

## **Labour Law and Women Workers: A Case Study of Protective Legislation in Inter-war Greece**

This article<sup>1</sup> seeks to elucidate the intricate network of relationships between party politics and inter-war women's groups in Greece through the examination of the protective legislation issue for female workers. There are many reasons for singling out this issue. First, it pertains to state legislation which, in turn, is based on international legislation.<sup>2</sup> From the 1910s onwards, the Greek state embarked on a series of protective measures for women (and children) working in factories. Second, it was of paramount importance among international as well as Greek feminist circles. Ardent discussions took place both in Western Europe and in Greece at the turn of the century.<sup>3</sup> Greek feminists themselves often referred to the issue as the relevant literature demonstrates.<sup>4</sup>

The approach followed in studying this issue is to examine its evolution over time, recording any changes in chronological sequence. In the first instance, the discussion on protective legislation for female workers will consider state legislation, the philosophy on which it was grounded, and its various expressions through the viewpoint of politicians who were mostly concerned with increasing their party influence. Then, the views of feminists (and of working women themselves), together with their reactions to protective legislation, will be examined. A close analysis of the steps taken by politicians and feminist groups in the pursuit of protective legislation for female workers reveals a network of connections, alliances and agreements between politically powerful men and the upper- and middle-class educated women who spearheaded the feminist struggle.

To begin with it is necessary to clarify a number of pertinent points. The subject-matter of the term which is generally described as 'protective legislation' involved a group of specific laws that were designed to limit employers' authority over their workers (and in our case, over their female workers). Generally speaking, the term 'protective legislation' applies to both male and female employees and comprises laws relating to a minimum wage, maximum of eight working hours per day, and unemployment and insurance benefits for all, whether they are employed in the public or private sector. Nevertheless, the term additionally included gender-based legislation relating to restrictions imposed on female employment under certain circumstances.<sup>5</sup> This article will look at this specific legislation on which inter-war Greek feminists initiated discussion. In fact, the exclusion of women from heavy and unhealthy, albeit well-paid positions, protection and the prohibition of night shifts for women constituted the core of the debate among some members of the Greek inter-war feminist groups. A number of them contested gender-based protective legislation,<sup>6</sup> believing that it would restrict women's employment opportunities. For these feminists, the improvement of working women's position which supposedly would be achieved by the implementation of protective legislation for women workers, could be attained by other measures such as a minimum wage for all, ensuring equal treatment of both genders.

Finally, although in international feminist literature gender-based protective legislation seems to have been applied to the few female workers who were occupied in the industrial sector,<sup>7</sup> this article will not exclude instances of protective legislation for other kinds of working women (such as schoolteachers) in as much as they illustrate contemporary perceptions about women's distinct 'nature' and in so far as they puzzled inter-war Greek feminists.

In November 1910, the rise to power of Eleftherios Venizelos paved the way for the creation of a modern, bourgeois state.<sup>8</sup> The pace of industrialization, however, was slow in early twentieth-century Greece. Although collective worker or class consciousness as defined in contemporary western Europe had not yet developed in early twentieth-century Greece, an increasing discontent emerged amongst industrial workers, whose deplorable working and living conditions were evident. As Leontaritis has

demonstrated, before 1910 the workers' movement in Greece was unable to use its influence in order to affect social policies. Lack of solidarity and unity coupled with an individualist perspective prevented workers from promoting their interests. The realization of workers' collective consciousness was already a reality in western European countries, where radical political formations had been established.<sup>9</sup>

The number of women was constantly increasing among the ranks of workers. Although during the inter-war period the number of Greek women working in the industrial sector was not great in absolute terms, it was growing larger particularly in the urban industries: from 4732 in 1879 to 23,825 in 1907, 58,652 in 1920 and 99,712 in 1928.<sup>10</sup> The 1928 population census does not provide an accurate picture with regard to the number of working women; the influx of the Asia Minor refugees from 1922 onwards had complicated the matter. For example, a substantial number of refugee female workers were not officially registered as workers in the census. However, it is certain that in addition to the almost 100,000 women who were employed in industry in 1928, approximately 60,000 worked in the public and private sectors in secretarial positions. Furthermore, 434,623 women worked in agriculture,<sup>11</sup> while there were a few women who ran small, usually family-owned, businesses engaged in the production of clothes and cosmetics.<sup>12</sup>

The introduction of protective legislation in Greece was related to the plight of workers at the turn of the century. As contemporary sources reveal, during the early 1900s working hours ranged from 12 to 14 hours per day. However besides, or perhaps because of, the long hours of employment, the working conditions of unskilled female workers were particularly deplorable, and women were overworked 'without having the specific rights that are granted to workers in other countries'.<sup>13</sup> Responding to this situation, Venizelos's legislative reforms represented a clear turn towards a series of measures aimed at improving working conditions, and at satisfying the workers' demands without provoking dissatisfaction on the part of employers. Between 1911 and 1912 a number of laws aiming to initiate labour legislation in Greece were promulgated. Particular measures for women and children workers were included amongst legislative proposals which dealt with the introduction of health insurance, wage increases and general improvement of working conditions.<sup>14</sup>

More specifically, after the prohibition of women's employment in the metallurgical sector in 1910,<sup>15</sup> Law No. 4049 of 1912 attempted to alter women and children's working conditions.<sup>16</sup> Providing for a working day of no more than ten hours in industry and manufacture, quarries, and construction. Additionally, it limited women's employment on Sundays in almost every sector (with the exception of transport) and prohibited night shifts in most workplaces (except for transportation, restaurants and hotels). Female employment was completely barred in the mining sector. Moreover, women were granted maternity leave which was four weeks before and four weeks after giving birth.<sup>17</sup> These measures were further elaborated in 1920<sup>18</sup> when Greece ratified the decisions reached at the international convention of the International Labour Organization held in Washington, DC in October 1919. Law No. 2274 increased maternity leave from eight to 12 weeks (six before and six after giving birth), provided for compensation and free medical care during maternity leave, and guaranteed the woman's employment during her child-bearing. At the same time, Law No. 2275 prohibited night shifts for every female industrial worker.

Cases of women excluded from protective legislation were nevertheless numerous. One example was domestic servants. In the mid-1930s, it was not surprising to find servants under the age of ten working for more than 12 hours per day, often without being paid by employers who sometimes physically or sexually abused them. Those affected were mostly young girls who had left their villages in order to find employment in the large urban centres. In addition, a large proportion (65 per cent) of women who were prostitutes in the 1930s were former domestic servants.<sup>19</sup> The hitherto blatant absence of even an elementary state concern for these women is illustrated in the measures suggested in 1934 by the head of the police in Athens for the improvement of domestic servants' living and working conditions.<sup>20</sup> Such lack of concern was only partially justified by claims that relations between servants and their employers were complicated by a network of personal connections between their respective families. The girls' parents usually knew the employers and decided to entrust them with their children. Inevitably, the problems that appeared could not be resolved simply by the mere promulgation of a series of laws, since a change of perception was also necessary.

