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Commonwealth Review of Political Science

“Democracy for Some: Greek-American Institutions and the Greek Junta, 1967-1974”

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Abstract

In 1967 a military junta took over Greece, silencing the democratic process in Democracy’s birthplace with the tacit approval of Democracy’s heir apparent, the United States of America. The tolerance, if not support, of Greek-American institutions to the establishment of the Greek Junta and the U.S. government’s support for that regime offers a case study of why democratic publics accept, if not bolster, their own government’s support for anti-democratic regimes. This case offers an intriguing juxtaposition because of the historical claims that U.S., Greek, and Greek diaspora identities make on democratic practice and commitment. This study examines how junta-tolerant Greek Americans rationalized support for the Greek regime and pro-junta U.S.-government actions. Viewed in the context of twentieth-century conservatism, the white ethnic revival and Cold War considerations, this case complicates our understanding of immigrant assimilation and ethnic identity formation, enhances our understanding of relationships between immigrant groups and Cold War politics, and reframes our understanding of U.S. political culture. Ultimately, it suggests that there is a realist vein in U.S. public life and a willingness on the part of Americans to tolerate their government’s support for anti-democratic regimes.

Editor’s Note: This text is in block-style formatting, which differs from the rest of the Commonwealth Review of Political Science’s articles because its research is grounded in historical scholarship.

As tanks rolled through the streets of Athens on April 21, 1967, the Greek colonels responsible for the coup had the distinct honor of being Europe’s first new military dictators since the collapse of the Nazi regime nearly twenty-two years earlier. The Greek military junta would last seven years, a second-rate European dictatorship when compared to the long reigns of Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, and Salazar. Even so, the Greek junta silenced the democratic process in Democracy’s birthplace and did so with the tacit approval of Democracy’s heir apparent, the United States of America. This irony was not lost on observers during or after the junta’s reign. While some liberal activists adopted the Greek cause in their condemnation of U.S. foreign policy during the tense

years of 1967-1974, widespread opposition to the Greek junta failed to grow and achieved little success within the U.S.¹

Notable in their silence, if not support, were Greek Americans and their main institutions: the Orthodox Church, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), and the ethnic press. Examining Greek-American ideology and action during this time offers a case study of why democratic publics accept, if not bolster, their own government's support for anti-democratic regimes. While numerous examples of U.S. support for anti-democratic governance have existed throughout U.S. history and often have rested on paternalistic rhetoric and a public largely neutralized from elite foreign policy formation, the Greek case offers an especially intriguing juxtaposition because of the historical claims that U.S., Greek, and Greek diaspora identities make on democratic practice and commitment. Greek Americans were and are heirs of two national traditions that emphasize democracy in their national mythology and two nations that expanded such democratic rhetoric during the mid-twentieth century. In addition, this case study occurred during a period of widespread public questioning of U.S. foreign policy; indeed, the 1967-1974 period proved to be one of the most challenging periods for the U.S. foreign policy establishment.

In examining the silence and support of Greek-American institutions during this time, it is important to note that the Greek-American community was not united. Greek-American opponents to the junta existed, yet their voices neither influenced policymaking circles nor dominated in public spaces.² While Greek Americans, like other ethnic groups within the U.S., have lived heterogeneous experiences, dominant popular narratives throughout the twentieth century have homogenized Greek Americans as tradition-honoring, family-oriented, church-going, conservative-minded (though not necessarily Republican-affiliated) members of U.S.

¹ In terms of broader forms of success, recent scholars have emphasized the importance of anti-junta activism to burgeoning human rights initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s. See Barbara Keys, "Anti-torture politics: Amnesty International, the Greek-Junta, and the Origins of the Human Rights 'Boom' in the United States," in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, eds. Akira Iriye et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 201-221. Keys examines the effects of Amnesty International's anti-torture campaign against the Greek junta and argues that it helped activate Congressional interests in human rights issues several years earlier than the 1973 Fraser human rights hearings. Also, see Sarah B. Snyder, "Exporting Amnesty International to the United States: Transatlantic Human Rights Activism in the 1960s," *Human Rights Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (2012): 779-799; Effie G. H. Pedaliu, "Human Rights and International Security: The International Community and the Greek Dictators," *The International History Review* 38, issue 5 (2016): 1014-1039; Victor Fernández Soriano, "Facing the Greek Junta: The European Community, the Council of Europe and the Rise of Human-rights Politics in Europe," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 24, issue 3 (2017): 358-376; Sarah B. Snyder, *From Selma to Moscow: How Human Rights Activists Transformed U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), Ch. 3.

² Some noted U.S.-born Greek-American anti-junta voices were Democratic California State Senator Nicholas Petris and D.C. Congressional aide James Pyrros who assisted Michigan Congressmen, Democrat Lucien N. Nedzi.

society.³ Viewing the Greek-American community in the context of twentieth-century conservatism, the white ethnic revival, and Cold War considerations complicates our understanding of immigrant assimilation and ethnic identity formation, enhances our understanding of the relationship between immigrant groups and Cold War politics, and reframes our understanding of U.S. liberal political culture. Greek-American indifference toward, or support of, a regime accused of torture and other human rights violations suggests that there is a realist vein in U.S. public opinion and a far greater willingness on the part of Americans to tolerate their government's support for such regimes.⁴

Though scholars of diasporic politics and U.S. foreign policy have noted the role of Greek Americans, little in-depth work has been done on diasporic supporters or opponents of the Greek colonels.⁵ Scholars of the junta briefly highlight the roles of Boston-based businessman Tom Pappas and Vice President Spiro Agnew as leading figures in pro-junta Greek America.⁶ Some contemporaries, such as James Pyrros, indicted the Orthodox Church, the Greek press, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), and the Greek-American business community for its support of the junta but considered the broader Greek-American community less enthusiastic though unwilling to challenge. Like sociologist Charles Moskos, most acknowledge Greek America's "acquiescence, when not outright support," especially among the American born. Moskos states that even as "the American liberal establishment made opposition to the Greek dictatorship a cause, many Greek Americans defensively rallied around the junta."⁷ Yet, even these references are weakly documented, based on personal experience, and usually mentioned in passing as part of a larger work on other aspects of Greek America or U.S.-Greek relations. Few historians or sociologists have examined in detail why Greek Americans

³ On heterogeneity with ethnic groups, see Lisa Lowe, "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Making Asian American Difference," *Diaspora* 1, no. 1 (1991): 24-44. For an emphasis on leftist politics within Greek America see the work of Dan Georgakas such as Dan Georgakas, "Greek American Radicalism: The Twentieth Century," in *Reading Greek America: Studies in the Experience of Greeks in the United States*, ed. Spyros D. Orfanos (New York: Pella Publishing, 2002), 63-84.

⁴ See Daniel W. Drezner, "The Realist Tradition in American Public Opinion," *Perspectives on Politics* 6, no. 1 (2008): 51-70. Drezner challenges the "anti-realist assumption" that the U.S. public is uncomfortable with a foreign policy driven by pure national interests.

⁵ Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 63; Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy: A History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 173.

⁶ For good examples of brief mentions of either Tom Pappas or Spiro Agnew, see "Athenian" [Rodis Roufos], *Inside the Colonels' Greece*, trans. Richard Clogg (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972), 186; James Edward Miller, *The United States & the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 159, 160, 165.

⁷ Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1989), 108.

embraced or tolerated not only the Greek junta but also U.S. foreign policy towards the junta.⁸ This lacuna in the scholarship misses an opportunity to examine the intersection of domestic and foreign policy.

This article seeks to understand why Americans tolerate foreign policies that violate human rights and democratic principles, using Greek-American tolerance of the Greek military junta as a case study. The article expands on Charles Moskos's observations, which identified socio-economics and 1960s cultural politics as reasons for Greek-American support for the junta and does not question the sincere belief of many Greek Americans as Cold Warriors.⁹ That said, the democratic rhetoric inherent in both a U.S. and a Greek understanding of self stands at odds with the reality of U.S. foreign policy and Greek political health during the 1967-1974 period. Why did the Greek cause for democracy fail to resonate with many Greek Americans during a time of heightened ethnic awareness and foreign policy criticism? In light of torture charges and other human rights violations that became central to the global anti-junta movement, what does Greek-American indifference or support indicate about the larger U.S. public's willingness to tolerate their government's support of such regimes? While it is always difficult to talk about the general public, the Greek case offers an opportunity to examine the reaction of one of the nation's subcultures and to identify how its ideological perceptions not only complemented policymakers' decisions but also framed this ethnic community's understanding of what it meant to be American and what it meant to be Greek during the late sixties and early seventies.

