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Political travel across the 'Iron Curtain' and Communist youth identities in West Germany and Greece in the 1970s and 1980s

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In 1975 a West German pro-Soviet Communist youth group advertisement for an organised tour to East Germany promised 'hot days' in Potsdam, combining fun with local rock music and an accurate understanding of socialist regimes.¹ Greek pro-Soviet Communist youth undertook organised travel to Eastern Bloc countries as well. Aiming to strike a fine balance between indoctrination and holiday, such excursions sought to spread an Eastern Bloc-inspired lifestyle through a segment of politicised youth in West Germany and Greece.

This article analyses the connection between political youth travel across what is depicted in scholarly and public debates as the 'Iron Curtain' and the shaping of Communist youth identities in West Germany and Greece. I examine the itineraries the excursions followed and the activities they entailed. I also explore how publications of West German and Greek pro-Soviet Communist organisations represented them, and how they were experienced by their participants. I probe changes to the excursions and their framing by organisers and participants during the 1970s and 1980s. The article aims in particular to scrutinise the relationship amongst these excursions, the reception of policies implemented in the Eastern Bloc by young pro-Soviet Communists in West Germany and Greece and their lifestyles. It intends to complement arguments about the transfer of US American cultural products to

Europe since the 1950s; social and cultural change in Western Europe in the 1960s-1980s; and the relationship between the former and the latter.²

My focus is on political youth travel through the Iron Curtain organised by the Communist Youth of Greece (*Kommounistiki Neolaia Elladas*, KNE) and its student group, PSK (*Panspoudastiki Syndikalistiki Kinisi*, All-Students Unionist Movement). KNE, formed in 1968 and legalised in 1974, is the youth wing of the pro-Soviet Communist Party of Greece (*Kommounistiko Komma Elladas*, KKE). The article also explores such tours arranged by SDAJ (*Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterjugend*, Socialist German Workers' Youth) and its student organisation, MSB (*Marxistischer Studentenbund*, Marxist Student Federation) Spartakus (henceforth MSB). SDAJ is the youth group of DKP (*Deutsche Kommunistische Partei*, German Communist Party). SDAJ and DKP were established in 1968 – the latter by former members of KPD (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, Communist Party of Germany), which had been banned in 1956.

Ideologically motivated travel from 'Western' countries to the USSR and other state socialist regimes was certainly not a novelty of the 1970s. The Soviet Union had attracted such travellers already in the interwar period.³ Moreover, organised political youth travel from Western Europe to the Eastern Bloc in the 1970s-1980s was not peculiar to West Germany and Greece. Quite the contrary: young Communists of diverse stripes, pro-Soviet and critical of the USSR, as well as from several Western European countries, including Denmark, Austria and Switzerland, participated in such organised tours.⁴ Nevertheless, I have chosen to examine SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK for two reasons: the particularity of their ideological orientation in the Communist

movement in Western Europe; and their trendsetting role in some of the transfers between West Germany/Greece and Eastern Bloc countries. Concerning the former, support towards the USSR was increasingly challenged during and after protests around 1968 and the quelling of the Prague Spring. A vigorously active New Left played a preponderant role in the uprisings that occurred around 1968 in Western Europe, lambasting pro-Soviet Communist groups as tantamount to bureaucratic organisations. Meanwhile, Western European Communist organisations, such as the Italian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Spain and the French Communist Party embraced Eurocommunism to a greater or lesser extent in the 1970s: not necessarily in confrontation with the USSR on matters of internationalist strategy, they developed a politically pluralistic socialism contrasting that of Eastern Bloc regimes.⁵ DKP and KKE with their youth wings were among the few Communist organisations in Western Europe that, at least at the higher levels of their hierarchy, unequivocally construed Eastern Bloc regimes as role models. The analysis of these groups, their youth travel programmes, and the diverse lifestyles they advocated encompasses 'shades of red' heretofore unexplored in research.

