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Democratization of Intelligence: Demilitarizing the Greek Intelligence Service after the Junta

Abstract: Military dictatorships critically rely on the armed forces and intelligence agencies for the maintenance of their regime. They strengthen these through the allocation of substantial staff and personal resources. We know little about the behavior of intelligence and security services in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy. This article examines the Greek Intelligence Service (KYP) and, since 1986, the National Intelligence Service as its successor. A principal ingredient for the democratic embedment of the service was a break with this dictatorial past and, consequently, its demilitarization. This article shows that the *de facto* demilitarization of the service was a protracted process that was largely independent from the *de jure* formal demilitarization in 1986. It both preceded and lagged the legislative decision in 1986. This article particularly focusses on personnel policies aimed at distancing the service from its former ties to the junta regime (1967–1974), the “old KYP.” Its methodological contribution lies in

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its reliance on original, oral history interviews with former employees of the service and in its systematic analysis of newspaper publications for research on the KYP. I argue and show that internal organizational factors, most notably professionalization and shifting responsibilities, rather than external factors such as party politics or a prodemocratic ideological vision, are the key explanations for a change in the otherwise persistent military staffing of the intelligence service.

Authoritarian regimes combine power with a fragile legitimacy, making them dependent on support from the security sector institutions, most notably the military, the police forces, and the intelligence services. To maintain support among the military, authoritarian regimes—especially military dictatorships—routinely broaden the competences of military staff and agencies that are traditionally close to the military such as the police and, as is the focus of the underlying study, intelligence services. As such, state building, army building, and regime maintenance become intertwined. These mechanisms of authoritarian control are theoretically and empirically reasonably well studied.¹ However, the literature on intelligence democratization after the transition from military to civilian bureaucratic responsibilities remains rather scarce and focused on formal institutional change rather than on informal behavioral change.²

This article focuses on the reforms of the Greek Intelligence Service (KYP) and, its successor since 1986, the National Intelligence Service (EYP), particularly on personnel policies aimed at distancing the service from its former ties to the junta regime (1967–1974), the “old KYP.” This article’s methodological contribution lies in its reliance on original, oral history interviews with former employees of the service, emphasizing social behavior in response to reform of the service. I show that the *de facto* demilitarization of the service was a protracted process that was largely independent from the *de jure* formal demilitarization in 1986. It both preceded and lagged the legislative decision in 1986. I argue that internal organizational factors, most notably professionalization and shifting responsibilities of personnel, are the key explanations for a change in the otherwise persistent military staffing of the intelligence service.

Below follows a discussion of the empirical literature on the KYP, the theoretical literature on the transition of intelligence services from dictatorship to democracy, and the research method. The empirical analysis, centering on governmental efforts to democratize the Greek service, explains how the demilitarization of the service consisted of two main initiatives: attracting qualified civilian employees, and giving civilian employees more responsibilities.

STATE OF THE ART

Research on the history of the KYP is surprisingly scarce in relation to the amount of political controversy it recurrently arouses. A notable and valuable exception is a monograph by the former head of service Pavlos Apostolidis, the only one with access to the service's archive.³ His work offers a valuable overview of the threats and opportunities Greek intelligence has dealt with since the nineteenth century. The nonoperational, institutional outline of the book has been an essential starting point for this research. Contrary to Apostolidis, scholar Sifis Fitsanakis did not have access to the service's archive. He discusses how the negative social and political experiences with Greek intelligence have led to a frail political legitimacy of the KYP, with a particular outlook on the present and future.⁴ His work centers on the argument that the democratic embedment of the service is possible and necessary. This research builds on the substantial historical section of Fitsanakis' book that pays particular attention to the influence of party politics on the service. Besides these two monographs, the history of the service occurs (incidentally) in research on specific service employees who played a significant role in contemporary Greek history, such as Alexandros Natsinas, first head of the KYP in 1953; and Georgios Papadopoulos and Nicholas Makarezos, both former KYP employees and masterminds of the later junta regime. Some former KYP employees also appear in research on the Greek armed forces, particularly the secret army officers' organizations IDEA (Holy Alliance of Greek Officers) and ASPIDA (Officers Save Fatherland Ideals Democracy Meritocracy). Finally, in a lively account drawing on multiple oral history interviews, Alexis Papahelas' work on the junta regime shows how the KYP played second fiddle to the military police and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the major events leading up to and during the junta regime. Through CIA archival material, he portrays the KYP during the junta as an ineffective organization.⁵ Existing research does not explain how the KYP came to terms with its junta past, and why the demilitarization of the service—such a crucial part of its democratization—took so long to materialize.

DEMOCRATIZATION OF INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

As exponents of state power, intelligence and security services tend to impress and inspire awe. Their inherent secrecy fuels suspicions of improper conduct and inflates power, influence, and efficiency attributions. This choreography of secrecy obstructs the democratic embedment of intelligence and security services.⁶ A service's involvement in previous dictatorships, and especially the continuation in the composition of its staff, is an additional impediment to its democratic embedment.⁷ In authoritarian states, intelligence and security

services are important means to detect and dismantle resistance to the regimes and internal opponents, carrying out activities beyond their legal mandate.⁸

This use of intelligence was not different for the military junta in Greece. The military dictatorship in Greece relied on the army, police, and gendarmerie to maintain the regime.⁹ Similarly, the main aim of intelligence and security service KYP was to contribute to the repression of perceived enemies of the regime (communist movements and their sympathizers), while it also served the personal interests of the dictators.¹⁰

The transition from dictatorship to democracy commonly includes a series of initiatives and processes that guarantees the responsibility for and control over the service is ultimately in the hands of publicly, electorally, and parliamentarily accountable politicians.¹¹ Such transitions can be long processes where change occurs with fits and starts, and where it is unclear whether regime change as a critical juncture produces significant change.¹² Some measures aim at greater political accountability, including legislation that improves control and oversight of the service, the installment of an ombudsman or comparable institution to deal with complaints, and the declassification of archives for greater accountability in retrospect.