In examining institutional responses from AHEPA, the Orthodox Church, and the ethnic press, Greek-American pro-junta and junta-tolerant voices reveal the prevalence of a realist vein steeped in anti-communism, the concern over law and order and the belief that history outweighs democracy.

⁸ For brief explorations, see Anna Karpathakis, "Home Society Politics and Immigrant Political Incorporation: The Case of Greek Immigrants in New York City," *International Migration Review* 33, no. 1 (1999): 58; Alice Scourby, *The Greek Americans* (Boston: Twayne, 1977), 102; James Pyrras, "PASOK and the Greek Americans," in *Greece under Socialism: A NATO Ally Adrift*, ed. Nikolas A. Stavrou (New Rochelle, NY: Orpheus Publishing, 1988), 233; Robert V. Keeley, *The Colonels' Coup and the American Embassy: A Diplomat's View of the Breakdown of Democracy in Cold War Greece* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 88; Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 107-108.

⁹ According to Moskos, Greek Americans with their "peasant background" easily identified with the "more modest origins" of the junta leaders than with Greece's traditional power elites, who had previously looked down upon Greek immigrants. Furthermore, Moskos argued, older Greek Americans liked the "anti-hippy" stance of the Greek colonels, while their second-generation children simply were not interested in Greek politics and so accepted the reality in Athens. Moskos pointed out that when the U.S. anti-junta movement attempted to organize, many of these second-generation Greek Americans "defensively rallied around the junta." Furthermore, he maintained that in retrospect many in this group attempted to "refurbish their image" by arguing that "accommodation to the junta was only a way of keeping lines open to the ancestral homeland." Moskos doubted this pragmatic line of thinking and remarked that Greek-American pro-junta sentiments during the period seemed "genuine." See Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 108.

The Greek Coup

Editor's Note: This section of the text contains explicit descriptions of sexual violence and torture.

When the three architects of the military takeover—Georgios Papadopoulos, Stylianos Pattakos, and Nikolaos Makarezos—suspended the Greek democratic process on April 21, 1967, they claimed to have acted to save Greece from imminent communism. Fearing that a decisive victory for leftist Georgios Papandreu and his Centre Union party in upcoming elections would eventually lead to the ascension of Andreas Papandreu, the Harvard-trained, anti-colonial, and passionately nationalistic son of the “old man,” the Greek army officers implemented *Prometheus*, a NATO plan for neutralizing an uprising in case of a communist attack.¹⁰

That these actions occurred almost exactly twenty years after the March 12, 1947 issuance of the Truman Doctrine suggests that postwar U.S.-led anti-communist efforts in Greece were perhaps not as successful in assisting Greece to become “a self-supporting and self-respecting democracy” as its proponents had claimed.¹¹ While the CIA apparently did not orchestrate the colonels’ coup, the U.S. government validated the takeover through its continued relations with the junta and had played its role in the destabilizing internal politics of 1960s Greece.¹² Again, the United States traded the long-term health of a democracy for the short-term stability of a dictatorship.¹³ Washington’s acceptance and willingness to work with the junta spurred a sharp turn against the United States soon after democracy was restored to Greece in 1974.

What type of Greek government did the United States associate itself with between 1967 and 1974? The most common labels given to the junta are “right-wing” and “military dictatorship.” Robert Keeley, ambassador to Greece in the 1980s and an officer in the Athens Embassy from 1966-1969,

¹⁰ Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2007).

¹¹ Harry Truman, “Truman Doctrine March 12, 1947,” *The Avalon Project*, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT, accessed February 22, 2023, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp.

¹² Debate continues on U.S. involvement in the lead up to the military coup. For those who emphasize U.S. involvement, see Stan Draenos, *Andreas Papandreaou: The Making of a Greek Democrat and Political Maverick* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012). For those who minimize the role of the U.S., see Miller, *The United States & the Making of Modern Greece*; Louis Klarevas, “Were the Eagle and the Phoenix Birds of a Feather: The United States and the Greek Coup of 1967,” *Diplomatic History* 30, no. 3 (2006): 471-508.

¹³ On the day of the coup, April 21, 1967, Walt Rostow wrote to Lyndon Johnson: “At some point soon, I feel we should express regret—even if softly—that democratic processes have been suspended. I fear that our posture before the Greek Americans and the Greek people will look weak-kneed if we completely avoid judgment. Greek democracy is something all the world cherishes, and we have made a strong effort through Ambassador Talbot to stave this off. However, State logically argues that we should hold off on any substantive comment this morning lest we encourage violence against the coup government.”

Rostow to Johnson, April 21, 1967, Greece Memos & Misc. [1 of 2], Box 126, National Security Files, Country Files, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library as found in Snyder, *From Selma to Moscow*, 127, emphasis mine.

added the label “fascist.” In his memoir, Keeley bemoaned his colleagues’ inability or unwillingness to recognize that the United States “was giving [our] support to a fascist regime in a NATO ally.”¹⁴ Richard Clogg, in his 1970 study of the junta’s ideology, concluded that it was neither genuinely fascist nor wholly populist. Membership in the Greek Youth movements was not compulsory as it had been in the Hitler Youth movement. He also believed that the junta’s ultra-nationalism, like its populism, was more rhetoric than reality. For instance, the junta agreed to Turkish demands in Cyprus in 1967 and abandoned Greek minority claims in regions of southern Albania (Northern Epirus).¹⁵ Keeley and many other opponents of the junta would not see these as grounds to dismiss the fascist label. Still, for historian Richard Clogg, the junta’s regime mirrored the right-wing administration of Ioannides Metaxas in 1930s Greece more than it resembled the fascist regimes of Hitler or Mussolini.¹⁶

Though the label associated with the Greek junta may not have mattered to some, it did matter to the junta officials who, desperately at first, sought U.S. approval. Throughout their reign, they used the language of democracy to suggest that democratic government was just around the corner –if only the world would wait a little longer. As the regime purported to make Greece safe for democracy, it suspended parliamentary government, arrested and imprisoned thousands of political opponents, placed the Greek Orthodox Church under military control, purged disloyal university professors, forced 2,500 officers into retirement, increased their own pay, and reinstated censorship laws from the Nazi occupation that tried to eliminate “subversion of ‘society, the monarchy and religion.’”¹⁷ The colonels issued an index of prohibited books that banned the works of Lenin, Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus, along with Euripides, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Aristotle, and Aristophanes. Protecting the Greeks from the decadence and secularism of modern Western culture, they outlawed miniskirts for young women and long hair for young men, banned hundreds of films, including *Zorba the Greek*, *Never on Sunday*, and anything else featuring the music of Mikis Theodorakis or the acting of Melina Mercouri. Stylianos Pattakos, the interior minister, even ordered all school children to attend confession and

¹⁴ Keeley, *The Colonels’ Coup and the American Embassy*, 172-173. There were already two fascist allies in NATO, Portugal and Spain, and Turkey was a near dictatorship for much of the period.

¹⁵ Richard Clogg, “The Ideology of the ‘Revolution of 21 April 1967,’” in *Greece Under Military Rule*, eds. Richard Clogg and George Yannopoulos (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1972), 51-54.

¹⁶ The power of the Metaxas regime rested on the army and the king. Though many have labeled the Metaxas regime fascist, Clogg believed it is “more correctly categorised as paternalist-authoritarian.” Metaxas rejected imperialism and anti-Semitism, and promoted the arts as part of his “Third Hellenic Civilization.” Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), 182. Both the junta and Metaxas shared an “obsession with the purported selfish individualism of the Greeks” as the Metaxas regime attempted to create “social beings” out of Greeks and as the junta tried to eliminate the “worm of egocentricity” from Greeks. Quoted in Clogg, “The Ideology of the ‘Revolution of 21 April 1967,’” in *Greece Under Military Rule*, 54.