While adamantly pro-Soviet Communist groups existed elsewhere in Western Europe as well, such as in the United Kingdom, in the 1970s and 1980s, their membership and influence was far more limited in comparison to the SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK. The pro-Soviet Portuguese Communist Party was also quite popular, but I have not included it in the comparison I am performing in this article, since its youth wing was established somewhat later in 1979, allowing a joint examination with SDAJ/MSB-sponsored political travel only in the 1980s. Concerning the groups in question, the PSK emerged as the first or second most popular group in university student elections

every year, with extremely high participation rates, from 1974 to 1988.⁶ Outside the universities KNE also obtained a degree of influence among young workers in Athens.⁷ KNE and KKE enjoyed some popularity among Greek migrant workers and students in West Germany as well.⁸ Meanwhile, in post-1968 West Germany, the New Left soon petered out, clearing the way for the emergence in the 1970s of a wide array of radical actors. One of them was SDAJ, which attracted a number of students, including some who had participated in the protests of the late 1960s.⁹ It also proved to be quite influential among young workers: according to historian Knud Andresen, by the end of 1969 it had ‘turned into a pressure group of considerable strength among young workers and pupils’.¹⁰ *Verfassungsschutz* (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution) data shows that SDAJ had around 29,000 members in 1974; the same agency estimated around 15,000 in 1981 and 1986.¹¹ According to the same source, MSB in 1974 had around 4,500 members, making it then the strongest radical left-wing student group, whose hotbeds were Bonn, Hamburg and Marburg.¹² In 1981 and 1986, its membership was estimated at 6,000.¹³

Although the membership figures of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK were not insignificant, they formed a minority among politicised youth in West Germany and Greece. From the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, the main left-wing competitors of KNE were the Socialist Youth of PASOK (*Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima*, Panhellenic Socialist Movement) and the Eurocommunist RF (Rigas Feraios).¹⁴ A network of politically unaffiliated feminist initiatives also appeared in the mid-to-late 1970s. However, the main challenges to KNE and KKE emerged in the mid-to-late 1980s from a different direction: the centre-right youth, whose influence had been mediocre in the initial post-authoritarian era, gained traction, finishing first in the 1987

university student elections, a performance it has repeated in every student election since. Meanwhile in the 1970s a broad range of radical actors appeared in West Germany, including Maoist groups, such as KBW (*Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschland*, Communist League of West Germany). The various Maoist and Trotskyist student groups managed in total to harvest 17.2 percent of the seats in the university and technical higher schools' parliaments in 1974.¹⁵ The Maoists maintained a degree of popularity until the mid-1970s. Left-wing terrorist organisations, feminist and homosexual liberation groups, and loose-knit initiatives running self-managed institutions, such as squats and clinics that ignored market rules, emerged as well.¹⁶ Such 'alternative'¹⁷ initiatives were particularly influential in West Germany: participation grew significantly by 1980 to around 80,000 activists involved in approximately 11,500 projects.¹⁸ Like KNE, SDAJ faced mounting challenges through the 1980s. The intensification of the Cold War arms race triggered global protest, including in West Germany, from the late 1970s onwards, reaching its apogee in the early-to-mid 1980s.¹⁹ SDAJ engaged actively with other radical subjects critical of the USSR. As a result, ever more SDAJ members criticised the orientation of their groups, gaining momentum in the aftermath of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. Shortly afterwards, the collapse of the Eastern Bloc deprived SDAJ and DKP not only of their role models, but also an important source of funding and reduced their strength significantly.²⁰

Meanwhile, West Germany and Greece in the 1970s and 1980s saw an intensification in contact with the Eastern Bloc until its 1989 collapse. Although this process was not necessarily linked with the West German and Greek Communist Left, the operation of pro-Soviet Communist organisations in both countries contributed to this

development. The Greek intensification of people and idea transfer through the Iron Curtain was the outcome of the transition from the 1967–1974 dictatorship to democracy as well as of the concomitant delegitimisation of the anti-Communist discourse dominant in Greece since the late 1940s. As a result of post-1974 erosion of anti-Communism, Communist groups were legalised. Anti-Americanism was gaining ground in Greece, as even right-wing subjects blamed the USA for encouraging, or at least tolerating, the military intervention of Turkey in Cyprus in 1974. KKE, KNE and PSK found a broadening audience receptive to their ideological prerogative of the USSR as an alternative to the USA.²¹ In this vein, KNE and PSK played a pioneering role in arranging youth travel, especially through university student unions, across the Iron Curtain: since the 1950s, those unions had organised travel abroad, mainly to Western Europe but occasionally to non-European destinations like Egypt, for graduating students.²² The growing influence of PSK in student unions since 1974 affected these destinations, increasingly lying in Eastern Europe²³ and the USSR.²⁴

In West Germany the formation of DKP and the creation of SDAJ and MSB also accommodated the transfer of people and ideas between West Germany and state socialist regimes. Early organised youth tours from West Germany to the Eastern Bloc did not aim to instill Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Hamburg YMCA, for instance, had played a key role in the organisation of youth exchange programs with Leningrad authorities since the 1960s.²⁵ Nevertheless, the role of young pro-Soviet Communists in West Germany set a trend of organised excursions to the German Democratic Republic: until the West German state began providing financial and institutional support to such exchange programs from 1978 onwards as part of the *Ostpolitik*²⁶, it was SDAJ, MSB, and SJD-*Die Falken* (*Sozialistische Jugend*