Domestic servants were not the only female employees excluded from legislative labour reforms. The same applied to peasant women working in agriculture. Very few of them officially defined their agricultural activities as a profession in the censuses, since cultivating the fields was thought to be part of their extended household duties. Here, interaction between the public and private spheres functioned at the expense of these women.

A close examination of the protective legislation passed in the early 1910s and 1920s reveals two particular points of interest. First, exceptions were made so as to please employers. In fact the abundance of exceptions, combined with insufficient state supervision for the proper implementation of protective laws, rendered the legislation difficult to enforce in most cases.<sup>21</sup> As time went by, the consequences of the worldwide economic crisis which reached Greece in the early 1930s affected the position of paid female labourers, as the rise in unemployment began to force them to work more and be paid less. At the same time, the absence of a state social security department worsened the situation,<sup>22</sup> since workers did not have access to any assistance in their search for employment or to financial support during periods of unemployment and economic hardship. Labour legislation was introduced in Greece much later than in other countries, and state officials attempted to apply models which were inappropriate for Greek reality. The end result was the inapplicability of labour legislation in general,<sup>23</sup> due largely to employers' reactions and the lack of strong pressure exercised by workers' unions. In addition, the emergence of state policies regarding labour law took place outside the complicated network of relations between the working class and the bourgeoisie ending up in indifference towards legislative reforms and in state paternalism.<sup>24</sup>

Second, it is noteworthy that the legislation did not distinguish between those measures relating to maternity leave and those generating limitations in women's employment. It can be argued that within the context of women's deplorable working conditions,<sup>25</sup> these two issues were inextricably linked. Childbearing was considered the most important female task.

[Women who] waste their physical strength in a factory or in agriculture destroy our future generation. The state and the whole [of] Greek society should realise the need for protective legislation for women workers . . . Motherhood was, is and will always be women's highest role.<sup>26</sup>

Consequently, the prohibition of women's employment in certain industrial sectors was inseparable from the provision of maternity benefits. State concerns and, to a certain degree, working class demands, favoured state intervention protecting female workers.<sup>27</sup>

Socialists and trade unionists with practical concerns considered protection desirable at the time and even progressive in relation to contemporary conditions. Initially, the legislation for the protection of women was not amply discussed or debated in feminist circles, as contemporary Greek feminism was just beginning to acquire a well-structured form. The few feminist groups established in Greece during the early 1910s were local branches of international feminist organizations; their activities ceased during the First World War but were resumed after the termination of hostilities in 1918. The *Εθνικόν Συμβούλιον των Ελληνίδων* (National Council of Greek women, NCGW), *Λύκειον των Ελληνίδων* (Lyceum of Greek Women, LGW), *Σύνδεσμος Υπέρ των Δικαιωμάτων των Γυναικών* (League for Women's Rights, LWR) and *Σοσιαλιστικός Όμιλος Γυναικών* (Socialist Women's Group, SWG) developed as the most important and influential inter-war feminist groups.

The NCGW was the Greek section of the International Council of Women (ICW). It was founded in August 1908 and comprised a coalition of educational, charitable and cultural women's organizations of, at first, Athens and Piraeus, and of the rest of Greece in subsequent years.<sup>28</sup> As a collective body, the NCGW published the periodical *Ellinis*,<sup>29</sup> through which it sought to 'improve the position of women and children' by seeking to promote gender consciousness, educational opportunities and, eventually, full civil and political rights.<sup>30</sup> The NCGW comprised women from a wide range of the political spectrum and had no evident political leanings.

The LGW was founded in late 1910 by Kallirroï Parren and her closest women associates. According to its statutes, the LGW's objectives included the creation of a coalition among women for the 'progress of their gender' and for the preservation and revival of Greek customs and traditions (dances, songs and costumes): in short, for the interest of Greek folk culture.<sup>31</sup> The LGW was strongly influenced by its founder and had primarily anti-Venizelist and pro-monarchist leanings.

But it was mostly the last two groups, the LWR and SWG, that

had extensively discussed the issue of protective legislation for women workers. It will be argued that despite this debate, the two groups were ideologically and politically closer than their arguments lead us to believe. The LWR was established as the Greek section of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance (IWSA)<sup>32</sup> in January 1920. LWR's main objectives appeared to be a 'purely feminist struggle' which concerned all the reforms necessary to achieve gender equality in society and to improve the status of both 'the Woman and the Child'.<sup>33</sup> As a group with strong Venizelist and republican leanings, it attempted to change the perceptions and eradicate the everyday prejudices of both men and women, and expressed specific demands regarding suffrage. Two prominent members of the LWR, Maria Desypri (later Svolou) and Anna Makropoulou, worked for the National Bureau of Employment. Their detailed reports on the wages and the conditions of women workers as well as their memoranda to the International Labour Office (ILO) are valuable sources for the study of female employment in inter-war Greece.<sup>34</sup> Among the founders of the LWR was its longstanding president, Avra Drakopoulou-Theodoropoulou (1880–1963). Her husband, Spyros Theodoropoulos (literary pseudonym, Agis Theros), was elected to parliament in 1910 as a member of Venizelos's party and concentrated his efforts on the implementation of the Greece's first labour legislation.<sup>35</sup>

The other feminist group, SWG, was actively engaged in the discussion of protective legislation. It was in close contact with Socialist Women International (SWI)<sup>36</sup> and was founded in October 1919<sup>37</sup> by Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou (1886–1954). Gianniou was born in Constantinople and worked as a school-teacher. In 1911, she followed her husband Nikos Giannios to Greece where they established the 'Socialist Centre of Athens'.<sup>38</sup> As the SWG's main source of inspiration, Gaitanou-Gianniou defined feminism as the 'social theory for gender equality; it included the movement for the achievement of such equality on an economic, civil, social and political level'.<sup>39</sup> In short, she maintained that 'women should participate in every aspect of life developing their own personality. The feminist struggle would end when the class struggle ends'.<sup>40</sup> Nine years after its establishment, the SWG brought out its monthly publication, the *Socialistiki Zoi*, which also served as the official organ of the Socialist Party of Greece, led by Athina's husband.<sup>41</sup> During

the 1920s the LWR and SWG were involved in an ongoing discussion regarding arguments for and against protective legislation for women workers. The LWR was thought to represent so called 'bourgeois' feminism and the SWG, the socialist viewpoint.