¹⁷ Quoted in Peter Murtagh, *The Rape of Greece: The King, the Colonels and the Resistance* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 134.

take communion.¹⁸

Still, the aspect of the Greek junta that most clashed with Western ideals was the issue of torture.¹⁹ Stories of suffering leaked out of Greece early. They galvanized a small liberal movement within the U.S.²⁰ Sent by Amnesty International, U.S. lawyer James Becket collected and later published the most damaging reports on the use of torture in Greece. His 1970 *Barbarism in Greece* presented an image of a Greek state that had no problem arresting, threatening, and torturing its citizens physically and non-physically. The *falanga* method of beating the soles of the feet for hours dominated torture practices. It left few marks and maintained a conscious victim. In addition to the *falanga*, torturers beat other body parts using wooden sticks and metal rods. They also administered electroshock to sensitive areas such as the neck, feet, hands, and genitals. One torture station, the infamous *Asphalia* on Bouboulinas Street in Athens, had a high-pressure water valve that was used to drive water up the anus into the intestines. Burnings, hangings, chemical agents, and temperature-driven tortures were also used. Torturers unleashed dogs, used loud and repetitive noises, stripped victims, verbally assaulted them, staged mock executions, coerced signings, spit on genitals, poured water down throats, flogged women's breasts, lodged guns and fingers into women's vaginas and men's anuses, and yanked men's penises among other techniques. To stifle the cries of victims, torturers often stuffed a urine-soaked rag into the victim's mouth and throat.²¹ The junta denied these charges, and when it appeared that the Council of Europe was going to expel Greece in December 1969, junta officials walked out. Some supporters of the junta pointed out that many countries practiced torture; however, the past and its legacy, at times, is a difficult burden to carry. As James Becket put it, "To many, rightly or wrongly, barbaric practices seemed more shocking, simply because they occur in Greece."²² With its ancient past, its Western roots,

¹⁸ Clogg, "The Ideology of the 'Revolution of 21 April 1967,'" in *Greece Under Military Rule*, 40; Murtagh, *The Rape of Greece*, 134. They even went so far as to suggest that barbershops would be set up at airports and border crossings to police a ban on foreigners with beards and long hair. As the tourist summer months approached, the colonels revoked this proclamation as they realized hirsute tourists kept their economy afloat. See "Junta to Rule Greek Church," *Chicago Tribune*, May 11, 1967, B1.

¹⁹ Early on the U.S. State Department monitored human rights abuses in Greece and estimated about 5,000 prisoners in June 1967. See Snyder, *From Selma to Moscow*, Ch. 3, fn 73. The number would increase. Eight months after the coup, about half of the 6,000 prisoners rounded up had been released, including Greek political celebrity and popular former U.S. academic Andreas Papandreou. The 6,000 figure and fifty percent release cited in both Elizabeth B. Drew, "Democracy on Ice: A Study of American Policy Toward Dictatorship in Greece," *The Atlantic*, July 1968; Amnesty International, *Torture in Greece: The First Torturers' Trial 1975* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1977), 10. Exact numbers in the case of Greece are difficult to determine as the military police (ESA) destroyed many of their records.

²⁰ See Snyder, *From Selma to Moscow*, Ch. 3. Snyder finds much to praise in how a small group of U.S. activists worked within transnational networks to secure Andreas Papandreou's release from prison, engage in fact findings missions on torture, and work to limit military aid to the regime.

²¹ Information in this paragraph draws from James Becket, *Barbarism in Greece* (New York: Walker and Company, 1970), 121-126.

²² *Ibid.*, 2.

and its claim to a civilizing mission, Greece *was* held to a different standard, one that supporters of the junta tried to dismiss and exploit.

Greek-American Spaces

Through what formal structures could Greek Americans respond? The three traditional cultural organs of the Greek diaspora in the United States were the AHEPA organization, Greek Orthodox Church, and the ethnic press.

AHEPA's roots went back to the Deep South, an area not popularly associated with southern European immigration but an area that saw some of the first Greek-American communities.²³ The organization arose from the racially charged atmosphere of 1920s Atlanta as Greek immigrants organized to protect themselves from then-dominant anti-foreign sentiments and Ku Klux Klan harassment.²⁴ Unlike earlier Greek immigrant fraternal organizations in the United States that centered on Greek localism, the AHEPA, organizing in a moment of intense nativism, immigration restriction, and white fears of a global racial war, encouraged unity among the Greek-American populace and stressed the latter part of the hyphenated name.²⁵ Greek Americans were to become American first and Greek second, and if they liked Epirotic, Macedonian, or Cretan third. According to sociologist Yiorgos Anagnostou, the AHEPA, amid this climate, advanced an assimilationist path that tried "to naturalize the connection between politico-cultural Americanism and racial Hellenism."²⁶ The AHEPA, and eventually its various auxiliaries, such as the Daughters of Penelope, the Sons of Pericles, and the Maids of Athena, would facilitate this strategy towards assimilation that emphasized association with the classical Hellenistic period.²⁷ Unsurprisingly,

²³ On Greek immigrants in the U.S. South see Lazar Odzak, "*Demetrios Is Now Jimmy*": *Greek Immigrants in the Southern United States, 1895-1965* (Durham, NC: Monograph Publishers, 2006). The first ten AHEPA chapters were all located in the U.S. South. See Odzak, 112.

²⁴ The state of Georgia officially recognized the AHEPA on September 25, 1922. On how the Klan represented and advanced mainstream notions on white supremacy and Protestant dominance, see Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2017); on how the Klan tapped into populist and progressive narratives to spread its nativism in the 1920s, see Thomas R. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2011).

²⁵ On AHEPA founding principles that compromised with the Klan, see George J. Leber, *The History of the Order of AHEPA, 1922-1972* (Washington, D.C.: The Order of AHEPA, 1972). On the intense nativism and immigration restrictions of the 1920s, see Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). The early 1920s saw the mainstream spread of white supremacist ideology as formulated by zoologist Madison Grant and Harvard-trained historian Lothrop Stoddard. See Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920).

²⁶ Yiorgos Anagnostou, "Forget the Past, Remember the Ancestors! Modernity, 'Whiteness,' American Hellenism, and the Politics of Memory in Early Greek America," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 22, no. 1 (2004), 46.

²⁷ Scourby, *The Greek Americans*, 41-42, 49.

AHEPA encouraged U.S. government officials to speak at its banquets. The two main themes repeatedly present in these speeches were an homage to ancient Greece and praise of Greek-American achievements.²⁸ These messages both validated Greek Americans as productive members of U.S. society and provided them with a trope to legitimate their place in the U.S.²⁹

Coming into existence amid the nativism of the 1920s, the AHEPA aimed to make Henry Ford's melting pot a reality by turning images of insular and divided Greek immigrants into flag-waving model U.S. citizens.³⁰ AHEPA stressed the importance of speaking in English and thinking as Americans while respecting a very distant Greek past. That meant putting divisive Greek politics (which, according to one historian, "had become synonymous with Greeks in this country") aside for the sake of membership in the American political body.³¹ Even though AHEPA quickly tempered its original strict position on English language use and its non-sectarian religious stance in light of criticisms from rival organizations, the AHEPA still viewed unity among Greek Americans as paramount in validating their claims to U.S. citizenship.³² As the AHEPA spread and gained new members, they took on a significant role in representing and shaping Greek identity in postwar America.³³ With its focus on success through the U.S. system, its promotion of English, its middle class and small business origins, the AHEPA steered the direction of Greek America towards an understanding of U.S. identity that valued assimilation over pluralism, classical inheritance over modern culture, and material success through the existing economic structures.³⁴

²⁸ Stephanos Zotos, *Hellenic Presence in America* (Wheaton, IL: Pilgrimage, 1976), 142-143.

²⁹ This state-validated face of the Greek immigrant helps explain why the history of the radical Greek left is often ignored both by the government and the historical record.

³⁰ From the 1922 AHEPA Charter, "The object of said association is to form a fraternal order and secure members therefore, with the purpose in view of advancing and promoting *pure and undefiled Americanism* among the Greeks of the United States, the territorial and colonial possessions thereof; to *educate Greeks of the United States in the matter of democracy, and of the government of the United States*, and to *instill the deepest loyalty and allegiance* of the Greeks of this country to the United States, *its tenets and institutions* and to teach the *operation and meaning of the said government* together with its laws, rules and regulations; and to promote American education among the Greeks; and to promote the *highest type of American citizenship* among the Greeks; and to promote a spirit of fraternity, sociability and benevolence among the members." As found in Lazark, 109-110, emphasis mine.

³¹ Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 41.