Deutschlands-Die Falken, Socialist Youth of Germany-Falcons), which leaned towards the Social Democratic Party, that arranged organised youth travel to the German Democratic Republic (henceforth GDR). Available figures show that every year, several thousand people participated in excursions to the GDR organised by SDAJ and MSB.²⁷

What adds to the significance of the political travel under study is its resilience throughout this period against a backdrop of different West German and Greek state attitudes towards the Communist Left. In contrast with Greece, where the state no longer obstructed the activity of the Communist Left after 1974, the government of West Germany ‘expanded the scope of executive power greatly’ during this decade; whoever the West German state regarded as ‘extremist’ was bound to face legal sanctions.²⁸ This also applied to the operation of SDAJ in general and its organised tours to the Eastern Bloc in particular, which were met with hostility by the West German state. The latter revised its regulations on state-funded youth travel in 1977, clearly excluding those arranged by groups it defined as anti-democratic. In this vein, it also refrained from financing the excursions organised by SDAJ.²⁹ Despite differing official reactions, pro-Soviet Communist groups in both countries facilitated a wide array of transfers between West Germany and Greece, and Eastern Bloc countries. Most amounted to virtual travel to Eastern Europe and the USSR, meant to foster positive impressions that actual travel would strongly vindicate through first-hand experience. While this travel did not entirely achieve the goals of its organisers, narrations of these tours continued to circulate in pro-Soviet Communist organisations throughout the 1970s and 1980s. They were a core component of the effort to disseminate representations of the USSR and its loyal state socialist regimes

in the 1970s and 1980s. They also stirred discussion not only among participants, but among the many more youth that read about them.

This article describes this travel as a case of a hybrid form of tourism, which in German could be translated as *Polittourismus*³⁰ (political tourism or travel). Participation in such travel patterns lends support to historians Ellen Furlough and Shelley Baranowski's challenge of several scholars' portrayal of contemporary tourism as essentially 'escape' from routine.³¹ To a greater or lesser extent, these Communists approached leisure and, more broadly, lifestyle, as interconnected with politics. In approaching political tourism, I exclude travel of West German and Greek pro-Soviet functionaries to the Eastern Bloc to participate in official delegations. Although a clear and total distinction between the two is hard to defend, delegation-related mobility was largely not meant to include leisure time and was experienced by participating SDAJ and KNE cadres as akin to work and not at all tourism.³² Moreover, delegations usually comprised a few cadres, while political youth tourism addressed a broader circle of participants.³³

The article draws on diverse sources to highlight the organisations' official discourse on political travel to the Eastern Bloc and its impact on participants. These include newspaper articles and official organisational documents pertaining to the arrangement and appraisal of the tours, oral testimonies and written autobiographies. In utilising such material, I did not seek a representative sample to distill quantitative data. In line with historian Alessandro Portelli, I believe that oral testimonies are unreliable sources with regard to factual validity.³⁴ Rather, those testimonies and autobiographies have helped me explore the range of travel experiences of young pro-

Soviet Communists of differing rank in the groups. I approached them from a post-positivist perspective: I particularly considered the impact of any events that occurred between the analysed era and the point when the interview was taken.

The study of transnational flows and youth lifestyles in the 1960s-1980s

The dissemination of North American cultural patterns in particular has proven to be at the fulcrum of identity making in post-World War II Europe, helping young people develop lifestyles distinct from those of their parents.³⁵ Scholars stressing the impact of such cultural patterns on youth cultures have been increasingly reluctant to employ the term ‘cultural Americanisation’, a term which may point to the top-down imposition of specific cultural politics, while what transpired, in their view, was a selective reception and resignification of American cultural products by subjects, some of which were even critical of the foreign policy of the USA.³⁶ Whereas most relevant works analyse the 1950s and 1960s, American Studies expert Rob Kroes offers a more ambitious thesis, arguing that ‘generation upon generation of youngsters’ growing up in different European settings have been affected by American cultural products since the 1950s. These patterns have helped spread ‘non-conventionality, informality, and a sense of freedom of choice’, including sexual liberalisation. Kroes employs the term ‘Americanisation’ only if understood as a ‘black box in the simple diagram of cultural transmission and reception’: in this black box, messages are ‘translated’, ‘decontextualised and recontextualised’ in order to suit the receivers’ frame of reference.³⁷