International socialism greatly influenced the arguments of the socialist feminists; in particular, those regarding the paramount importance of waged employment for female emancipation. However, it is apparent that the perceptions of both men and women on gender roles would not necessarily change following women's entry into the workforce, because most of those who were working were *obliged* to earn their living being either unmarried or widows. Female workers were always younger than their male counterparts and most women quit their employment after marriage.<sup>42</sup> Gaitanou-Gianniou was quite optimistic in believing that 'after some years, waged employment will vest women with the self-respect of a conscientious feminist'.<sup>43</sup> Hence, women would form alliances 'with those men who struggle to create a Greek society in which women could attain their [feminist] social and civil objectives . . . [that is] . . . with the members of . . . socialist parties'.<sup>44</sup>

Socialist women, most notably, Gaitanou-Gianniou, claimed that protective legislation was essentially desirable for every worker. Thus, they supported its implementation for women and children hoping that it would eventually extend to include male workers.<sup>45</sup> Only a handful of women in feminist circles disapproved of the numerous restrictions on female employment, alleging that they were actually limiting women's opportunities. Most of this minority belonged to the LWR. At first, in their reports on working conditions in Athens and Piraeus factories, Anna Makropoulou and Maria Svolou reproached the constant violation of all protective laws, especially those concerning women's wages:

It is a well known fact that women in industry are mostly employed in auxiliary positions and their wages are far lower than those of men . . . Even in the weaving sector, where women workers constitute the majority of employees, their wages are still lower than the wages of male assistants . . . and remain the same even after 20 or 25 years of employment, especially for unskilled workers.<sup>46</sup>

However, the solution to the problem proposed by Svolou differed from wholehearted acceptance of protective legislation



for female workers embraced by Gaitanou-Gianniou. Svolou suggested that the ideal would be the 'implementation of legislation that concerns both sexes and not only women. The opposite would exclude women from the best-paid positions and it would worsen their financial condition.'<sup>47</sup>

Svolou did not consider the issue of women's wages as the only source of distress for female employees. She claimed that home-based employment was equally problematic.<sup>48</sup> In one of her reports she reveals that, while most married women were not officially registered as employed in the industrial sector, they still worked at home. She criticized this practice because the workers' 'comfortless homes were transformed into small factories, where women worked from day to night under conditions which were unhealthy to them and to their children'. In the same article, she attempted to explain that married women worked in their homes because there was

no measure to facilitate their lives, to help them combine household activities and work in a factory . . . But, although working at home might be considered by many women as a good option, it is actually very bad, because women usually work at home twice or three times as much as in the factory.<sup>49</sup>

In February 1927, LWR members sent a memorandum to the ILO<sup>50</sup> arguing that labour legislation in Greece existed only in theory and not in practice. What is interesting is that the memorandum referred mainly to women's low wages and the unwillingness of employers to apply any legislation concerning maternity benefits. This implies that, while the LWR opposed any protective legislation specifically for women, it did strive for maternity benefits, believing 'that maternity should be recognized as a *social function* . . . These benefits ought to be real in order to increase *de facto* the family income.'<sup>51</sup> The implementation of a minimum wage for male and female workers constituted the core of the LWR's professional claims since it referred to the whole gamut of the Greek workforce, but it faced employers' opposition. The director of the ILO, Albert Thomas, was aware of this opposition and referred to the minimum wage claim as 'premature for a country where industry was still a new phenomenon'.<sup>52</sup> In this case, any agreement on a minimum wage would be viewed as antagonistic to the interests of the country's burgeoning industry.

The LWR insisted on the issue of a minimum wage but also adamantly opposed other protective measures for women; its

members believed that women should not be categorized in the same group as children since they did not need to be patronized.<sup>53</sup> This is evidently a valid point since the same protective legislation applied equally to women and children working in factories. The LWR members' stance was that if women accepted that they needed special protection, this would imply that they considered themselves weaker than men, a rationale that would utterly contradict their attempt to prove that they had the same abilities as men. On the other hand, the SWG's response to this view was that 'the advocates of liberty or equality in an abstract sense had always assisted the employers who had the opportunity to exploit female workers in the name of gender equality'.<sup>54</sup> Within the conceptual framework of bourgeois democracy and its legal system, notions of 'equality' and 'freedom' were emphasized in an attempt to transform economic relations into individual ones and conceal essentially unequal relations between workers and employers.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast to the LWR, the SWG attempted to present socialists as able to relate to the reality and specific circumstances of women workers' lives; it accused the LWR and all the 'bourgeois' feminist groups of being unaware of the true conditions of female workers who had to perform household work in addition to their professional tasks. One of its leading arguments was that female workers actually wasted protective legislation, in as much as it would provide a defence against what the SWG saw as the dismal working conditions of contemporary women. It is apparent that such conditions applied by and large to women employed in the industrial sector. It was mainly to them that socialist feminists referred when they voiced their claims for protective legislation. So, when LWR members maintained that night shifts should not be prohibited because women could work a few hours per night and earn as much as they could for ten hours of daytime work, the socialists assumed once again that the LWR had ignored the actual working conditions in factories. They claimed:

Women workers had no choice between day and night shifts. In fact, they were obliged by their employers to work overnight in addition to a ten-hour shift and household employment, where specific protective legislation did not apply.<sup>56</sup>

Gaitanou-Gianniou suggested that feminists should struggle not only for political rights, but also for a general improvement in the

female population's standard of living as a whole, so that they could rise 'from the lowest ranks of society, in which their illiteracy . . . had condemned them to live'.<sup>57</sup> Their suggestions were closely linked to the practical concerns of women committed to improving the lives of all workers. According to them, protection would help to decrease the number of accidents during employment as well as the incidence of 'labour diseases' by lowering the number of working hours per day, especially at dangerous and unhealthy workplaces.<sup>58</sup>

The SWG members attempted to account for the different viewpoints between themselves and the LWR members. They argued that bourgeois women were mostly professional and self-employed women who had their own work schedules and rules. 'In industry though,' they opined, 'women are employed as part of a whole and they should act as group members accepting common rules on the basis of trade unionism.'<sup>59</sup> This suggestion had a firm footing in the international trade union movement which in general supported protective legislation, hoping that by restricting women's employment, female workers would no longer be used to displace their male counterparts.<sup>60</sup> In short, in the circles of the international socialist movement, protective legislation was considered desirable.

Other feminist groups also referred to the issue of gender-based labour legislation, albeit indirectly. In 1922, an article published in the official organ of the LGW's Zakynthos branch praised the Soviet Union for its labour legislation,<sup>61</sup> particularly with regard to the position of women:

Women are equal to men; the working woman, despite her natural weakness, is now supported by a series of legislative reforms strictly applied, and her salary equals that of a man for the same kind of work. Working women develop all their capabilities, but they still remain mothers and women.<sup>62</sup>

It might seem odd that a division of the LGW which was not inspired by communist or even socialist ideas referred favourably to Soviet reforms. However, it should be kept in mind that the periodicals edited by feminist groups were platforms for the expression of a myriad of ideas, sometimes contradictory in nature, especially during the 1920s. Furthermore, feminists often praised every bit of progress on issues relating to women's emancipation, no matter from which country it came.