³² The Greek American Progressive Association (GAPA) stressed the importance of Greek language and Orthodox faith preservation while encouraging full participation in American life. Both organizations pursued turning their members into good U.S. citizens, but differed in the stress placed on the preservation of ethnic culture. Theodore Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 256. Again, this emphasis on unity as a method for assimilation reinforces narratives of homogeneity within ethnic groups and narrow notions of identity.

³³ Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 42.

³⁴ Greek-American historian Theodore Saloutos wrote that AHEPA "represented Americanism in a decade of conformity, when many Greek-Americans, reacting sharply against the politics of the Old World, were desirous of shaking off all traces of foreignism by joining the greater American community." He also stressed the middle-class orientation of AHEPA. The organization

In 1922, the year that AHEPA coalesced, the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States won formal recognition from the State of New York.³⁵ During Archbishop Athenagoras's eighteen-year term from 1931-1948, political division within the Greek Orthodox American community dissipated, and centralization occurred.³⁶ Under his successor, Archbishop Michael, the Greek Orthodox community enjoyed a period of "unaccustomed equanimity." A youth ministry was organized to incorporate the U.S. born, twenty-six state legislatures recognized Orthodoxy as a significant faith alongside Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism, and the Defense Department finally authorized the Eastern Orthodox "dog tag" in 1955. In 1957, Archbishop Michael also took part in the Presidential inaugural ceremony, the first Orthodox leader to do so.³⁷ During the junta years, Archbishop Iakovos would lead the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America. Ironically, if not intentionally, the U.S. government reached out to the Orthodox Churches in the U.S. during the years when Orthodoxy worldwide struggled behind the Iron Curtain.

The third staple of Greek-American life was the ethnic press. The Greek-American press, like most ethnic presses, grew out of the immigrant's need to stay connected with the homeland and the need for local information provided in the native language. Ever since 1892 when the first Greek-language paper printed in the United States was published in Boston, the Greek-American community has had several small presses come in and out of existence.³⁸ For most of the twentieth century, the two most prominent Greek dailies were the conservative *Atlantis* and the centrist

"appealed to those who were climbing the social and economic ladder of success. It extended recognition to those who craved it but who found it difficult to obtain in 'non-Greek' spheres." See Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States*, 256.

³⁵ The Orthodox Church consists of fourteen autocephalous churches that are in charge of their own administration. The Church of Greece and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople are two of these fourteen churches. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered "primus inter pares" ("first among equals") among these churches as the Orthodox Church stresses the importance of Ecumenical Councils in formulating doctrine rather than a worldwide hierarchy. Today the Church of Greece administratively controls the 1912-1913 borders of Greece with the remaining areas under the control of Constantinople. The Ecumenical Patriarchate also administratively controls all Greek diasporic communities including the Archdiocese of America.

³⁶ The Greek Orthodox Church in the United States had suffered from disorganization and intercommunal strife. Caught up in the divisive politics of the Greek homeland during the first decades of the twentieth century, the Church bounced between control under the Athens-based Church of Greece and the Constantinople-based Ecumenical Patriarchate until the latter finally won out in 1922. Many Greek Orthodox Americans had continued to challenge the Patriarchate's clerical appointments in the U.S. until Archbishop Athenagoras's term. Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 37; Scourby, *The Greek Americans*, 84; Zotos, *Hellenic Presence in America*, 204. Both Moskos and Scourby attribute this to changing politics in Greece and the emergence of a second generation of Greek Americans less interested in homeland politics. Moskos also stresses the patient personality of Athenagoras.

³⁷ Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 52; Scourby, *The Greek Americans*, 85.

³⁸ S. Victor Papacosma, "The Greek Press in America," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 5 (1979), 46.

Ethnikos Keryx (National Herald).³⁹ Observers disagree with the stance of the two major Greek-language newspapers toward the junta. According to some, the *Atlantis* and the *National Herald* “responded guardedly,”⁴⁰ while others argue that the *National Herald* supported the junta, but “in a less excited manner” than the “rabidly” pro-junta and traditionally conservative *Atlantis*.⁴¹ Some acknowledge that smaller presses, which mainly represented the working class left and liberal center, openly challenged the junta during this period, yet they failed to garner a more significant forum.⁴²

In examining the press, this study concerns itself mainly with the English-language media, both the mainstream U.S. national papers and the leading Greek-American newspaper, the *Hellenic Chronicle*.⁴³ It does so in order to target how “Americanized” Greek Americans framed their pro-junta position. The Boston-based, English-language *Hellenic Chronicle* provides a window into

³⁹ The *Atlantis*, which was first published in 1894, served conservative Greek Americans who supported the monarchy. The *Atlantis* remained in business until 1973 when labor issues forced it to shut down. Ironically, the paper went out of business soon after the junta abolished the monarchy in a fraudulent referendum. When the dictatorship finally collapsed in 1974, the new Greek government held another plebiscite to confirm the abolition of the monarchy. The role of the monarchy had been a central issue dividing Greeks since the modern nation first established a monarchy in 1863.

The *National Herald*, which started in 1915, served more liberal readers who preferred a republican form of government for the homeland. The *National Herald* continues to publish a daily newspaper, which has included an English version since 1996 and an online version since 2004. It has been in continuous publication longer than any other New York City newspaper other than the *New York Times*.

Susan Pappas, “The Greek-American Press Marks Its 100th Anniversary This Year,” *Editor and Publisher*, September 26, 1992.

⁴⁰ Scourby, *The Greek Americans*, 99. Though there is no immediate footnote after this statement, the writer believes Scourby found this information from Papacosma, which if she did, she misrepresented. Papacosma writes, “Even the controversial issue of military rule in Greece from 1967 to 1974, supported by *Atlantis*, met with only guarded criticism from *Ethnikos Keryx*, to the dismay of the junta’s ardent opponents who sought an influential Greek voice in this country.” Accordingly, Papacosma *does* identify the *Atlantis* as being pro-junta.

⁴¹ Pyrros, “PASOK and the Greek Americans,” 233.

⁴² Papacosma, “The Greek Press in America,” 60.

⁴³ Claiming to be “America’s largest newspaper for Greek-Americans,” the *Hellenic Chronicle* was founded in Boston in 1950 by Peter Agris. Agris was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts and raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts where he graduated from Rindge High School. After serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, he attended both Suffolk University and Boston University. At the age of twenty-four, he founded the English-language weekly *Hellenic Chronicle* providing a media outlet for news related to the Greek-American community. Though sections of his weekly specifically addressed local New England communal affairs such as marriages, church gatherings, and youth athletic and academic achievements, the majority of the paper dealt with more national Greek-American community news relating to the AHEPA organization, the Greek Orthodox Church, and U.S.-Mediterranean politics. See *Alpha Omega Council* <http://www.alphaomegacouncil.com>.

the world of second and third-generation Greek Americans. Though they were linguistically removed from Greece, their weekly newspaper demonstrated a clear interest in events transpiring in Greece and events worldwide, including the United States, that dealt with Greek or Cypriot concerns.

While it is not surprising that readers of Greek-language dailies, such as the *Atlantis* and *National Herald*, would remain connected to the homeland's culture and have strong opinions on its politics, readers of English-language Greek papers present a more complicated issue. The *Hellenic Chronicle* was not a church newsletter that only dealt with aspects of the Greek Orthodox faith or a local newspaper that simply dealt with events pertinent to the New England-based Greek-American community, though it did both. During the years of the junta, the paper's front page and, often enough, its editorial page dealt with Greek political issues.

The *Hellenic Chronicle* appears to challenge various sociologists' beliefs that second and third generations Greek Americans were not interested in the politics of the homeland. To read the *Hellenic Chronicle* was to step beyond casual attendance of church-sponsored Greek festivals or sensory enjoyment of other "Dionysian" aspects of culture typically associated with assimilated groups.⁴⁴ Reading foreign news in the English-language medium also meant viewing Greek culture from a distance. This position makes "Americanized" Greek Americans an interesting group to study because it is not readily apparent whether their positions towards the Greek junta resulted from their "Americanness" or their "Greekness."

Global and U.S. Greek Diasporic Responses

To place Greek-American responses in a worldwide diasporic context, it is helpful to briefly examine several non-U.S. Greek diaspora reactions to the junta takeover.