Furthermore, the transition to democracy may include the development of systems for the protection of information, such as security clearances, collaboration in international intelligence networks, and outreach to academia.¹³ Other measures aim at disempowering the service by decentralizing it into several smaller services and reducing its staff. Personnel management includes merit-based recruitment procedures, releasing staff that had been associated with the dictatorship, and the professionalization of staff by means of training.

These staff-related mechanisms most explicitly cut off the link between the old and the new regime. First, the parliamentary accountability of ministers ultimately relies on effective control of the minister over their service. In turn, effective control should not be blurred with preexisting friendly ties and loyalties to the military. Second, the quality of intelligence may suffer if the operational choices of intelligence officers are not based on actual and potential threats to the state, but on potentially outdated perceived threats. Third, public perceptions matter. A persisting image of the “old KYP,” so closely aligned to the military dictatorship and easily publicly perceived as illegitimate, could be effectively countered by demilitarizing the service, or at least its top-level leadership that is visible to the public. These important mechanisms manifested themselves in two changes in human resources policies at the KYP: attracting more (qualified) civilian employees and giving them more responsibilities. These two changes will be empirically discussed after the methods section.

RESEARCH METHOD

Original oral history interviews and newspaper publications—the main sources of this research—allow us to analyze employees' experiences of demilitarizing the service and informal considerations in hiring decisions. They inform us on the role of ideology, working relations between civilian and military employees, and the changing hierarchical relations between these two strands of employees. The absence of archival material from the KYP, which has not yet been declassified despite the legal obligation to do so, makes it hard to include statistical information on employees.¹⁴

Oral history interviews with former intelligence service employees usually require a lengthy preparation, especially regarding employees not used to talking about their work outside the service environment. The former head of service, Pavlos Apostolidis, comfortable and experienced with media and research attention, played an indispensable part in contacting four former employees. They, in turn, functioned as intermediaries to get in touch with others, creating a “snowball” sample of interviewees. In such a chain-referral selection approach, special care is needed to ensure sufficient diversity in the eventual sample to avoid clustering friends and peers.¹⁵ The resulting eight interviewees differ considerably regarding age, position, and period of employment.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the selected interviewees showed similarities in two respects. First, all of them occupied (relatively) higher hierarchical positions, at least toward the end of their career. While people in such positions have memories that reflect the broad range of their responsibilities, they may be less perceptive to working conditions on lower hierarchical levels. Second, all interviewees were civilian employees, except for one. Former military employees were hard to find, and with one exception, were unwilling to share their memories.

Most former employees spoke spontaneously and willingly for, on average, one and a half to two hours.¹⁷ Their anonymity, except for two former heads of service who agreed to being named, was a precondition for their contribution and undoubtedly for their generous answers.¹⁸ Interview questions concerned the organizational culture of the intelligence service, with particular attention to the legacy of the dictatorship. They did not delve into any operational matters, and they raised as few specific facts and numbers as possible. Instead, questions explored employees' perspectives, motives, enjoyments, and concerns. This research benefits from the added value of oral history interviews that lies, as with most historical sources, in their subjectivity.

Another historical source for this article consists of newspaper publications. Newspapers publications have been analyzed with keywords related to the service.¹⁹ They mostly serve as secondary sources to

corroborate or contextualize the oral history interviews. For instance, newspaper articles discuss or mention (anonymous) service employees, protests by the service's labor union, and open competitions to hire new personnel that include hiring criteria and descriptions of vacancies. Sometimes, employees' names are disclosed in public conflicts and (former) heads of service voice their dissatisfaction or intentions in newspaper articles. *Kathimerini*, considered center conservative at the time, published the most factual (and anonymous) reports and articles on the service, for instance on recruitment of new personnel and on announcements from the service's labor union. By contrast, *Ta Nea* and *To Vima*, at the time considered center left, tended to publish more opinionated articles, often related to scandals. While the latter category is significant for research on, for instance, political framing and public legitimacy of the service, it is less relevant for the focus of this research on the internal dynamics of the demilitarization of the service.

THE LINGERING TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY AFTER 1974

The junta regime in Greece (1967–1974) was possible due to a politically polarized society, while clashes between then Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou and King Constantine II gave a group of colonels the opportunity to seize power. The colonels—Stylianos Pattakos, Georgios Papadopoulos, and Nikolaos Makarezos—used the perceived threat of communism to legitimize their coup and a new constitution gave them the full means to suppress any dissent.²⁰ The Greek Military Police (ESA) was the junta's main arm of law and order, and it took care of the oppression of dissent. The ESA arrested (perceived) political opponents of the junta, sent them to prisoners' islands, and was responsible for much of their torture.

Compared to the ESA, the KYP played a secondary role in the support of the military regime. However, the KYP and the colonels maintained close ties, especially with Papadopoulos as junta leader until 1973. Papadopoulos and Makarezos both had served with the KYP in the past,²¹ and the head of service during the junta, Michalis Roufogalis, was a close friend of Papadopoulos. Every Tuesday evening, they met each other with their spouses.²² Moreover, from his time with the KYP, Papadopoulos had maintained a close relationship with the CIA station in Athens. As leader of the junta regime until 1973, he refused to contact the American government directly, except via the CIA.²³

The junta's inability to govern the country, its unpopularity, the growing dissent it triggered, and, finally, its foreign policy mistakes (notably regarding Cyprus) led to its downfall in 1974. The notorious military police was abolished, the junta trials underlined a break with the past,²⁴ and military reforms aimed at finding a right place for the military forces in society. If Greece wanted to join the European Economic Community (EEC), which it

wished to do, the EEC required strong democratic civilian control of the military.²⁵ In this context, we should consider the repeated governmental attempts to demilitarize the KYP after 1974.

Ever since 1974, the demilitarization of the KYP has been a recurring topic of debate in the media and parliament, fueled with persisting associations—by politicians and citizens alike—with the military dictatorship and related suspicion against the service.²⁶ For instance, in 1981, a minister pointed out how the opposition always reacts to employees of the KYP as if it confronts “a monster or a scapegoat,” indicating the lack of political trust in the service.²⁷ In 1999, the responsible minister for the service, Vaso Papandreou, called the EYP “a swan song of a mechanism of previous times,”²⁸ suggesting its apparent inability to break with the past. This stigma, associated with the agency’s nondemocratic past, prompted former head of service Ioannis Korantis (2004–2009) to declare his dislike for the persisting perception of “the old KYP. [...] As if you blame someone to be a villain without even knowing him.”²⁹ That is, political associations with “the old KYP” were holding back the democratization of the service.