In later years, the status of women in the Soviet Union was also

hailed by Greek communists, who claimed that women there were equal to men in terms of their social, political, financial and private lives: 'Men and women together build the new society; the socialist one.'<sup>63</sup> In theory, Soviet legislative reforms were influenced by a widespread concern for women's health. It was maintained that women who worked in factories under deplorable conditions would give birth to, and consequently raise, unhealthy children. This concern, which has been also encountered among individuals with a non-communist political outlook, prevailed among members of the Communist Party of Greece (*Kommounistiko Komma Ellados*, KKE) and was based on the need to respond to contemporary working conditions, that is to practical concerns rather than to Marxist theoretical constructs. Yet women who were members of the KKE, unlike their socialist counterparts, clearly rejected the notion of feminism, claiming that it was a 'bourgeois' ideology: 'Feminism has failed. It has become a fashion trend . . . because it was not a social struggle . . . it was not related to historical materialism . . .'<sup>64</sup> Many KKE proclamations mentioned the lack of protective legislation. In 1918, the KKE had already referred to the need for restriction on women's night work.<sup>65</sup> In 1926, it was claimed that women's and children's employment was responsible for an increase in unemployment among men and for lower wages.<sup>66</sup> The lack of protective legislation was emphasized once again in 1929; at the same time, 'equal pay in return for equal work' was amongst the KKE's primary demands for women workers.<sup>67</sup> The KKE continued to support the need for the establishment of a welfare system which would include protection for women and children until 1936,<sup>68</sup> when Metaxas's dictatorship threatened the party's very existence.

Finally, based on a wide array of deterministic theories which stressed the prospect of 'putting scientists in positions of power in order to ensure a husband, a home and children for every woman',<sup>69</sup> physicians such as Anna Katsigra also expressed views on the issue of protective legislation.<sup>70</sup> Believing that motherhood and household activities were the most appropriate occupations for women but accepting that work outside the home was inevitable, Katsigra was amongst the first to support protective legislation in the workplace.

It is apparent that feminist views on protective legislation were based on a general consensus about working hours and a mini-

mum wage; but they differed over practical issues such as the promulgation of measures for female rather than for male workers. Up to this point only the views of leading feminists and, in short, of those who propagated female emancipation have been discussed. However, it would be useful to look at the opinions of working women themselves on the issue. As a member of the SWG, Maria Mpotsi claimed the perceptions of contemporary working women did not differ from their grandmothers' perceptions, in as much as they considered marriage the only ideal that a woman should pursue. In addition, women belonging to middle- and low-income sectors were trying to imitate the lifestyle of the higher wealthy layers of the population. More specifically, it was argued that:

Our grandmothers' views are somehow understood since they had grown up in a socio-economic environment which considered marriage the one and only female ambition . . . The majority of working women today think that their employment is temporary and they do nothing to advance their intellectual skills. They do not know their tasks and responsibilities. When they decide to work productively, then they will be worthy of freedom and equality.<sup>71</sup>

In the same vain, the SWG members publicly denounced impoverished, working-class women who were inflicted by 'bourgeois' outlooks and 'unfortunately put obstacles in the way of their husbands' struggle for social reform'.<sup>72</sup>

The SWG and the KKE tried to recruit as many women as possible into their ranks to change the aforementioned workers' views. The exact number of female members of the KKE is unknown. During the 1920s female membership was minimal and, although it increased during the 1930s, it remained low compared to the total number of women workers. Most female communists were students, teachers or tobacco workers, while there were a few who came from wealthy families.<sup>73</sup> Communist leaders propagated women's civil and political rights, merely based on the fact that social reform needed women's support in order to have a sound base amongst the working class. KKE members realized that women workers could offer much to their party:

The weaving industry in Piraeus is very large and most of its workers are women, who could form the core of a revolution. Their strikes have shown that these women need enlightenment and guidance . . . That is why we should organize seminars for them at least twice a week.<sup>74</sup>

The SWG reacted to what it considered to be a communist

attempt to enlist female workers for reasons of expediency. In 1928, the *Sosialistiki Zoi* reported that the KKE had established a women's division and claimed that the latter aimed to influence women workers in order to exploit them for its own political benefit. 'However, it did not manage to control the trade union [of women working in the wool industry] because women want to act according to socialist principles and not according to the absurd communist ones.' Moreover, it was claimed that each time a communist agent arrived in a workers' neighbourhood, '[s/he] . . . was obliged by the people to leave it immediately.'<sup>75</sup> The antagonism between socialist feminists and communists over who would attract the more women reflects a broader conflict between the KKE and the representatives of socialist reform in Greece: a conflict which had already been expressed in socialist literature<sup>76</sup> and in communist drives to recruit women workers for the KKE which had begun after its foundation in 1918 and were intensified after 1927.<sup>77</sup>

Socialist and communist efforts to organize women workers in trade unions were rather unsuccessful. Among working women however, schoolteachers were the first to join trade unions, demonstrating a deep understanding of 'their role in the schools where they work, while assisting both morally and materially the [male] teachers' struggles . . . This is the reason why female teachers succeeded in earning salaries equal to those of their male counterparts.'<sup>78</sup> However, female schoolteachers organized in trade unions were not always united in their opinion on protective legislation. The most characteristic discussion involved the case of female schoolteachers in Chania (Crete) who in November 1928 addressed a petition to the ministers of education and finance and to the president of parliament, claiming their right to voluntary retirement after 15 years' service.<sup>79</sup> The arguments expressed therein were based on their perceptions about women's roles as mothers. On the one hand, they believed that motherhood was a privilege and that female nature cannot change by equal rights granted through legislative reforms. The task of women as mothers was reified relative to their task as public employees. On the other hand, they emphasized that equality ought to be granted to women in order to satisfy an abstract notion of justice defined by the Christian principle that all people are created equal in the eyes of God. This concept of justice was shaped according to the schoolteachers' particular needs:

It is somewhat unfair to ask for privileges [e.g. early retirement] for those women who are single [and have no children], even though they are in good health. But [married] women [with children] who have worked for fifteen years should have the right to decide if they want to continue to work or not. There are plenty of single women who would like to take over the employment positions held now by those who are married.<sup>80</sup>