Nevertheless, there is no unanimity among scholars about the impact of transfers from North America to Western Europe on social and cultural changes in the latter. Historian Arthur Marwick argues that cultural transformations, such as more sexual freedom, the creation of a vast market for and by the youth and the spread of a spirit of ‘doing your own thing’, are elements of a ‘cultural revolution.’ This has appeared in the West since the long 1960s (ca. 1958-ca. 1974).³⁸ However, in contrast with Kroes, he stresses the role of not merely American, but, more broadly, intra-Western flows of cultural patterns and people to the initiation of this ‘revolution’. In addition, Marwick contends that this ‘cultural revolution’ did not solely affect the youth: emerging youth subcultures, as he calls them, interacted with various other social groups, which contributed to and were influenced by profound cultural transformations.

The concrete transfers of people and ideas that shaped cultural change in general and youth lifestyles in particular in Western Europe in the 1970s and 1980s have so far remained underexplored. Recent works have begun to analyse a wide array of cultural products shaping diverse segments of Western European youth. They have stressed, for instance, a ‘re-invention of national tradition’ in Greece in the 1960s-1970s.³⁹ I wish to encourage more research on this variety of cultural influence, arguing that transfers from the Eastern Bloc to Western Europe were part of this puzzle: a proportion of Western Communist youth considered adopting them.

Scholars have been increasingly examining cultural transfers from the West, especially from the USA, to Eastern European countries and the USSR during the Cold War.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, transnational flows from the Eastern Bloc to the West and

their impact on the lifestyle of young people residing in the latter have hitherto remained largely unexplored. One of the very few exceptions is a remark made by historians Konrad Jarausch and Hannes Siegrist: in defining ‘Americanisation’ and ‘Sovietisation’ as processes of political, social, cultural and economic transformation that affected West and East Germany, respectively, they note an ‘irony’, namely that a segment of West German Communist youth underwent a self-Sovietisation. However, they do not elaborate further on this phenomenon.⁴¹ Rather than labelling their impact as akin to self-Sovietisation, I employ the term ‘black box’ for these transfers as well: although cultural production in state socialist regimes was meant to offer organically coherent wholes and fixed meanings,⁴² their reception varied. Political youth travel from Western to Eastern Europe helped vindicate an alternative to capitalism modernity, resting on identification with the ideological orientation of Eastern Bloc regimes and their lifestyles. Such a connectivity, however, did not rest on uniform understandings of the Soviet Union and its loyal regimes: while pro-Soviet Communist youth organisations in West Germany and Greece clearly designated Eastern Bloc regimes as role models and were also financially supported by them, they did not embrace the entirety of Eastern Bloc lifestyles.⁴³

In devising their version of Eastern bloc-inspired modernity, which they expected the tours in question to vindicate, SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK demonstrated an ambivalent attitude towards intra-Western flows: they discerned a clear-cut dichotomy between the policies implemented by ‘capitalist’ and ‘socialist’ regimes, a taxonomy which the tours they arranged were expected to vindicate. However, they did not wish to eliminate all cultural patterns which intra-Western flows helped spread among young Greeks and West Germans. Therefore, the youth lifestyles they

aimed to reinforce through such excursions were not necessarily the opposite of what relevant scholarship has depicted as American-inspired youth cultures in Western Europe. To demonstrate this complex relationship, the article addresses their attitude towards the hedonistic spirit of 'doing your own thing' and a transformation of sexual norms, which historians depict as core components also of such youth cultures. These were also extensively addressed in the 'youth' discourse of the groups in question. My analysis proceeds in four steps: first, I address the standardisation of political youth travel arrangements from West Germany and Greece to the Eastern Bloc countries by the mid-1970s. Despite such standardisation the following sections show how young West German and Greek Communists represented and experienced the policies of Eastern Bloc regimes and lifestyles in the visited locations as a black box. The second and third sections demonstrate that the organisers wished the excursions to serve as a combination of indoctrination and leisure, which, however, they understood in somewhat diverging ways. The second section analyses the former element, showing that the tours in question were carefully planned and aimed to instil discipline in their participants. Thus, they clearly differed from informal cross-border travel, in which other radical left-wingers engaged 'around 1968' and the 1970s and which, in contrast with the excursions in question, have been analysed in depth by historians.⁴⁴ The third section addresses the leisure element in this form of travel, showing, simultaneously, that as the 1980s progressed, relevant travel reports put growing emphasis on the pleasure of East European tourism. Finally, the fourth section shows how travel to the Eastern Bloc was meant to vindicate different understandings of sexual norms there: 'sexual restraint' for the Greeks and 'sexual freedom' for the West Germans.

