- i In 1989 the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), the Greek Left (EAR, an outgrowth of the KKE interior) and other small independent left groups formed a coalition under the name Coalition of Left and Progressive Forces (Synaspismos).
- j KKE, which ran independently, gained 4.54% and 9 seats and Synaspismos only 2.94% and no seats.
- k KKE received 6.28% of the vote and 2 seats and Synaspismos 6.24% and 2 seats.

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