The Cretan schoolteachers' claim was supported by both the NCGW and SWG. Considering that Gaitanou-Gianniou publicly supported this demand, it would be interesting to examine her overall attitude on the issue of imposing restrictions on married women's employment. What is certain is that her stance was always determined by the particulars of each individual case. Thus, in 1930 when the National Bank of Greece took the decision to discharge every female employee who would be getting married, Gaitanou-Gianniou reacted angrily:

Until now, there was only the Italian Commercial Bank, a true offspring of a bourgeois state, which refused to employ married women . . . However, we never thought that the National Bank of Greece would adopt the same measure . . . This measure proves how false is every 'protection' offered by a bourgeois state, which is unable to impose its legislation on its very own National Bank.<sup>81</sup>

Was Gaitanou-Gianniou actually contradicting herself or was she really unaware of the fact that, by supporting the Chania schoolteachers' early retirement, she was in fact hindering married women's access to employment in the future? An overview of her feminist philosophy and activities demonstrates that she was aware of the drawbacks that some of her ideas could possibly have for the feminist struggle. However, her feminist approach was directed towards practical concerns, and it changed every time a compromise on her part was considered necessary. In the event, she believed that working women would have more to gain than to lose.

On the other hand, the LWR denounced the schoolteachers' demand on the basis that women are human beings first and then women, and that favouritism along with the granting of privileges should not go hand in hand with true equality. As Theodoropoulou put it:

We believe that every adult woman should be treated in the same manner as every adult man . . . Behind the state's favouritism for women, lies the professional competition of the genders, the pressure for cheap labour which capitalists exercise . . . Thus, women should always think twice before they go about asking for special privileges.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, the LWR and its sister organization in Thessaloniki, the *Φεμινιστική Ένωση Μακεδονίας Θράκης* (Feminist Union of Macedonia and Thrace, FUMT<sup>83</sup>), vehemently protested against the prejudiced comments made by the male board of the Teachers' Union and the arguments of the State Educational Council that, 'since there is an overflow of teachers, male, rather than female, teachers should be employed. Married women should not work.'<sup>84</sup> Within that theoretical setting, an ideal society was envisioned where women would work only when there were no males (fathers, brothers, husbands) to financially support them and having a child was considered a good reason for women to quit their employment. However, most of them continued to work at home.

The LWR's fear was well founded that state overprotection of women's employment would develop into an authoritarian patronization eventually harming the women's struggle. In November 1935 the Kondylis government in an attempt to reduce male unemployment, introduced a bill which restricted women's employment in both the public and private sectors. All feminist groups united to protest against the bill, signing a statement in which they argued that 'women's employment is not a luxury; it is an essential need . . . Thousands of families will suffer from the bill . . . Employees should be hired only on the basis of their qualifications.'<sup>85</sup>

Notwithstanding the diversity of views expressed with regard to protective legislation by the SWG and LWR, a close look at the political profile of each demonstrates that the ideological gap between them was less wide than both cared to admit. In fact, one could possibly argue that a fundamental reason for the apparent discord between the two groups was that they both belonged to more or less the same area of the political spectrum: that is, socialist to leftist bourgeois. Thus many members of the LWR, an essentially 'bourgeois' group according to SWG members, were influenced by socialist principles and had close ties with the Venizelist left wing represented by Alexandros Papanastasiou and Theodoropoulos.<sup>86</sup> In 1925, Maria Svolou maintained that 'peasant women and female industrial workers should have as many rights as the upper-bourgeois women who happen to view the world only through the window of their beautiful living rooms and not through the difficulties of everyday labour'.<sup>87</sup> Svolou advised bourgeois politicians to grant women a relatively broad



sense of freedom instead of the limited array of rights that they initially intended to give them, and she warned parliament that the application of unjust legislation against proletarian women 'could escalate the hate they feel and could make the gap among classes deeper'.<sup>88</sup> Her urging reminds us of Theodoropoulos's attempt at a state-organized trade unionism in order to avoid social tensions and to preserve the existing bourgeois social order.

On the other hand, the SWG and Gaitanou-Gianniou were obviously influenced by the SPG and Nikos Giannios. Despite his severe criticism of Venizelos's labour legislation,<sup>89</sup> on numerous occasions Giannios had supported Venizelos's Liberal Party and its policies. Far from being imbued with the principles of the German social democrats' historical materialism, Giannios represented the 'far right wing of Greek socialism'.<sup>90</sup> In fact, in inter-war Greece many individuals oscillated between the left wing of Venizelism and the right wing of socialism. It is important to note, moreover, that certain members of the two feminist groups had similar ideological backgrounds. These centred around the need to improve working conditions as a means of hindering the creation of a desperate and, by inference, radical labour force, without at the same time either favouring employees at employers' expense or upsetting the existing social order. The ideology behind such reasoning impinges upon the definition of bourgeois socialism as presented in a well known passage of the *Communist Manifesto*:

A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society . . . The Socialistic bourgeoisie want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat.<sup>91</sup>

In this setting, protection for women workers worldwide was indeed based on contemporary perceptions about their 'different nature'. Those who were influenced by these notions believed that mothers of young children should not engage in waged employment. Indeed, some wished to expel women from the workforce.<sup>92</sup> In Greece, socialists and trade unionists with pragmatic concerns considered protection desirable at the time and were even progressive in view of contemporary working conditions. However, its application was not generally enforced during

the inter-war period. For example, there was no state attempt truly to provide for a functional structure and service that would supervise and enforce implementation of the relevant legislation. In 1936, the need was again emphasized for protective legislation for all workers entering the labour market with limited qualifications (the so-called *demi-ouvriers*), such as uneducated or unskilled workers, and children as well as women.<sup>93</sup> Evidently, major feminist appeals with regard to the implementation of legislative labour reforms had not been realized by the time of Metaxas's rise to power, and swiftly, dictatorship, in 1936.

The debate between the LWR and SWG seems also to comply with the policies of international feminism. The IWSA, linked to the LWR, opposed any specific protection for women employees. In fact, the LWR supported the policies of the 'Open Door International Council', an international organization founded in 1929, aiming to grant financial independence to working women internationally and to abolish protective legislation for women workers in every country included in the League of Nations. The establishment of the Open Door council encountered the reaction of socialist organizations and trade unions who believed that protective legislation for female workers was part of international labour law, the outcome of arduous efforts and struggles on the part of the international workforce,<sup>94</sup> and that, therefore, its abolition would represent a retreat in the history of the labour movement. The IWSA accordingly supported protective legislation for women. Its founder, Klara Zetkin, was in close contact with Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou and the SWG.