In the days immediately following the coup, Greeks living in northern Europe erupted in protest. Authorities in West Germany, Denmark, and England all clashed with angry young Greek and non-Greek protesters. In Stuttgart, a "screaming crowd" of 1,000 Greek workers carried banners

⁴⁴ While the 1960s brought greater cultural awareness to the United States through various civil rights struggles and while the decade represented the peak of post-World War II new Greek immigration, sociologist George Kourvetaris argues that neither of these developments stopped the Americanization process of third generation old Greek Americans. Kourvetaris argues that old second and third generation Greek Americans paid more attention to issues of religion and class, respectively, rather than ethnicity. When they did pay attention to ethnicity, they did so from sociologist Milton Gordon's "ethclass" perspective, that is they associated with other Greek Americans of the same socio-economic background. For these older, more assimilated Greek Americans, Greek ethnicity consisted of what sociologists consider the Dionysian aspects of culture, that is, the more external or material manifestations of culture such as food, dancing, and rituals. These assimilated Greek Americans largely ignored the Apollonian aspects of Greek culture, which included more symbolic and abstract aspects of ethnic culture like literature, philosophy, values, history, and language.

See George A. Kourvetaris, *Studies on Greek Americans* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 8-9.

supporting Andreas Papandreou. In West Berlin, 200 Greeks stood outside the Greek Military Mission waving posters that proclaimed “Down with Fascism” and “No Recognition for Tyranny.”⁴⁵ In Copenhagen, 600 demonstrators marched through the city chanting “Hang Constantine” and briefly scuffled with police. The protestors were identified as members of “left-wing student organizations and the communist party.” Their banners proclaimed “Out with Constantine,” “Save Greece from fascism,” and “Come home Anne-Marie,” the latter a reference to the King’s twenty-year-old Danish-born Queen.⁴⁶ The following day a brief fight broke out in front of the Greek embassy when a police guard prevented Greek demonstrators who were wearing black armbands and carrying black banners from handing a resolution through the door.⁴⁷

The most dramatic Greek diasporic events soon after the coup occurred in London. On the night of April 28, 1967, Good Friday for the Greek Orthodox faithful that year, as the Greek ambassador Demetrius Nicolargisis attended church services, 150-200 British and Greek citizens temporarily “seized” the Greek embassy in London to protest the military coup. They “took over the building, cut phone lines, ransacked files and broadcast attacks on the junta over a loudspeaker set up outside.” The ambassador’s two daughters ages 7 and 10 who had been left with the butler, were unharmed. Authorities arrested 42 people, mostly in their twenties, who were associated with the “Save Greece Now” organization, whose stated purpose was to demonstrate “solidarity with the people of Greece who have been subjugated to force by a military dictatorship.”⁴⁸ The protesters also seized radio transmitters in the basement and announced to other Greek embassies that the London embassy was the “first part of Greek soil to be liberated from the junta.”⁴⁹ When the court held hearings for the 42 accused, demonstrators held a banner stating “Fascism in Greece and Vietnam” and clashed with police in the visitors’ gallery. Police removed several protesters, including “one gray-haired man” who shouted “Save Greece Now!” as he left the gallery.⁵⁰

Nothing on this level of protest came out of Greek America in the days after the coup. The *New York Times* was the only mainstream daily to publish letters from Greeks in the U.S. early on. The *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Boston Globe*, all in areas of high Greek population concentration, did not publish letters from anyone, including Greek Americans, until May. Greek Americans were the first to provide editorial responses in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, but not so in the *Boston Globe*, where non-Greeks issued the first editorials and op-ed essays. Los Angeles came out strong against the junta, while Chicago and Boston were split in their opinions, with Boston being the more conservative.

That the *New York Times* was the only U.S. mainstream daily to publish early letters to the editor from Greek Americans appears fit with New York City’s status as home to the largest Greek-American community in the nation. By 1967, moreover, that community was growing thanks to the 1965 Hart-Celler Immigration Act that abolished the 1924 quota system, which had drastically

⁴⁵ “W. German Police Battle Greek Mob,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1967, G2.

⁴⁶ “600 Danes Protest Greek Army Move,” *New York Times*, April 22, 1967, 5.

⁴⁷ “W. German Police Battle Greek Mob,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1967, G2.

⁴⁸ “Mob Occupies Greek Embassy in London,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1967, 11.

⁴⁹ “Embassy Seized in London,” *New York Times*, April 29, 1967, 4.

⁵⁰ “Foes of Greek Coup Clash with Police in London Court,” *New York Times*, May 7, 1967, 11.

reduced Greek immigration.⁵¹ Under the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act of 1952, which Congress passed over Truman's veto, the quota for Greece was raised to 308 from the previous allotment of 307. Even with such stringent quota numbers, the U.S. allowed around 70,000 Greeks to enter between the end of World War II and 1965. According to Charles Moskos, this occurred in large part "by borrowing on future quotas, by qualifying for displaced person status, or by utilizing provisions enabling citizens to bring over relatives."⁵² In contrast to prior immigrants, many early postwar immigrants were largely well-educated, and many came to further their education at U.S. universities. Indeed, this particular migration led to the first significant development of a Greek-American professional class in the 1950s and 1960s of physicians, engineers, and academics.⁵³ Later, many of these academics were among the voices that spoke out against the junta.⁵⁴ With the radical changes brought by Hart-Celler, thousands of Greeks immigrated to the United States, producing the second-largest wave of Greek immigration after the initial early twentieth-century migration.⁵⁵ Accordingly, Greek America during the junta years was composed of many different blocks: the older first wave of immigrants and their second-generation children and third-generation grandchildren, postwar refugees and intellectuals, and recent immigrant arrivals who most likely worried more about finding jobs and learning the language than partaking in old or new world politics.

Greek Americans who voiced opinions favorable to the junta shared several themes. The most important was their allegiance to a conventional Cold War worldview. For this group, the Truman Doctrine reinforced a preference for anti-communism and made many Greek Americans sympathetic to any government they viewed in the U.S. camp. That the U.S. government first articulated this anti-communist preference regarding their homeland made Greek Americans easy converts to a Truman-defined notion of proper political identity, whether Greek or American. For these Greek Americans, the "sincere patriots" and "loyal," "patriotic" officers of Greece "saved"

⁵¹ A comparison of fiscal year 1966 and 1965 figures ending on June 30 demonstrates the tremendous impact the Hart-Celler Act had on Greek immigration. Greek visas rose from 1,926 in 1965 to 8,917 in 1966. Zotos, *Hellenic Presence in America*, 131.

⁵² Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 53. The 307 figure was established in 1929 when amendments to the 1924 Act stated that total immigration would be limited to 150,000 persons. Quotas within this total were to be proportional to any specific ethnic group's percentage of the population as counted in the 1920 census. When the Greek Civil War broke out following World War II, special refugee legislation passed in 1948 allowed more Greeks to enter the United States by *borrowing* from future quotas. According to Moskos, by 1952 the Greek quota "was mortgaged to the year 2014!" New legislation in 1953 made exceptions for displaced persons and counted them as non-quota immigrants.

⁵³ George A. Kourvetaris, "Greek-American Professionals: 1820s-1970s," *Balkan Studies* 18, no. 2 (1977): 285-323 as found in Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 53.

⁵⁴ Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 109-110. Moskos writes, "many Greek-born intellectuals who had come to America before the coup later identified with anti-junta groups. It was through such opposition to the military regime that some Greek intellectuals in this country began to revive Greek-American leftist activities and thought."

⁵⁵ Moskos approximates 160,000 "new wave" immigrants arrived in the U.S. between 1966 to 1979. During the "great wave" of 1900-1917, 450,000 had arrived. See Charles Moskos, "The Greeks in the United States," in *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Richard Clogg (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 105.

Greece from “communist infiltration” and from the “communistic blood bath,” which some believed would have been worse than the events of 1944-1949.⁵⁶ Some argued that the junta saved Greece and “stabilized the whole Middle East,” saving it from communism. They believed that the junta stood “for freedom and the Greek people...[it] love[d] the United States and what it stands for.”⁵⁷

As an organization that stressed assimilation and government ties, it was unsurprising that AHEPA supported a strong anti-communist position throughout the Cold War. In its October 1967 statement, the AHEPA took pride in the “great” Truman Doctrine and Greece being “the first nation that stopped the communist aggression.” In what was probably an allusion to the Vietnam conflict, the AHEPA noted that “not a single American soldier shed his blood or lost his life in the great struggle of the Greek people (1947-1950).” Greece was a “faithful ally,” a “valued” and “loyal member of NATO,” and a “reliable friend and ally of our country.” Greece provided the U.S. with bases “to contain communism.” AHEPA urged continued military aid to Greece under the junta based on the positive feedback from members who recently visited Greece and found “law and order” prevailed and that “conditions for visitors and tourists” were “most pleasant.” “As Americans,” argued AHEPA, “our concern is that whatever Greek government Greece has should keep Greece as a member of NATO and a faithful ally of the United States.”⁵⁸ As early supporters of the military regime in Greece, AHEPA, like early U.S. Cold War architects, preferred allegiance to a democratic government [the U.S.] instead of adherence to democratic principles.