To wipe out this stigma, a 1986 law (1645/1986) sealed the demilitarization of the service, and formally attempted to bring about a break with the dictatorial past. In practice, however, the demilitarization of the service could have been faster to materialize. To illustrate, even in the 1990s, all heads of service were from the military. In 1999, the civilian head of the intelligence service, Pavlos Apostolidis (1999–2004), made no secret of his aspiration to diminish the number of seconded employees from the military and police.³⁰ And, an astonishing three decades after the fall of the junta, along similar lines, his successor Ioannis Korantis was instructed to “proceed with the demilitarization of the Service with priority.”³¹ Consequently, the lingering demilitarization of the service started in 1974, and remained unsatisfactory in 2004.

Distancing the service from its junta past was not on employees’ minds. As Korantis remembers, “[I]nside the service, I do not think [the junta past] was something that people talked about, nor did someone really care, if I am honest.”³² His recollection corresponds to those of other former employees. Instead, this article points at two ways that increasingly distanced the service from its junta past: the professionalization of civilian employees through the recruitment of more (qualified) civil personnel, and shifting hierarchies that placed increasingly more responsibilities with civilian employees. Prior to this main part of the analysis, I discuss the position of civilian employees during the junta years.

CIVILIANS IN INTELLIGENCE DURING THE JUNTA YEARS

During the military dictatorship, the service prioritized civilian personnel that were politically aligned with the dictatorship, leading to a politically

homogenous service that entailed both labor benefits and drawbacks.³³ This phenomenon of prioritizing political loyalty over competence in staffing intelligence services is common in dictatorships.³⁴ Indeed, in the case of Greece, a large majority of the personnel were seconded from the armed forces and police, “without having much to recommend them, because the main concern was that they should be straight from the viewpoint of political views,” recalls a former civilian employee who joined the Service in 1974.³⁵ Accordingly, hiring procedures departed from the circle of family, friends, and acquaintances of the existing staff. A former employee explains how, in 1967, he was “simply looking for a job.” “I happened to know someone from the [service’s] military personnel, and he recommended me [for a job with the service].” This common practice entailed more than a mere recommendation. Rather, the recommending employee guaranteed the quality of the recommended candidate, meaning that future unsatisfactory performance of the latter could impact the former.³⁶ The employee who entered the service in 1967 laughingly refers to a competition he had to pass. “It was just part of a formal procedure. Essentially, they just chose me [rather than selecting me as the result of a competitive hiring procedure].”

While education or specific skills seemed of secondary importance during the first junta years, the service hired the first of several generations of university-educated civilian employees in 1974, just before the fall of the dictatorship.³⁷ These fifteen to twenty employees also joined the service through cooptation, so they were hired at the recommendation and guarantee of existing employees.³⁸ However, unlike their colleague from 1967, their impression was that the exam results mattered.³⁹ They went through language and essay exams, psychological tests, and an interview. They had to express their personal opinions regarding “the general political and economic situation of the country and neighboring countries [...], and national matters such as the Cyprus and Macedonian questions.”⁴⁰

Between the junta period and the 1986 law—which will be discussed later in this article—the KYP was an attractive employer. In 1971, dictator Georgios Papadopoulos, himself a former employee, decided to give permanent contracts to all civilian employees. During the same period, salaries of the entire workforce, including the seconded employees from the armed forces and police, were raised. This development created a substantial difference in remuneration between intelligence service personnel and the rest of the civil service.⁴¹ Moreover, as an additional benefit, most intelligence service employees were able to stay in the same place rather than being sent to various (remote) places in Greece every couple of years, as is common practice for other public service roles.⁴² After 1986, the civilian employees lost this privilege and wages were frozen, leading to even lower salaries than many civil servants in other parts of the public service.⁴³

Working at the Greek service entailed some essential drawbacks too. Besides the problems inherent in working with classified information that are common to all intelligence and security services, the Greek service imposed additional sociopolitical obligations on its employees.⁴⁴ Especially during the junta period, restrictions on the social environment of an employee led to a politically and nationally homogenous organization.⁴⁵ Not only were employees not allowed to mix with ideologically left-wing individuals, but “under no circumstances” were relatives of employees allowed to be ideologically left wing, let alone communist.⁴⁶

RECRUITING QUALIFIED CIVILIAN STAFF

The first steps in demilitarization aimed at recruiting civilian personnel that lacked association with the junta’s repressive years, and had the necessary skills to carry out intelligence tasks in a democratic milieu. Such attempts at merit-based, competitive recruitment of civilian employees continued, with fits and starts, until the 2000s.

The KYP tended to favor hiring rather silent and discrete personalities rather than the more boisterous ones, in line with recruitment strategies of these types of institutions whose main work is predicated on secrecy.⁴⁷ “A basic element they checked during the hiring procedure,” a former employee remembered, “was to see how chatty you were. [...] What they wanted, was that you talked little and that you were good at listening,” he laughingly added. The service stopped the vetting and hiring procedure if you appeared too chatty.⁴⁸ The service valued discrete and taciturn personalities in their recruits irrespective of the new employee’s position.⁴⁹ The general hiring criteria, which applied only to civilian employees, underwent a major overhaul between the junta period and the mid-2000s. Especially the formal demilitarization of the service in 1986 aimed at attracting more and better-qualified civilian employees and at limiting the number of military and police employees. However, it did not happen overnight. On the contrary, the beginning of the 1990s even saw a modest remilitarization, and only after 1999 did the service make significant progress toward demilitarization.