However, during the 1930s, local political needs prevailed. Greek feminists believed that it was vital for women to cooperate with the established political parties in order to become equal to men in terms of civil and political rights. Therefore, they did compromise their principles whenever they thought that such practice would eventually have a positive effect on women's struggle for true emancipation. It is apparent that most feminist groups placed the vital issue of protective legislation for women at the core of their struggles. A rapprochement was achieved only on the understanding of how important the matter was to the process of feminism in Greece. Nevertheless, the feminists' divergent political views did not allow for a unified theoretical approach towards the *particulars* of the issue. Increasing dissatisfaction with the conditions of working-class people forced certain

LWR members to reject the policies of the Liberal Party and to join other political formations advocating the improvement of workers' lives. As the inter-war period was drawing to a close, the idealism apparent in the claims of certain members of the LWR was facing imminent disillusionment at the slow process of social change in Greece. Leading members of the LWR such as Maria Svolou, forsook their previous positions and joined the Communist Party, which advocated protection for women workers,<sup>95</sup> in the belief that radical transformation of society would eventually lead to female emancipation. At the end of the inter-war period, feminist organizations, having yielded to the inevitability of their movement's politicization, were closer to political parties than to each other.<sup>96</sup>

### Notes

1. This article is based on a presentation at the Research Colloquium organized by the Standing Committee for Modern Greek in Universities (SCOMGIU), Oxford, May 1995.

2. Protection for women in the workplace initially appeared in Victorian England in 1842 prohibiting women's employment in mines. The example set by Britain was followed by Germany in 1891 and France in 1909 (B.S. Anderson and J.P. Zinsser, *A History of Their Own. Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, Vol. 2 [New York 1988], 287–9), and it also sowed the seeds of change in Greece.

3. Employing the British example once more, it is obvious that issues related to women's employment were constituent elements of political argumentation. This is apparent by the formation of a cooperative women's guild, determined to improve working conditions for women and their male colleagues in the last decade of the nineteenth century. See Elizabeth Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State* (London 1977); Jennifer Dale and Peggy Foster, *Feminists and the State Welfare* (London 1986); Eleanor S. Reimer and John C. Fout, eds, *European Women. A Documentary History, 1789–1945* (Brighton 1980), 23–7.

4. Indicatively, see N. Christodouloupoulou, 'I ergazomeni manna, i dimotiki psyfos kai to spitiko', *Sosialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (1929), 90–2.

5. Namely, 'the prohibition of female employment in certain sectors that could harm women's sanitary and moral standing . . . and the limitations imposed on the maximum amount of hours women should work as well as the prohibition of women's employment overnight'; *Efimeris Syzition tis B' Diplis Anatheoritikis Voulis, Parartima* 1912. Ekthesis tis epitropis tis Voulis epi tou nomoshediou peri ergasias gynaikon kai anilikon, Vol. 2, 533.

6. Nevertheless, not every gender-based protective measure was disputed by the advocates of equal-rights feminism. In fact, all feminists welcomed maternity benefits for women employees (defined as 'social welfare legislation' in international literature; see Pamela M. Graves, *Labour Women. Women in British*

*Working-Class Politics 1918–1939*, Cambridge and New York [1994], 135) since it was asserted, both in Greece and abroad, that ‘true equality between men and women can not be claimed when it comes to childbearing’; see ‘I antidrasi kata tis prostatevtikis nomothesias gia ti gynaika’, *Socialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 2, No. 19 (1930), 109–12. In inter-war Europe, professional women were not exempt from the ‘first female duty’; Renate Bridenthal, ‘Something Old, Something New: Women Between the Two World Wars’, in Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, eds, *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston 1977), 488. Bridenthal includes an extensive examination of perceptions on issues such as women as mothers, childbearing and the family.

7. Graves, op. cit., 138–51; Nancy F. Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, CT and London 1987), 121–5. To this effect, almost half of female industry workers in inter-war Greece were under 19 years of age and therefore were covered by protective legislation applied to child labour.

8. Thanos Veremis, ‘Eisagogi’, in Th. Veremis and G. Goulimi, eds, *Eleftherios Venizelos. Koinonia-oikonomia-politiki stin epohi tou* (Athens 1989), 17.

9. G. Leontaritis, ‘To elliniko ergatiko kinima kai to astiko kratos (1910–1920)’, in Thanos Veremis and Odysseas Dimitrakopoulos, eds, *Meletimata gyro apo ton Venizelo kai tin epohi tou* (Athens 1980), 50–5.

10. Persefoni Zoitopoulou, ‘To gynaikeion ergatikon zitima eis tin Ellada kai i eidiki prostasia tis ergazomenis gynaikos’, *Ergasia*, Vol. 7, No. 322 (1936), 204.

11. Ibid; Ypourgeio ton Esoterikon, Ypiresia Apografis, *Apografi 1928*, Vol. I (Athens 1930) I, 48–59; Efi Avdela, ‘Stoiheia gia tin ergasia ton gynaikon sto mesopolemo. Opseis kai theseis’, in G. Th. Mavrogordatos and Chr. Chadjiiosif, eds, *Venizelismos kai astikos eksyhnismos* (Heraklion 1988), 193–223; Henry A. Hill, *The Economy of Greece*, Vol. 2, Part 2 (New York 1947), appendix 1, 6.

12. Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou, ‘I Ellinida os epiheirimatias kai os viomihani-ki ergatiria’, *Ellinis*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1931), 32–5.

13. S. Loverdos, ‘Ergazomenai Ellinides’, in S. Loverdos, ed., *I Meleti* (Athens 1907), 84–5.

14. Leontaritis, op. cit., 52. As Papanastasiou had put it, ‘contemporary societies which use women and children in heavy-duty work look like those barbarians who cut a tree in order to reap its fruits’; X. Levkoparidis, ed., *Alexandros Papanastasiou. Meletes, logoi, arthra* (Athens 1957), 155.

15. Efi Avdela, ‘To antifatiko periehomeno tis koinonikis prostasias: i nomothesia gia tin ergasia ton gynaikon sti viomihania (19os -20os ai.)’, *Ta Historika*, Vol. 6, No. 11 (1989), 339–60.

16. Ibid., 349.

17. *Government Gazette* (7 February 1912), No. 46, 283–6.

18. *Government Gazette* (1 July 1920) No. 145, 1366–72.

19. Aristotelis Koutsoumaris, ‘I zoi kai i ekmetallevsis ton mikron ypiretrion. Ti metra prostasias ton prepei na lifthoun’, *Ellinis*, Vol. 14, No. 10 (1934), 195–203.

20. Such measures included the limit of 14 as the minimum age of starting employment; improvement of the wretched conditions in which young servants worked and lived; establishment of at least eight hours of rest during the day and the limitation of paternal power over their daughters; this power often worked against the servants’ interests, since their fathers or brothers used to collect their

wages. Other suggested measures included the establishment of a governmental bureau to provide employment and accommodation for impoverished girls; *ibid*, 202–3.