Archbishop Iakovos also used Cold War rhetoric as he attempted to forge closer bonds between Greek Americans and the new Greek government. During the Archdiocesan Council meeting, which was held in the junta’s Greece in August 1967, Iakovos met with other Archbishops, the U.S. Ambassador to Greece, Philips Talbot, “distinguished representatives” of the Greek government, Democratic congressmen John Brademas and Peter Kyros, and members of the Greek academy, press, and television. In relaying events upon his return, he proudly told the faithful that the Church of America is “no longer unknown in Greece,” no doubt referencing earlier issues between the Church in America and that in Greece. He praised the Church in Greece that was “motivated by the new spirit toward new directions and horizons” as expressed by its leader, the junta’s appointment, the staunchly conservative and anti-communist Primate Archbishop Ieronymous.⁵⁹ Iakovos thanked Ieronymous, who “opened his bosom to our Church, understood and appreciated our struggles and concerns.” Iakovos never explained what he meant by “new” spirit. He also reminded the faithful that the Church in America and the Church in Greece were the only two free Orthodox Churches at that time, the rest remaining suppressed behind the Iron

⁵⁶ Constantine Stacy, “That Greek Junta,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 22, 1967, 28; T. A. Theodoracopulos, “Letter to the Editor 1 – No Title,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 9, 1967, 16. See also James Kallas, “Letter to the Editor 1 – No Title,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 4, 1967.

⁵⁷ James H. Kaltsas, President of Prest-Wheel Co. Inc. in Grafton, Massachusetts quoted in Jack Tubert, “New Regime Helps Greek Nation Visitors Assure Worcesterites,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, May 30, 1968.

⁵⁸ Leber, *The History of the Order of AHEPA*, 478-479.

⁵⁹ After dismissing the entire Athenian Church Synod in May 1967, the junta replaced it with new members of their liking. Ieronymous resigned in December 1974, the same year the junta fell. His leadership during the 1967-1974 years continues to be controversial in Greece.

Curtain. Iakovos stated that Greece “is not foreign to us.” It “is our land.” He continued, “Our ties with Greece are historical, religious, cultural, as long as we share a common destiny and as long as our countries, both America and Greece, belong to the *same world*, to the *same frontier* and *same battlefield*.”⁶⁰ Iakovos, like other U.S. Cold Warriors, used the language of the “free world” and viewed the junta’s Greece as being a part of it because it was not communist. Only after 1973, when the junta called a referendum on the monarchy, did Iakovos speak out against the regime. Historians have noted that Iakovos and the junta leaders “drift[ed] slowly but steadily apart” largely through the desires of the junta leaders, not Iakovos.⁶¹

Along with supporting the Cold War, the pro-junta Greek-American response overlapped with an early broadening definition of conservatism during the Nixon-Agnew years.⁶² Spiro Agnew, Nixon’s first vice-president and media frontman, came from a non-traditional Greek-American background but used his ethnic background to curry favor with Greek Americans and other ethnic Americans.⁶³ Studies conducted on voting patterns during the Nixon-Agnew presidential elections showed that even though most Greek Americans had traditionally supported the Democratic Party, the Agnew candidacy led many to vote Republican because they identified with Agnew.⁶⁴

Many pro-junta comments by Greek Americans in early 1968, after the Tet Offensive but before the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, stressed the same “new” conservative principles Spiro Agnew advocated: law and order, economic liberalization, and middle-class prosperity. These principles blended almost effortlessly into the Cold War framework. Greek Americans respected

⁶⁰ Demetrios J. Constantelos, ed. *The “Complete Works” of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos Vol. 2 The Torchbearer – Encyclicals: Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Subjects, Administration, Education, Culture Part 1 1959-1977* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1999), 54-56, emphasis mine.

⁶¹ For a closer analysis of Iakovos and the junta see Alexander Kitroeff, “Uneasy Alliances: Archbishop Iakovos and the Greek Colonels’ Dictatorship,” in *The Greek Military Dictatorship: Revisiting a Troubled Past, 1967-1974*, eds. Othon Anastasakis and Katerina Logos (New York: Berghahn Books, 2021), 215-239.

⁶² Peter B. Levy, “Spiro Agnew, the Forgotten Americans, and the Rise of the New Right” *Historian* 75, no. 4 (2013): 707-739; Justin P. Coffey, “Spiro T. Agnew: The Decline of Moderates and Rise of the Republican Right,” in *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism’s Decade of Transformation*, eds. Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 243-259.

⁶³ Roy Pollard, Agnew’s half-brother, was “a little surprised when, while campaigning, Spiro went so heavily to the fact that he was of Greek ancestry because, very frankly, up till the time he began campaigning, I never thought of him as a Greek at all, I thought of him as an American.” Quoted in Joseph Albright, *What Makes Spiro Run: The Life and Times of Spiro Agnew* (New York: NY: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1972), 35.

⁶⁴ Craig R. Humphrey and Helen Brock Louis, “Assimilation and Voting Behavior: A Study of Greek-Americans” *International Migration Review* 7, no. 1 (1973): 40-41, 44; Zotos, *Hellenic Presence in America*, 112; Stefano Luconi, “A Greek American Vice President? The View from the Italian American Community,” in *Redirecting Ethnic Singularity: Italian Americans and Greek Americans in Conversation*, ed. Yiorgos Anagnostou et al. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2022), 46-71.

the junta because it brought “political stability” and moved the Greek economy ahead.⁶⁵ After the Greek government revised the Constitution in 1968, the *Hellenic Chronicle* praised the Greek government for calling it a “true, orderly democracy.” It insisted that if a vote were taken the next day, the junta would win “hands down.”⁶⁶ One editorial argued, “It is unpopular to say a good word about a military government these days because the international vogue is to lean to the left.” They believed that events in Greece were “necessary to protect the stability of that nation which was being ravaged by opportunists and threatened with collapse by the chaos that existed.” They insisted that stability was important not only to Greece, but also to the U.S. because the present government was pro-American, pro-NATO, and anti-Communist.⁶⁷ Others argued that the “fear and anxiety” that existed in the days leading up to the coup were replaced with “calmness and serenity.”⁶⁸ These comments revealed an ethos prioritizing stability and gradual change over democratic process and practice.

For these Greek Americans, the junta epitomized the benefits of economic reform and a middle-class-oriented society. Responding to exiled Greek (American) socialist Andreas Papandreu’s claims that the junta was unpopular, the *Hellenic Chronicle* wrote, “The Greek government enjoys wide acceptance and popularity among the general citizenry of Greece with most of the populace anxiously hoping that it will remain in office indefinitely.” Only “Communists” and “the Monarchy Aristocracy” opposed the present government. “The greatest support” came from “the masses of white and blue-collar workers, the farmers and the rapidly-developing middle-class....” Interestingly, the *Hellenic Chronicle* viewed Papandreu’s campaign against the regime as a failure because of the campaign’s “noticeable lack of support from among leading Greek-Americans, Greek communities, and national Greek-American fraternities and organizations” while criticizing that “whatever support” it seemed to have come from “left-wingers, fellow travelers, and misguided intellectuals.” The editorial closed with echoes of a Cold War definition of a good ally. It stated, “Any government that has proven itself pro-American, pro-NATO, and anti-Communist deserves our complete support, and we should make every effort to retain them as our friends. As it is, we have perilously too few.”⁶⁹

According to the *Hellenic Chronicle*, 1969 was a year for Greeks to give “sincere thanks and gratitude” because the junta had relieved peasants and farmers of their debts, given free education to citizens and fostered the development of a solid middle-class.⁷⁰ The AHEPA shared similar sentiments. It argued that “everyone interviewed in Greece emphasized that since April, 1967, economic conditions had improved considerably, benefits and services to the people had increased tremendously, people were all working, and life was good, pleasant, and calm. There were fewer tensions, and very little insecurity.”⁷¹

⁶⁵ Editorial Board, “Our Visitors to Boston,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, May 23, 1968.