In 1986, a new law formally demilitarized the new National Intelligence Service.⁵⁰ This move was explicitly linked to distancing the service from its junta past. When announcing the intention to draft a new law in 1984, a government spokesperson emphasized that “the targeting of Greek citizens belongs to the sinful past” of the KYP.⁵¹ In a parliamentary debate on 22 May 1986, the aim of the new bill is described as “the reform of the structure and the role of the intelligence service, to relieve it from the stigma of its antidemocratic activities in the past and to enable the service to develop its work in a climate of trust and respect regarding individual and political civilian rights.”⁵²

The demilitarization of the KYP matched the political agenda of the social-democratic PASOK government (1981–1989). Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou had an ingrained distrust regarding the military rule of the KYP.⁵³ He made both the KYP and the entire Ministry of Defence his direct responsibility and, the following year, Papandreou appointed Konstantinos Tsimas as the first civilian head of service. This was a remarkable nomination. Tsimas had a family with a communist background, and, like Papandreou, he was a former member of the Panhellenic Liberation Movement, an organization with anti-imperialist views that had campaigned against the junta regime from abroad. Also, like Papandreou, Tsimas was deeply distrustful of CIA attempts to rekindle its former ties with the service.⁵⁴ The newspaper *Kathimerini* understood Tsimas' nomination as “a typical choice of the government that reflects its aspiration to maintain an atmosphere of downright conflict with the military opposition.”⁵⁵ Moreover, Tsimas' nomination strengthened suspicions of the conservative opposition that the PASOK government attempted to “change the KYP into a party political organ” of its own.⁵⁶ Indeed, two years later, it appeared that under the responsibility of Tsimas, the EYP had targeted politicians of the conservative opposition.⁵⁷

Despite Tsimas' nomination, the demilitarization of the service stalled in the 1990s. To be sure, on top of a series of exclusively military nominations as heads of service between 1989 and 1999, the service experienced a modest remilitarization in 1990 and 1991, during the coalition government.⁵⁸ Specifically, while in 1990 the EYP announced it had 200 civilian employees too many, as the only bureaucracy in the Greek civilian service, in 1991 it increased the number of its military and police employees.⁵⁹ That same year, 480 civilian employees out of a total of about 1,000,⁶⁰ the majority of which had joined the service after 1981 (during the PASOK government), were moved administratively to other ministries, apparently for political reasons. Simultaneously, there was a rise in the relative number of staff seconded from the Ministry of Defence.⁶¹

More research is needed on the reasons for this modest remilitarization in the 1990s. Apparently, Papandreou's failing health and retirement in 1996 removed a staunch supporter of a demilitarized service. Another explanation can be Greece's membership in the European Community in 1981, which possibly took the pressure off putting the armed forces under increasing civilian control.

The demilitarization of the service resumed only in 1999, when Pavlos Apostolidis was appointed as the second civilian head of the service. As a former ambassador, he came from a nonmilitary environment and PASOK prime minister Kostas Simitis encouraged him to make headway with the demilitarization of the service. In 1999, 2001, and 2003,

Apostolidis organized open and competitive hiring procedures for the first time in the service's history. Open and competitive hiring does not guarantee merit-based selection procedures, but it makes them more likely. Apostolidis considered these new hiring procedures as instrumental in civilianizing the service, staffing the service with increasingly more permanent qualified civilian employees, and thus further limiting the military and police personnel of the service.⁶² In 1999, the service advertised 141 vacancies for, among others, guards, chauffeurs, information technology (IT) specialists, cleaning personnel, and translators.⁶³ In 2001, it advertised 140 vacancies for various positions, ranging from intelligence officers, cryptanalysts, IT specialists, translators (of, among others, Albanian, Arabic, French, Hebrew, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, and Turkish), (night) guards, catering staff, and chauffeurs.⁶⁴ A former employee, who was offered a contract for one of these advertised vacancies in 2001, thought that her field of expertise (human rights) attracted the attention of Apostolidis because the Greek intelligence agency had no prior exposure to human rights—either in theory or practice.⁶⁵ Attracting employees with such expertise suggests that the service made significant progress in distancing itself from its past political hiring policy and embraced some diversity in its professional expertise.

In time, the service proved an attractive employer for civilian employees, despite the persisting issue of relatively low salaries. In 2003, 50 vacancies for intelligence officers and IT specialists attracted 11,601 applications; in 2005, 50 vacancies attracted 4,500 applications.⁶⁶ “I believe we had to see what the market had to offer us,” Korantis explains, regarding his choice to continue the open competitive vacancies.⁶⁷ That offer did not always consist of candidates with informed considerations to apply. Korantis remembers that

some men and women did not have a clue what the EYP was, thinking that upon entering the EYP they would lead the life of James Bond with a Ferrari, Lamborghini, beautiful women, casinos in Monaco and spies. Or [the vacancies attracted] many, most of them to put it simply, that just wanted a [permanent] job as a civil servant, 35 years of guaranteed income and nothing else. Obviously, neither the former nor the latter category of applicants suited the EYP.⁶⁸

Ultimately, then, by the mid-2000s, the EYP resumed the process of demilitarization and had progressed in attracting qualified civilian employees. This merit-based recruitment, rather than loyalty-based recruitment, had become the aim. However, the process of demilitarization did not only consist of attracting qualified civilian staff; it also meant they had to have enough responsibilities.

MORE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CIVILIAN STAFF

Most former (civilian) employees who share their memories on their relations with their military and police colleagues⁶⁹ tend to underline their differences, the difficult collaboration, and at times the competition between them. There was hardly any “esprit de corps” that united them. They did not look for each other’s company after work. Also, they were relatively unfamiliar with each other, because military and police employees had a high turnover that tended to follow the turnover of governments.⁷⁰ Most former civilian employees interviewed for this article emphasize the difference in education with their military and police colleagues.⁷¹ “Those from the army and police working in the EYP were mostly people of action—that is to say, inclined toward operational work—and less interested in the theoretical approach of things,” a former civilian employee recalls.⁷² A former military employee acknowledges the difference between the two strands of employees, which he explains by means of the “more organized” and operationally more experienced way of thinking of military employees, and its constant education and briefing.