21. Antonis Liakos, 'Apo to 'kratos fylax' eis to 'kratos proneias'. Oi parametroi tis ergatikis politikis sto mesopolemo', *O Politis*, No. 78 (1987), 38–41.

22. Gaitanou-Gianniou, 'I Ellinida os epiheirimatias', *op. cit.*, 32–5.

23. Antonis Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki stin Ellada tou mesopolemou. To Diethnes Grafeio Ergasias kai i anadysi ton koinonikon thesmon* (Athens 1993), 293–5. During the inter-war period, labour legislation was determined by both the stable features of the Greek economy, as well as a myriad of political, social and demographic changes in the wake of the Asia Minor disaster. The industrial reality of inter-war Greece, with its numerous small businesses and most of the workforce divided and unable to act as a strong force, heavily influenced state policy throughout the period. At the same time, trade union groups emerged and developed in the context of clientelism with the state; Liakos, 'Oi parametroi tis ergatikis politikis', *op. cit.*, 38–9.

24. For a full discussion of the reasons why labour legislation in inter-war Greece was inappropriate and inapplicable see Liakos, 'Oi parametroi tis ergatikis politikis', *op. cit.*, 36–40.

25. Workplaces remained dirty and impoverished throughout the inter-war period. They were not properly ventilated and workers were employed in humid and dark rooms. Tuberculosis decimated the youth of mostly the low-income social strata. In 1921, the Ministry of Finance admitted that it could not prevent the employment of children under the age of 12 because 'recent economic conditions have made the employment of minors necessary for their own living'; see Anna Makropoulou, 'Apo tin ergasia tis gynaikas kai tou paidiou', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 4, Nos. 50–51 (1927), 3–7; Anna Makropoulou, 'I gynaika stin ergasia', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 5, No. 70 (1928), 3–7; Anna Makropoulou, 'Ergatika atyhimata episymvanta kata to etos 1927', *Ellinis*, Vol. 8, Nos. 6–7 (1928), 145 and Liakos, 'Oi parametroi tis ergatikis politikis', *op. cit.*, 37–8.

26. Apostolos Doxiadis, 'I prostasia tis miteras kai tou paidiou', *Ergasia*, Vol. 1, No. 37 (1930), 9.

27. It is true that the specific measures taken did not operate in vacuum. Within the broader conceptual framework, labour legislation met with general consent on the side of workers and their representatives.

28. Sasa Moshou-Sakorrafaou, *Istoria tou ellinikou feministikou kinimatos* (Athens 1990), 113, 124–8.

29. Efi Avdela and Aggelika Psarra, *O feminismos stin Ellada tou mesopolemou. Mia anthologia* (Athens 1985), 36.

30. Eirini Fotiadou, 'To Ethniko Symvoulío Ellinidon kai o feminismos', *Ellinis*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1921), 66.

31. Eleni Mpompou-Protopapa, *To Lykeio ton Ellinidon, 1911–1991* (Athens 1993), 24–5.

32. The IWSA was set up in Berlin in 1904 in order to advocate political rights for women; it was a younger sister organization and product of a schism within the ICW. Because at the end of the First World War many western governments had already granted women the right to vote, the result was an inevitable split between IWSA delegates from suffrage and non-suffrage countries. In 1926, the Alliance changed its name to International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal

Citizenship, keeping track with the League of Nations and its decisions concerning women's issues; see Mineke Bosch and Annemarie Kloosterman, eds, *Politics and Friendship. Letters from the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, 1902–1942* (Columbus, Ohio 1990), 1–10, 176.

33. See Avra Theodoropoulou, 'O agonas tis gynaikas' (Athens 1923), in Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 104.

34. Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki*, op. cit., 293–4.

35. Moshou-Sakorrafou, op. cit., 152–4. For inter-war labour legislation and the attitude of LWR members toward its implementation see Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki*, op. cit., 293–300.

36. Anderson and Zinsser, op. cit., 388.

37. Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 48, and 'Apologismos ergasias tou Sosialistikou Omilou Gynaikon, Oktovris 1919–Mais 1928', *Socialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1928), 9–11.

38. Panagiotis Noutsos, *I sosialistiki skepsi stin Ellada apo to 1875 os to 1974*, Vol. 2, part 1 (Athens 1991), 102, 316.

39. Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou. 'O feminismos', in *Megali Elliniki Egkyklopaideia*, Vol. 10 (Athens 1934), 870–1.

40. Noutsos, op. cit., 102–3.

41. Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 49.

42. Petros Pizanias, *Oi fthoi ton poleon. I tehnognosia tis epiviosis sto meso-polemo* (Athens 1993), 38–9.

43. A. Gaitanou-Gianniou, *Gynaika kai politiki* (Athens 1925), in Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 402.

44. *Ibid*, 400–1.

45. 'I antidrasi', op. cit., 110.

46. Maria Svolou, 'I gynaika stin ergasia. Ta imeromisthia ton ergatiron sti viomihania', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 4, No. 38 (1927), 3–4. Wages for female workers were low (Leontaritiss, op. cit., 60) in the early twentieth century and remained so throughout the inter-war period. A 1936 report by the Vice-Minister of Labour provided a detailed analysis of wages in Piraeus and Thessaloniki by specialization, profession and gender. Women's wages were generally half of those of men with the same qualifications and the average figure was often even lower than that; A. Dimitratos, 'Ta ergatika imeromisthia', *Ergasia*, Vol. 7, No. 345 (1936), 859–66.

47. Maria Svolou, 'I prostasia tis gynaikas stin ergasia', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 5, No. 70 (1928), 7.

48. As soon as young women got married, they left their jobs in industry and stayed at home to work, performing mostly weaving tasks since they had already gained adequate dexterity through their work experience in the industrial sector; Petros Pizanias, op. cit., 35–7.

49. Maria Svolou, 'I Ellinida ergatiria', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 1, No. 7 (1924), 3–4.

50. Founded in October 1919, the ILO was an offshoot of the League of Nations which attempted to facilitate, at the international level, the complicated network of relations between labour and state intervention for social and economic transformation; Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki*, op. cit., 191–5.

51. Maria Svolou, 'I stasi tou Typou', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 3, Nos. 27–8 (1925/6), 35–6 (emphasis in the original).

52. Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki*, op. cit., 294.
53. Svolou, 'I prostasia tis gynaikas', op. cit., 7.
54. 'I antidrasi', op. cit., 110.
55. Leontaritis, op. cit., 81–2.
56. 'I antidrasi', op. cit., 111.
57. Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou, 'I epaggelmatiki morfosi tis gynaikas', *Ellinis*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1925), 15–17. It should be noted that throughout the inter-war period, the need for elementary education amongst working-class people was stressed. The boys and girls who worked in factories were obviously unable to go to school and thus, illiteracy rates increased in sectors (especially the tobacco industry) where women workers were employed as unskilled workers. In 1921, illiteracy rates amongst women factory workers was 49 per cent (65 per cent among those working in the tobacco industry). Literacy rates among male workers were almost 50 per cent higher than those for female workers, but this does not imply that male workers had any knowledge other than elementary reading and writing. The vast majority of working-class people in inter-war Greece was illiterate, while the rest had attended only the first few grades of elementary school; see Pizanias, op. cit., 137–9.
58. Makropoulou, 'Ergatika atyhimata', op. cit., 145.
59. 'I antidrasi', op. cit., 111.
60. Anderson and Zinsser, op. cit. 289–290.
61. The 1918 Soviet Labour Code guaranteed the right of every citizen to work, irrespective of gender. However, protective measures were provided for women, including paid maternity leave, a minimum wage, as well as restrictions on night, overtime and unhealthy employment. These protective measures were not implemented due to practical reasons, such as the civil war in 1919, and the restriction on women's employment was officially lifted in October 1919; Norton T. Dodge, *Women in the Soviet Economy. Their Role in Economic, Scientific, and Technical Development* (Baltimore, MD 1966), 57–69.
62. P. Pascal, 'I gynaika sti Rosia. Ta ithika apotelesmata tou sovietikou politevmatos', *Eva Nikitria*, Vol. 2, No. 7 (1922), 12.
63. 'Entyposeis apo ti Sovietiki Enosi. I gynaika', *Neoi Protoporoi*, Vol. 2, No. 5 (1993), 127.
64. 'To gynaikeio zitima. I gynaika stin koinonia', *I Neolaia*, No. 23 (1929), 4.
65. KKE, *To Kommounistiko Komma tis Elladas. Episima Keimena*, Vol. I (Athens 1974), 10.
66. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, 216, 286.
67. *Ibid*, Vol. 3, 19.
68. KKE, *To Kommounistiko Komma tis Elladas. Episima Keimena*, Vol. 4 (Athens 1975), 400.
69. Anna Katsigra, 'I ergasia tou koritsiou', *Ellinis*, Vol. 7, Nos. 6–7 (1927), 147–8.
70. Anna Katsigra, *Ta aitia kai ta apotelesmata tis exosygikis ergasias tis gynaikas* (Athens 1929). Katsigra cannot be described as a feminist because her interest in women's issues was limited to those matters that touched upon her field (medical science).
71. Maria Mpotsi, 'I nootropia tis ergazomenis gynaikas', *Sosialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (1929), 63–4.
72. 'Agonistries pano ap' ola!', *Sosialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 2, Nos. 23–4 (1930), 181.

73. Tasoula Vervenioti, *I gynaika stin Antistasi. I eisodos ton gynaikon stin politiki* (Athens 1994), 64–5.

74. Stella Drosou, 'Oi ergatries ton yfantourgion', *Neolaia*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1922), 6.

75. I.E. Ioannidis, 'Oi ergatries imatismou stratou', *Sosialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1928), 22–3.

76. See archive of Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou: N. Giannios, I. Iliades, D. Desyllas, D. Bonofatsios and I. Ioannidis, *Kata ti diaferei to Sosialistiko Komma tis Ellados apo to Kommounistiko Komma* (February 1921).

77. KKE, *To Kommounistiko Komma tis Elladas. Episima keimena*, Vol. 1 (Athens 1974), 74 and Chrysa Chadjivassileiou, *To Kommounistiko Komma tis Elladas kai to gynaikeio zitima* (Athens 1946), 19–24.

78. 'I daskala ston syndikalismo', *I Feministiki*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1930), 13–14.

79. Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 88–9.

80. Marina Lekanidou, 'Prepei na prostatevthei nomothetika i gynaikeia ergasia', *Ellinis*, Vol. 9, No. 6 (1929), 63–4.

81. Athina Gaitanou-Gianniou, 'I prostata tis pantremenis stin ergasia', *Sosialistiki Zoi*, Vol. 1, No. 21 (1930), 145.

82. Avra Theodoropoulou, 'Prostasia', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 5, No. 80 (1928), 1–2.

83. Established in July 1928 in Thessaloniki by Eleni Pangkalou and Elpida and Tasia Antoniadou; Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 40–5.

84. 'I daskala ston syndikalismo', op. cit., 14.

85. Moshou-Sakorrafou, op. cit., 210–12.

86. In 1909, Theodoropoulos urged Greek workers to be united and 'in line with the Capital for the sake of their own families, of the industry and of the Nation'; Spyros Theodoropoulos, *Pros tous Ellinas ergates* (Athens 1909), 5–13. Workers' representatives were advised to try to resolve their differences with factory owners by peaceful means and discussion. Three years later, Spyros Theodoropoulos, in *I ergatiki nomothesia tis Ellados* (Athens 1912), 54, emphasized the need to get workers organized in trade unions. Workers' unity was considered a precondition for the improvement of labour legislation. Such unity could be achieved by state-organized trade unionism, for the state 'is a caring father, who looks after his children [the workers]'; *ibid*, 3.

87. Maria Svolou, 'Antilaloi ap' olon ton typo gia ta zitimata mas. Gyro apo tin gynaikeian psyfon', *O Agonas tis Gynaikas*, Vol. 2, Nos. 22–3 (1925), 2.

88. *Ibid*.

89. Giannis Kordatos, *Istoria tou ellinikou ergatikou kinimatos* (Athens 1972), 179–81.

90. Stratis Someritis, *I megali kampi* (Athens 1975), 70; Giorgos Leontaritis, *To elliniko sosialistiko kinima kata ton Proto Pagkosmio Polemo* (Athens 1978), 259.

91. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (New York 1948), 38. The *Manifesto* was originally published in London in February 1848.

92. Morris, op. cit., 226.

93. Zoitopoulou, op. cit., 203–4. The lack of any professional training for female workers was severely criticized by feminists, while comparisons with other European countries showed that Greece had still a long way to go before reaching the high standards of professional training of the West; Olympias P. Kokkevi, 'I



simasia tis georgikis ekpaidevseos tis gynaikos', *Ellinis*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (1935), 83-4.

94. Avdela and Psarra, op.cit., 82.

95. Communists in Greece were always for the implementation of protective legislation for women and as early as 1918. See KKE, op. cit., Vol. 1.

96. Avdela and Psarra, op. cit., 72.

Maria Kyriakidou received her BA and MA from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece in 1988 and 1991 respectively. She received an additional MA in Anthropology from the George Washington University, Washington, DC in 1993 and her PhD in Modern Greek History from King's College, University of London in 2000. She is currently an assistant professor of History at the American College of Thessaloniki and her research interests lie in the areas of gender and modern Greek history and politics.