⁶⁶ Editorial Board, “The Revised Constitution,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, July 11, 1968.

⁶⁷ Editorial Board, “Need for Stability,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, May 8, 1969.

⁶⁸ T. A. Theodoracopulos, “Letter to the Editor 1 – No Title,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 9, 1967, 16.

⁶⁹ Editorial Board, “Papandreu in Boston,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, March 28, 1968.

⁷⁰ Editorial Board, “Reasons for Rejoicing,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, March 13, 1969.

⁷¹ Leber, *The History of the Order of AHEPA*, 480.

Archbishop Iakovos also praised the economic benefits, particularly the tourist comforts one could find in the junta's Greece. In 1967, Iakovos announced the Church had decided to hold next year's Clergy-Laity Congress in Athens. He went to great lengths to justify Athens as the "appropriate setting" stating that it had a "favorable" climate and environment and almost desperately pointing out that their hotels were "not inferior to ours here." He even asked, "in reference to other conditions, where in the world are they better?"⁷² Finally, he absolved the Church of any criticism by pointing out that the World Council of Churches found Greece an appropriate location for a conference, so why not the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America? Iakovos' attempts to justify the Athens location demonstrated his understanding that the location might be a controversial selection.

The junta's promotion of Orthodoxy also appealed to conservative Greek Americans. In the fall of 1967, one Greek American who had the opportunity to meet junta leader Stylianos Pattakos wanted readers of the *Chicago Tribune* to know how impressed she was with the dictator. She described Pattakos as a "profound human being" who was "extremely intelligent, very capable, refined, and a man of great faith." Greece was now a "paradise," and "God sent Pattakos" to save Greece. She believed Americans "should give them [the junta] our wholehearted support for how they caused the tide of communism to disintegrate on Greek shores." She felt the need to tell readers that Pattakos' office had a table "covered with many icons."⁷³ This respect for institutional religion played a role in Greek-American activism and silence during the 1960s and 1970s. Though Archbishop Iakovos avoided taking an official position on the junta, his actions often appeared to endorse the regime and may have contributed to a quiet acceptance among the faithful.⁷⁴ Greek-American support for the junta's defense of traditional family structures and Church-supported morality speaks to the increased activism of religiously inclined Americans to support right-wing policies that emphasized reactionary cultural and social control over public life and narrower definitions of citizenship –not a given in the U.S. experience with ample examples of religious Americans promoting left-wing reforms and broader definitions of citizenship.⁷⁵

Iakovos and the editors of the *Hellenic Chronicle* represented the height of mid-century Cold War consensus liberalism with their support for early 1960s immigration reform and civil rights. They, like other U.S. Cold Warriors seeking global alliances, celebrated the 1965 Immigration Act and

⁷² Constantelos, *The "Complete Works" of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos Vol. 2 The Torchbearer – Encyclicals*, 54-56.

⁷³ Elaine Dafnis, "Two Views of Greek Junta," *Chicago Tribune*, November 20, 1967, 16.

⁷⁴ See Kitroeff, "Uneasy Alliances."

⁷⁵ On the increased right-wing activism of religious Americans around issues of sex and family, see R. Marie Griffith, *Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), esp. Ch. 4-6; Daniel K. Williams, "Richard Nixon's Religious Right: Catholics, Evangelicals, and the Creation of an Antisecular Alliance," in *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation*, eds. Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 141-158; Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), esp. Ch. 4 and 5.

the changes that it brought for “long maligned nations.”⁷⁶ After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the *Hellenic Chronicle* urged readers to “rededicate themselves to the high and just principles which the martyred clergyman represented.”⁷⁷ At a time when few religious leaders chose to speak up for civil rights in the United States, Iakovos marched with Martin Luther King Jr. at Selma in 1965. In 1959 when he met Pope John XXIII, Iakovos became the first Greek Orthodox archbishop to meet with a Roman Catholic pope in 350 years. He supported the ecumenical movement and spent nine years on the World Council of Churches, an organization devoted to interdenominational dialogue. Like other mid-century Cold Warriors, many Greek Americans were expansive in who they believed could assimilate into U.S. society, yet clear that socialism and communism, protest and riots, and non-conventional and non-conforming lifestyles were not American values.

Greek Americans within AHEPA and the Church who favored the junta typically emphasized the “Americanness” rather than the “Greekness” of their political position. These pro-junta Greek Americans were unwilling or unable to imagine a U.S. that valued democracy more than it valued anti-communism, symbolizing the power and dominance of Cold War rhetoric. At the same time, the “Greekness” of Greek Americans within the U.S. made them more likely to accept government definitions of proper “American” identity without challenge. As some have argued, earlier immigrants to the U.S., including Greeks, bought their way into early twentieth-century U.S. society at the expense of Black Americans.⁷⁸ Amid McCarthyism, the postwar period allowed ethnic groups to fortify their U.S. credentials with anti-communist zeal. Greek Americans and other ethnic groups were not Anglo-Saxon Protestants, but at least they were not communists. If anything, immigrants and their progeny could argue that they were model citizens who appreciated America’s economic opportunities. Republished in the *Hellenic Chronicle* in 1968 and erroneously attributed to Harry de Metropolis, a West Point graduate and officer, Greek American Dean Aflange’s “The American Creed” symbolized the view of many of his peers:

I do not choose to be a Common Man!
 I choose to be UNCOMMON – if I can!
 I only seek just opportunity;
 I crave not cowardly security!
 I don’t wish to be a kept citizen,
 A Welfare State’s own slave and denizen! ---

⁷⁶ Editorial Board, “Greeks to Celebrate,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, Boston, March 21, 1968. The 1965 Immigration Act passed with 74% of Congressional Democrats and 85% of Congressional Republicans voting for the bill. Notable opposition came from the Democratic U.S. South.

⁷⁷ Editorial Board, “A Time for Rededication,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, April 4, 1968.

⁷⁸ On how “inbetween peoples” like Greeks became “American” through adoption of U.S. exclusionary policies like race relations see James R. Barret and David Roediger, “Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality, and the ‘New Immigrant’ Working Class,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 3 (1997): 3-42; David Roediger, *Working toward Whiteness: How America’s Immigrants Became White, The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005). On how ethnic racial categories became re-classified as white and therefore assimilable, see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Forever humbled, dulled, and mortified
 By all the world, and by myself despised!
 I will not trade my Freedom, dignity,
 Or self-respect for Welfare's charity!
 I will not stoop to play a beggar's role,
 Nor barter my incentive for a dole!
 I want to take the Calculated Risk –
 To dream, build, fail, succeed – more than exist!
 The earth belongs in usufruct to all!
 I'll with my country's fortune rise or fall!
 I do not seek fleeting Utopia'
 I want to build a real America!⁷⁹

Aflange, the son of Ottoman-born Greeks and a politician who served across the political spectrum during the twentieth century, originally wrote the poem in 1952. His language reflects and reproduces a U.S. Cold War rhetoric reinforcing bipolarity. Real Americans wanted to distinguish themselves, not be part of the masses; they reveled in the uncertainty of individual navigation of opportunities, not the security of collective support structures. Freedom, defined as the chance to assess risk and live with the potential for individualized failure, electrified “real” Americans, unlike those who prefer to be slaves and beggars to a Welfare state with its ethereal promises of harmonious living.

Like Aflange, many Greek Americans of the period viewed themselves as model U.S. citizens who had come, or whose ancestors had come, to the United States for the economic opportunities that their homeland could not provide for them. Many appreciated this high-risk chance and found the U.S. system worth defending, especially if their bets had paid off. If that meant supporting a right-wing dictatorship in democracy's birthplace, so be it. The cognitive dissonance one would expect from such a position was not evident in the views of many Greek Americans. Like many policymakers, they accepted the junta's claims that it was moving toward gradual democracy. AHEPA pleaded with other Americans not to “judge the actions of others, especially foreigners, by using our yardstick of life and conditions.” It encouraged the individual to “place himself in that foreigner's shoes...before passing judgment.” The Greek people had been in five wars within thirty-five years and had suffered tremendously. They argued that though “a nation such as ours of 200 million –with thousands of miles between itself and any substantial communistic country – can well afford to take the threat of communism lightly,” a nation of “only 8 million, surrounded practically on all sides by Communist countries, must take the threat seriously.”⁸⁰ Thus their position came out of their experience as both Americans and Greeks though they chose to frame it in U.S. terms. Ironically, in presenting their positions, Greek Americans stressed the Americanness of their position, while policymakers discussing Greek-American reactions to the junta stressed the Greek aspect; if Greek Americans were “ok” with the junta, then it must not have been that bad.