Despite these differences, he did not have any negative experiences in collaborating with civilian employees because there was hardly any need for them to work together.⁷³ A former civilian employee perceived military and police employees as “more familiar with the notion of national security, with threats.” She considered the coexistence of the two strands of employees as fruitful, as complementing each other, despite and thanks to their differences.⁷⁴

During the dictatorship, a former employee explains jokingly, “[I]t’s beyond any doubt, whatever rank [the military employees] had, [in practice] they were above their civilian counterparts. The atmosphere was very coercive,” he adds.

I mean, not coercive in the sense that they obliged you to do specific things. I mean, they just did not let you take any initiative. Sure, I need to say that diligent and capable colleagues were acknowledged. [...] But their mission, their capabilities reached up until a certain point. After that, the military [colleagues] took over.⁷⁵

In the 1960s and 1970s, civilian employees were mostly responsible for administrative tasks, while the military and police personnel occupied all operational and managerial positions. The KYP had seconded employees of all parts of the armed forces, but those from the Army tended to have the better positions.⁷⁶ In contrast to the more general military positions, police employees had more specific positions related to counterintelligence and civilian security and safety, such as organized crime.⁷⁷ The three upper managerial layers—the service head, directors, and departmental heads—were the privilege of military employees. A former civilian employee sighs

when recalling that “[our capabilities reached] up until that point. That was the situation. [...] All those years. [...] All important positions were for the military. All of them.”⁷⁸

In 1981, when the PASOK government assumed power, the organizational culture offered more possibilities for civilian employees. Military employees still occupied the same operational and managerial positions, but the PASOK government had replaced them with people who did not belong to the military establishment. Rather, they were military officers that had been sidestepped or discharged from the military because of their social background, ideological views, or lack of skills.⁷⁹ “They were different people” than an earlier generation of military detachments, a former civilian employee agrees:

They gave confidence to the personnel of the service, and especially to the civilian employees. They could handle matters, make proposals. [...] However, regarding your development [as a civilian employee], there was no difference. You could reach the level of office manager, that’s it [not higher].⁸⁰

In 1986, the PASOK government of Andreas Papandreou embarked on reforms that granted civilian employees of the EYP more specific intelligence-tradecraft-related tasks and responsibilities. As a government representative underlined, the formal demilitarization of the agency aimed at an “unhindered development of the new specialized civilian employees up until the highest rank, enabling them to occupy positions of decisive power.”⁸¹ However, like the process of attracting more and better-qualified civilian employees, these shifting responsibilities were slow to materialize because of ingrained hierarchical relations and behavior.

To be sure, the hierarchical restrictions to civilians that existed during the junta dictatorship lingered after the transition to democracy. In this connection, the same former civilian employee who, earlier in this article, complained about the challenging organizational culture during the PASOK administration notes that, in 1986, “I was really fed up with the situation. I told myself ‘there is no way out, no way out, this is where I am going to stay until the end of my days and nothing will become of me,’” and she hit her fist on the table when remembering her disappointment in the beginning of the 1980s. “If only I could assume a [higher] position. It’s a disgrace!” Accordingly, she applied for an administrative move to another ministry, but the service rejected her request.⁸²

Other higher-educated civilian employees share her frustration. In March 1986, *To Vima* wrote about the discontent of about 30 recently hired civilian employees who requested a transfer to other ministries. All of them were higher educated and, according to information the newspaper had received,

they were disillusioned with “the atmosphere in the service [...] that does not differ [...] from a regular military unit.” Moreover, the delays in carrying out the demilitarization of the service frustrated them.⁸³ This frustration becomes more understandable in light of former (military) head of service (1974–1976) Konstantinos Fetsis’ views, who may have voiced the opinion of other military employees, when in 1985 he publicly criticized the then approaching demilitarization of the service:

The management of the KYP should remain with the military. Many years are needed to transfer military responsibilities to civilian employees. First the civilian employees need to acquire substantial experience and considerable knowledge and only then should they be allowed to manage the KYP. Anyway, for the time being this will be difficult.⁸⁴

By contrast, in 1986 *To Vima* published a public declaration of the Association of Academic Employees of the KYP:

We too aim, among other things, at the upgrading of the personnel, namely high qualifications, democratic ethos, abilities, and continuous education of employees in languages and specializations that are directly connected to the demilitarization [of the service] and it is about obvious who is obstructing it directly or indirectly. We are fighting for a radical reform of the service [...], this time with the backing of the [new law]. In this fight we find ourselves alone or almost alone. One of our goals is to rid the service of the wounds of the past so that it will become a real National Intelligence Service and that the Greek people can truly be informed, that the people will accept and honor the service.⁸⁵

This was not the only occasion when employees made themselves heard publicly in some organized form, such as through the labor union of the service. However, this declaration is striking because it suggests fundamental differences between the civilian and military personnel regarding their role in the democratization of the service.

The greater visibility of the service’s labor union after 1986 was a significant effect of the greater agency of civilian employees.⁸⁶ For instance, in November 1987, some civilian employees went on a public hunger strike for additional allowances, and, in April 1989, civilian employees blocked the entrance of the EYP building to protest the administrative move of colleagues and the “party political hiring” of 400 individuals.⁸⁷ They shouted, “[W]e want a dialogue,” “[A]uthoritarianism will not pass,” and, to the then head of service, “Tsima, come down and talk with us,” and they threatened Prime Minister Papandreou that they would take further determined action if he did not comply with their demands.⁸⁸ The strike prohibition for EYP

employees in 1999 hardly made the labor union less boisterous, not in the least because sometimes management reacted vehemently and publicly to the labor union demands and actions, for instance through legal action.⁸⁹

Ironically, in 1986, the service's management created an internal commission on the demilitarization of the service that did not include any civilian employees.⁹⁰ This scheme suggests the persistence of the informal and formal hierarchy between military and civilian employees, also after 1986. Until the beginning of the 1990s, a former civilian employee explains emphatically, "[T]he people of primary importance were those from the army, the officers and those kinds of people, you understand?!"⁹¹ Similarly, up until the mid-2000s, several former employees remember that military and police employees continued to occupy most managerial positions, not only the ones pertaining to military or police intelligence.⁹² Only in 1999, when Pavlos Apostolidis became head of service, the first civilian employee made it to the rank of deputy head of service, responsible for all operational matters.⁹³ Apostolidis, coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, noticed that civilian employees were not all at ease with assuming responsibility:

The greatest difficulty, I think, was that people who were used to working under the direction of someone else, were not used to taking responsibility and decisions. [...] So, when I came to the service, there were people who had worked in situations where some military employee was above them, who took the decisions and told them what to do. When I was at the service, these people were the most experienced ones who should be the directors. [...] In some way I sensed that they were not used to such a thing.⁹⁴

Under his direction, the service's management attempted to "create margins that enable the civilian employees to rise further in hierarchy."⁹⁵ Future access to the archive of the service can, arguably, offer more information on whether this intent led to implementation of the plan. Ultimately, despite the *de jure* possibilities for civilian employees to occupy the highest ranks since 1986, the habit of military management, still palpable in 1999, stalled the shift from military to civilian responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The demilitarization of the KYP was a significant part of its democratization after the junta regime. This article shows the disparity between the formal demilitarization in 1986 and its practical implementation that both anticipated and reacted to the formal change. While the formal demilitarization of the service briefly accelerated the process, the sociocultural demilitarization of the agency followed its own dynamics. This article argues that three mechanisms distanced the sociocultural

circumstances of the service from its formal demilitarization, either anticipating it or slowing it down.

First, the professionalization of civilian employees occurred in 1974, when the service hired a relatively large number of university-educated employees in a clear break with previous hiring policies that prioritized political loyalty over competence. Archival material on the motives behind this decision to hire university-educated civilian employees would enable us to contextualize the arrival of this new, modest-sized generation of civilian employees.

Second, a politicization of the service in the 1980s diverted attention from the practical implementation of its formal demilitarization. The efforts of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou to keep the agency under his control led to a series of politically motivated management nominations, secondments of military and police employees, and civilian personnel transfers. Although management nominations and secondments of military and police staff are structural political currency to align the agency with new governmental priorities, the scale in which the PASOK government made use of this currency caused considerable turmoil in the service. Arguably, it contributed to its modest remilitarization in the 1990s.

Third, the sociocultural habit of military management was more persistent than the formal possibility for civilian employees to have more responsibilities after 1986. Even if civilian employees were eager to assume more responsibilities before the 1986 change, there was an enduring discomfort from both the civilian and military sides. While the former seemed to feel uneasy about assuming responsibility, the latter appeared to have little trust in handing it over.

Further research on the demilitarization of the KYP would greatly benefit from the declassification of the EYP archive. Archival material from the service would enable the collection of empirical data on, for instance, developments in the number of employees; the ratio between civil, military, and police employees; and shifts in recruitment policies regarding education level, political views, age, and gender. While this article made use of fragments of empirical data on staff composition in newspaper publications, a more systematic data collection would make it possible to corroborate individual perspectives even further and to examine whether personnel policies achieved the planned results. Moreover, research on the demilitarization of the KYP would benefit from more diversity in the selection of interviewees, particularly by including a greater number of former military and police employees and more personnel from lower hierarchical ranks. A final way of extending this research consists of further substantiating the suggestions in this article that the political and societal framing of the KYP remained connected so persistently to its junta past. Further research that focuses explicitly and more extensively on political and

societal framing of the KYP and its relations with parliament can show whether this shadow of the dictatorship was as long as this article suggests.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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 - ¹⁸ Each interviewee gave informed consent for their recorded and transcribed interview. They have been given the opportunity to check their citations in the final draft of this article. Some of them preferred former head of service Pavlos Apostolidis to check their citations rather than doing it themselves. Interviewees were free to point out factual errors, while they agreed that the author of this article is responsible for the interpretation of their citations and other historical sources. At the start of this research, the Faculty of Humanities of Utrecht University did not yet have an Ethics Committee that could give formal approval for this research.
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- ²⁴ Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, “The Ghost of Trials Past: Transitional Justice in Greece, 1974–1975,” *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 31 (2022), pp. 286–298.
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- ²⁸ Anonymous, “Φιλόδοξο σχέδιο για την ΕΥΠ” [Ambitious Plan for the EYP], *Kathimerini*, 20 February 1999, p. 1.
- ²⁹ Interview Korantis, 13 April 2022.
- ³⁰ Irini Karanasopoulou, “Η επιτυχία στην Κένυα τον έφερε στην κορυφή της ΕΥΠ” [The Success in Kenya led him to the Top of the EYP], *Ta Nea*, 5 March 1999; Apostolidis, *Μυστική Δράση*. Pavlos Apostolidis also mentions, several times, his determination to further demilitarize the service. Archival material from the KYP is needed to corroborate whether he succeeded.
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- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ Anonymous, “Επουσιώδεις οι Μεταβολές στην Κ.Υ.Π” [Inadequate Changes in the KYP], *Ta Nea*, 5 October 1974, pp. 1 and 9; interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
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- ³⁵ Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019.
- ³⁶ Interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
- ³⁷ Since oral history interviews are not a suitable source for statistical data, this research had not prepared specific questions to this end. Nevertheless, interviewees mentioned several recruitment clusters since 1974. As these