⁷⁹ Harry de Metropolis, “The American Creed,” *Hellenic Chronicle*, June 13, 1968. Correction March 27, 1969 correction. Dean Aflange.

⁸⁰ Leber, *The History of the Order of AHEPA*, 480.

Conclusion

What does Greek-American indifference and support of the junta tell us about the willingness of Americans to tolerate their government's support of regimes that violate human rights? While opposition to state policies typically exists in some form, average Americans passively accept foreign policies that they play little role in forming. Three themes emerge and apply to several cases in which the U.S. public tolerates anti-democratic actions taken by their political representatives.

First, many tend to doubt the universality of democracy. Often proponents of this belief argue that democracy more naturally aligns with particular peoples and societies than others who need tutelage and time to adopt democratic practices. Implicit in much of this thinking exists a hierarchy, even among democracies. In the case of 1960s and 1970s Greece, some Greek Americans considered the junta the most appropriate government for people who were so divisive throughout their history. For these Greek Americans, the past determined the present. Greeks did not know how to behave properly, so dictatorship was the best they could do. One U.S.-based writer identifying as "an American" academic and writing under the pseudonym Angelos Sotiris identified three "essential facts" needed to understand modern Greece: it had never been a truly independent sovereign state, it had never known political democracy, and it had never moved to genuine political reform. He characterized Greek society as founded on "family hierarchy and political patronage" with "authoritarianism woven into the social fabric on all levels, beginning with the family." The author closed with words from "that first great modern tourist [to Greece], Lord Byron," writing "Art, Glory, Freedom, fail: But Nature still is fair."⁸¹ These claims echoed the words of turn-of-the-century imperialist U.S. Senator Albert Beveridge when he said,

The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, the rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, *applies only to those who are capable of self-government*. We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent. How do they know what our government would be without their consent? Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody

⁸¹ Angelos Sotiris, "There's the Greece of Greeks and There's the Tourists' Greece," *New York Times*, July 25, 1971. Angelos Sotiris was a pseudonym. The author identified as an American who was a "university teacher of history and sociology."

For another article in which the writer, David Holden, a British correspondent on the Middle East, takes a dismissive view of the Greeks as non-democratic, politically corrupt, administratively incompetent, and arrogant peoples with a long history of political torture and commitment to "a tradition of orthodox Christian reaction" especially in rural areas, see Holden's very critical reviews of Andreas Papandreou's *Democracy at Gunpoint* and James Becket's *Barbarism in Greece*. David Holden, "The Greek Colonels are Part of an Old Tradition," *New York Times*, May 31, 1970.

rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them?⁸²

Though stated more than a hundred years ago, Beveridge's words still ring true, in a more sanitized form, for many. In the immediate post-9/11 world, it was and is quite common to hear that many of the people of the Middle East just do not know how to rule themselves. This assumption greatly contributes to Americans' willingness to tolerate U.S. relations with anti-democratic and human rights-violating regimes.

Second, many tend to believe in governmental rhetoric. For a nation of proclaimed individuals, many rally around government-defined notions of key concepts like Americanism, democracy, and capitalism. Perhaps a weak tradition of public intellectuals contributes to this. How the state defines these terms differs with historical context. The same words are used, but what they mean changes over time as elite political imaginations of what is possible also change. For immigrants past and present, understanding government definitions of Americanism has been key to acquiring citizenship and joining "American society." For immigrants arriving in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, being American was largely defined as identifying with dominant Anglo-Saxon capitalist culture at the expense of Black Americans and working-class politics in the national drama on race and capital organization.⁸³ As the Cold War and McCarthyism took hold, older immigrants and their children became some of the most rabidly anti-communist people living in the U.S. By joining the "good fight" against the dreaded Reds, they boosted their U.S. credentials. After several decades in the U.S., this was not hard for many to do. Like other Americans, Greek Americans switched from viewing the Soviets as allies to enemies within a few years. Understanding that there were limits to democratic processes when they resulted in anti-capitalist governments also reinforced the U.S. public's support for anti-democratic regimes. Democracy did not just mean voting, but voting within a prescribed political spectrum of possible governments –and some socialist governments did not fall within that spectrum. Greek-American reactions to the junta fell in line with such Cold War consensus. Greece lived under a dictatorship but belonged to the "same world" –the ironically, "free world." This contradiction reveals how powerful and hypnotic government definitions of citizenship and democracy are.

Third, many tend to value stability over change, preferring political gradualism even amid rapid social and cultural change.⁸⁴ This theme connects to the previous one on government-sanctioned definitions of key governance concepts. Americans have accepted political gradualism over revolutionary change because they have accepted governmental definitions of proper governance concepts. Accordingly, like Senator Beveridge's quote above, others must be taught, over time, to behave in particular ways before they can be set "free," now defining freedom as Dean Aflange

⁸² Albert Beveridge, "The March of the Flag," *Internet Modern History Sourcebook*, ed. Paul Halsall, Fordham University, New York, NY, accessed February 22, 2023, emphasis mine. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1898beveridge.asp>.

⁸³ See footnote 88. On capitalist reorganization during the early twentieth century, see Martin Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890-1916: The Market, the Law, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁸⁴ Many have examined this. For an overview of U.S. ideology in foreign policy that emphasizes U.S. greatness, fear of revolution, and racial hierarchy see Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

did in 1952. Most Americans accept an understanding of democratic politics that falls within a political spectrum respecting private property rights, contract law (including marriage), and enforcement mechanisms that contribute to making society legible and orderly. This core preference for political gradualism and stability presented itself in its most dramatic form during the years of the Greek junta –the turbulent, confrontational late 1960s and early 1970s. Greek Americans who admired the junta, like other silent majority types, did not see a human rights-violating regime but a law-and-order policeman who preferred “maxiskirts” and “mini hair” who was correcting the excesses of modern culture. This moral correction was supported by a Greek Orthodox Church attempting in its way to make sense of changes among its youth. Like the increasingly vocal new right, Greek Americans in general, whether Democrats or Republicans, valued orderliness, personal responsibility, hard work, nuclear families, and law and order.⁸⁵

Years ago, Louis Hartz argued for the hegemonic presence of liberalism in the U.S. political experience.⁸⁶ Many have criticized Hartzian views for ignoring America’s political diversity and exaggerating consensus. In particular, Rogers Smith’s case for multiple positions within American political thought and his explicit focus on an ascriptive tradition that granted liberal rights and benefits to those at the top of a social hierarchy brought an appropriate corrective to Hartz.⁸⁷ However, recognizing that conflicts occurred throughout U.S. political history does not negate Hartz’s claims of a hegemonic liberal tradition.⁸⁸ The tolerant, if not positive, response of the Greek-American community, a white ethnic community with double historical claims to democratic practice and commitment, to both the establishment of the Greek junta and the U.S. government’s support for that regime during a decade of widespread political conflict surrounding U.S. liberalism, reflects a broader acceptance on the part of Americans that democracy is *not meant for all peoples*, or even for people with an established democratic tradition if that governance process produces results that waver from a U.S.-defined spectrum of a proper democratic organization. The range of proper democratic organization has proven to be a relatively narrow Lockean view of liberalism that has produced Thermidorian reactions when challengers have attempted to redefine ascriptive Americanism. Greek-American Thermidorians conformed to and reproduced these narrow forms of proper American identity that reinforced private property rights, traditional family structures, the rhetoric of hard work, potential reward after struggle, and law and order in the U.S. and Greece. This was an understanding of democracy as product, not process. Democracy, in this sense, was not voting your conscience or competing against others in an electoral marketplace but committing to repeated electoral cycles in defense of a particular social order.

⁸⁵ This list taken from Levy, “Spiro Agnew,” 714.

⁸⁶ Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955).

⁸⁷ Rogers Smith, “Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America,” *American Political Science Review* 87 no. 3 (1993): 549-566.

⁸⁸ For a defense of Hartz, see Philip Abbott, “Still Louis Hartz after All These Years: A Defense of the Liberal Society Thesis,” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, no. 1 (2005): 93-109.

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