- mentions led to conflicting information, this article will not refer to them. Archival material from the KYP promises to be a more reliable source.
- ³⁸ Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019.
- ³⁹ Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019 and no. 1, 2 October 2019.
- ⁴⁰ Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019.
- ⁴¹ Interviews no. 4, 2 October 2019 and no. 1, 2 October 2019.
- ⁴² This was an important personal advantage, especially for those with families (interview no. 1, 2 October 2019). An exception to this principle was, until 1997, the annual move in the summer of about 100 civilian employees to remote areas of Greece for three years. Operationally, such short-term moves had little advantage. After 1997, such moves were restricted to employees who already had (e.g., family) ties to specific remote areas and were motivated to stay longer (interviewee no. 6 reacts to draft version of article, 10 January 2023).
- ⁴³ Interview no. 6, 14 April 2022. Up until 2008, the labor union raised the issue of the low salaries. See also “K.A.” chairman, Labor Union EYP, in *Κράτος-Ασφάλεια και ο Ρόλος των Υπηρεσιών Πληροφοριών: Η Περίπτωση της Ελλάδας: Αρμοδιότητες και Λειτουργία της Εθνικής Υπηρεσίας Πληροφοριών* [Security State and the Role of the Intelligence Services: The Case of Greece: Responsibilities and Functioning of the National Intelligence Service] (Athens: Sakkoulas, 2009), pp. 4–5.
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- ⁴⁵ Anonymous, “Εποσιώδεις οι Μεταβολές στην Κ.Υ.Π” [Inadequate Changes in the KYP]; interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
- ⁴⁶ Interviews no. 4, 2 October 2019, and no. 1, 2 October 2019. Other drawbacks consisted of mandatory blue aprons for women until the late 1970s, and the permission of the service that an employee was required to ask for to marry someone until the early 1980s (interviews no. 4, 2 October 2019, and interview no. 1, 2 October 2019).
- ⁴⁷ Eleni Braat, *Oude Jongens, de Dingen die Voorbij Gaan: Een Sociale Geschiedenis van de Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst, 1945–1998* [Of Old Boys, the Things that Pass: A Social History of the Dutch Security Service, 1945–1998] (Zoetermeer: General Dutch Intelligence and Security Service, 2010), pp. 11–21.
- ⁴⁸ Interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
- ⁴⁹ The military and police workforce joined the service through administrative move.
- ⁵⁰ In the run-up to formal demilitarization, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) government strengthened the civilian character of the service by adding 151 civilian employees to the existing 851 ones. Anonymous, “Άλλες 151 Θέσεις Εργασίας Προστίθενται στην Κ.Υ.Π.” [Another 151 Job Offers at the KYP], *Kathimerini*, 22 August 1985, p. 2.

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- ⁵² Anonymous, “Με Νομοσχέδιο που Κατατέθηκε στη Βουλή η ΚΥΠ Μετονομάζεται και Αναδιοργανώνεται: ‘Μετεξελίσσεται’ σε πολιτική οργάνωση” [With Bill that was Presented at Parliament the KYP will be Renamed and Reformed: The KYP “Evolves” into a Civilian Organization], *Kathimerini*, 23 May 1986, p. 1.
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- ⁵⁷ Anonymous, “Κατασκόπευε’ τους Φρουρούς του ο Α. Παπανδρέου μέσω ΕΥΠ—Έμπιστοι Υπάλληλοι Παρακολουθούσαν τις Συνομιλίες του Κων. Καραμανλή” [A. Papandreou Spied on his Guards by Means of the KYP—Trusted Employees Followed the Talks of Kon. Karamanlis], *Kathimerini*, 31 August 1989, p. 2.
- ⁵⁸ We may assume that between the end of the 1980s and mid-1990s the service numbered about 2,000 employees, of whom about half were seconded from the armed forces or police. Between 1992 and 1996, the number of permanent civilian employees oscillated between 1,050 and 1,100. See Ilias Georgakis, “Τέλος για Δέκα Χιλιάδες Αποσπάσεις: Νομοθετική Ρύθμιση για να Μπει Τάξη [An End to 10.000 Transfers: Legislative Regulation to Get Things in Order],” *Ta Nea*, 2 December 1996, p. 18; Ilias Georgakis, “Από το ’97 σε Ισχύ! Σε Χρόνο Ρεκόρ Έτοιμο το Νέο Ενιαίο Μισθολόγιο” [From ’97 in Force! Ready in No Time the New Single Payroll], *Ta Nea*, 24 April 1996, p. 37, Fotini Kalliri, “Δεν Μειώθηκαν οι Δημόσιοι Υπάλληλοι: Έξι Χιλιάδες Επιπλέον σε ΕΛΑΣ, Νοσοκομεία, Σχολεία, Δικαστήρια” [Number of Civil Servants Not Reduced: An Additional Six Thousand in the Police, Hospitals, Schools, Courts], *Kathimerini*, 25 April 1997, p. 7.
- ⁵⁹ In 1990, the EYP announced it had 200 civilian employees too many. Ilias Georgakis, “Το Πάνω Κάτω στο Δημόσιο” [Everything Upside Down at the Civil Service], *Ta Nea*, 13 December 1990, p. 12; Anonymous, “Στον Δημόσιο Τομέα Περισεύουν Μόνον ... Πράκτορες! Πλήν ΕΥΠ, Όλες οι Υπηρεσίες

- Θέλουν Προσλήψεις” [In the Civil Service Are Redundant Only ... Spies! Except for the EYP, All Civil Services Want New Hirings], *To Vima*, 4 February 1990, p. unknown; N. Hasapoulou, “Απολύονται για να ... Προσληφθούν” [They are Being Fired to ... Be Hired Again], *To Vima*, 25 February 1990, p. unknown. In 1991, the EYP increased its military employees to 965, although we have no information on the number prior to the increase. Anonymous, “Ξαναντύνεται στο Χακί η ΕΥΠ” [The EYP Dresses Again in Khaki], *Ta Nea*, 12 July 1991, p. 26.
- ⁶⁰ Interviewee no. 6 remembers about 2,400 civilian employees (written reaction to draft version of article on 10 January 2023).
- ⁶¹ Anonymous, “Κίνδυνοι για την Εθνική Ασφάλεια” [“Dangers for National Security”], *Ta Nea*, 20 September 1991, p. 15; K. Bakatselos, “Όργιο Μετατάξεων” [“Orgy of Transfers”], *Ta Nea*, 12 November 1991, p. 10. In an interview with the press, the Service’s labor union interpreted this move as “a threat to national security” because these employees’ names were published. Anonymous, “Με Μορφή Διωγμού οι Μετατάξεις στην ΕΥΠ” [Transfers in the EYP in the Form of Persecution], *Ta Nea*, 2 October 1991, p. 14; Anonymous, “Μήνυση για τις 400 Μετατάξεις στην ΕΥΠ” [Complaints Regarding the 400 Transfers in the EYP], *Ta Nea*, 28 July 1992, p. 37.
- ⁶² Apostolidis, *Μυστική Δράση*, pp. 291–293; Dimitra Kroustalli, “Αλλάζει Πρόσωπο η ΕΥΠ (με Βάση Ξένα Πρότυπα) και Αποκτά Νέες Αρμοδιότητες” [The EYP Changes Its Personnel (Based on Foreign Examples) and Acquires New Responsibilities], *To Vima*, 21 September 2002, p. A16. The KYP is the only government agency that does not recruit its personnel through the Supreme Council for Civilian Personnel Selection. Rather, it has the possibility to recruit its personnel at its discretion. Interview with Apostolidis, 3 October 2019.
- ⁶³ Ilias Georgakis, “Προσλήψεις στην ΕΥΠ” [Hirings at the EYP], *Ta Nea*, 25 November 1999, p. 57; interviewee no. 6 (written reaction to draft version of article on 10 January 2023) remembers 17,000 applications in response to these 141 vacancies.
- ⁶⁴ “Announcement for 140 Vacancies at the EYP,” *Ta Nea*, 21 May 2001.
- ⁶⁵ Interview no. 3, 1 October 2019.
- ⁶⁶ Interview with Korantis, 13 April 2022.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ The military and police employees in the service are commonly called “uniformed” employees, to distinguish them from their civilian counterparts. However, these “uniformed” employees were not allowed to wear a uniform at the service. Their civilian dress did not prevent colleagues from “just knowing” who belonged to the military and police and what rank they had, which often was unrelated to their position within the service. Interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
- ⁷⁰ Interview no. 4, 2 October 2019; interview no. 1, 2 October 2019; interview with Apostolidis, 3 October 2019; interview no. 3, 1 October 2019.
- ⁷¹ Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019; interview no. 1, 2 October 2019; interview no. 3, 1 October 2019.

- ⁷² Interview no. 2, 1 October 2019.
- ⁷³ Interview no. 5, 31 March 2022.
- ⁷⁴ Interview no. 3, 1 October 2019.
- ⁷⁵ Interview no. 4, 2 October 2019.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; interview with Apostolidis, 3 October 2019; interview with Korantis, 13 April 2022.
- ⁷⁸ Interview no. 1, 2 October 2019.
- ⁷⁹ Apostolidis, *Μυστική Δράση*, p. 263.
- ⁸⁰ Interview no. 1, 2 October 2019.
- ⁸¹ M. Papazoglou, “Συνταγματική η Ψήφιση” [The Vote is Constitutional], *Ta Nea*, 7 August 1986, p. 12.
- ⁸² Interview no. 1, 2 October 2019.
- ⁸³ Anonymous, “Δεν Αντέχουν το ‘Στρατιωτικό Κλίμα’: Δεκάδες Υπάλληλοι Ζητούν να Φύγουν από την ΚΥΠ” [They Cannot Stand the “Military Atmosphere”: Dozens Employees Ask to Leave the KYP], *To Vima*, 23 March 1986, p. 9.
- ⁸⁴ Anonymous, “Στρατιωτική να Μείνει η ΚΥΠ, Υποστηρίζει ο Τέως Διοικητής κ. Κ. Φέτσης” [The KYP Should Remain Military, Argues Former Head Mr. K. Fetsis], *Kathimerini*, 12 November 1985, p. 2.
- ⁸⁵ “Οι Υπάλληλοι της ΚΥΠ” [The Employees of the KYP], *To Vima*, 16 February 1986, p. 16.
- ⁸⁶ Only civilian employees were allowed to be members of the labor union and a great majority of them were. Until the 2000s, military employees were not allowed to be members of any labor union (interview no. 6, 14 April 2022).
- ⁸⁷ Anonymous, “Εξαγγελία Απεργιών,” *Kathimerini*, 24 November 1987, p. 11.
- ⁸⁸ Anonymous, “Καθιστική Διαμαρτυρία των Υπαλλήλων: ‘Έκλεισαν’ την ΕΥΠ,” *Ta Nea*, 15 April 1989, p. 19.
- ⁸⁹ Newspapers regularly reported about oppositions between the labor union and EYP management. See, for example, Anonymous, “Επίθεση Κατά Συνδικαλιστών από τον κ. Τσίμα” [Tsimas Attacks Trade Unionists], *Kathimerini*, 20 April 1989, p. 3; Anonymous, “Οι Συνδικαλιστές της ΕΥΠ κατά Τσίμα” [The Trade Unionists of the EYP against Tsimas], *Kathimerini*, 10 May 1989, p. 3; Anonymous, “Ποινικοποιούν τη Δράση Συνδικαλιστών στην ΕΥΠ” [They Criminalize the Actions of Trade Unionists of the EYP], *Ta Nea*, 16 February 1990, p. 12; Anonymous, “ΑΔΕΔΥ: Παρανομεί η Διοίκηση της ΕΥΠ” [Civil Servants Confederation: Violations by EYP Management], *Ta Nea*, 16 March 1990, p. 14; Anonymous, “Συνδικαλιστική η Διώξη Λένε οι ‘Τρεις’ της ΕΥΠ [The “Three” of the EYP Call the Prosecution Syndicalist],” *Ta Nea*, 4 April 1990, p. 12; Anonymous, “Διαφάνεια στην ΕΥΠ Ζητούν Εργαζόμενοι” [Employees Ask for Transparency at the EYP], *Ta Nea*, 16 July 1990, p. 28.
- ⁹⁰ Anonymous, “Διαμαρτύρονται οι υπάλληλοι της ΚΥΠ” [The Employees of the KYP Protest], *Ta Nea*, 9 July 1986, p. 11.
- ⁹¹ Interview no. 6, 14 April 2022.

⁹² Interviews no. 5, 31 March 2022, and no. 3, 1 October 2019; Apostolidis, *Μυστική Δράση*, p. 291.

⁹³ During this period, the EYP had two deputy heads. Deputy Head A was responsible for operations and Deputy Head B for administration and finances.

⁹⁴ Interview with Apostolidis, 3 October 2019.

⁹⁵ Alexis Papahelas, “Το Σχέδιο Αναδιάρθρωσης της ΕΥΠ” [The Planned Reform of the EYP], *To Vima*, 13 October 2002, p. A21.

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