Package tours: a Communist version

Before the spiral of events that brought an end to the state socialist regimes ruling Eastern Europe and the USSR, a number of youngsters aligned with or leaning towards KNE and PSK in Greece or SDAJ and MSB in West Germany had travelled to those countries as participants in ideologically-motivated tours. This section will outline the efforts of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK to standardise their arrangement swiftly across the Iron Curtain to indoctrinate participants.

The groups offered such tours at least once annually in collaboration with travel agencies controlled by their parent Parties: hansa-tourist (ht), which was associated with DKP, and LEV-Tours, which informally represented the interests of KKE and KNE. The youth and student organisations also cooperated with travel institutions that addressed young people in Eastern Europe and the USSR. These were, for instance, *Sputnik*, the travel agency of the Komsomol, the youth organisation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and *Jugendtourist* (Young Tourist) in the GDR, for the transportation and stay of their participants in the USSR and Eastern Europe.⁴⁵ Tours lasted one to two weeks. Neither the West German nor Greek pro-Soviet Communist youth groups limited these excursions to a small circle of functionaries: unaffiliated youngsters who may have been sympathisers and were interested in Eastern Bloc life were welcomed. According to FDJ reports, several SDAJ/MSB tour participants to East Germany were not officially aligned with the group. Similarly, KNE's student group contributed to the organisation of tours through the Iron Curtain available to any interested graduating student.⁴⁶ These

student excursions proliferated until the early 1980s; simultaneously from the mid-1970s to the late 1980s, KNE co-arranged travel with LEV-Tours to the Eastern Bloc for youth regardless of student status.⁴⁷ All such trips were akin to package tours: young people could book individually through the groups or through LEV-Tours. Two itinerary types can be discerned: the first centred on a particular location somewhere in Eastern Europe or the USSR, such as in Moscow in 1980, site of the Olympic Games.⁴⁸ Visitors stayed at vacation campsites, youth hotels and hostels, where they usually had the opportunity to mingle with comrades of theirs from several Western and Eastern European countries.⁴⁹ They were based at specific sites but visited nearby destinations. The second, expanded itinerary type included excursions to several places in the destination country.⁵⁰

The programme of these excursions appeared in relevant advertisements in *elan* and *Odigitis*, the publications of SDAJ and KNE, respectively.⁵¹ The former started publicising this kind of political trip in 1968. Initially, the advertisements consisted of a very brief text mentioning the destination (at first, limited to the USSR, GDR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia) and the travel dates.⁵² The magazine began to present these travel programmes in a more systematic manner after the World Festival of Youth and Students, organised by the World Federation of the Democratic Youth (WFDY)⁵³, in 1973. Young West German festival participants were not necessarily affiliated with left-wing, let alone pro-Communist, youth groups. For example, members of the *Junge Union* (Youth Union), the youth wing of the Christian Democratic Union, also took part.⁵⁴ This occasion, however, provided SDAJ and other DKP-affiliated organisations with the opportunity to host a significant cohort of cadres, members and sympathisers. Shortly afterwards, *elan* began to publish an

annual travel guide in collaboration with *ht* and *rote blätter*, the MSB magazine, ‘following the relevant request from its readers’, as *elan* claimed, advertising all organised excursions offered by SDAJ. These destinations were mainly limited to Eastern Europe and the USSR.⁵⁵ In contrast to the late 1960s and early 1970s, relevant advertisements in *elan* now contained detailed tour itineraries and descriptions of activities.

There was an exception, however, to this process of standardisation: the excursions through the Iron Curtain pursued by Greek student migrants living in West Germany in the 1970s and 1980s and affiliated with KNE/PSK. Their members often travelled to East Germany informally, without KNE/PSK involvement. Youth cultural associations that addressed Greek migrants in West Germany and were aligned with KNE organised tours to East Germany, such as to Potsdam, too. KKE members regardless of age also tried to organise travel from West Germany to the USSR through Greek communities (*Gemeinde*), such as that of Hamburg.⁵⁶ Such organised tours did not take place at regular intervals, however.

Serious (fun)

In embracing the same standardised arrangements in their tours through the Iron Curtain, SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK devised a form of political travel that they wished to revolve around ideological commitment and pleasure. Pleasure had functioned as a core component of youth culture in West Germany and Greece since its inception already in the late 1950s. This was exemplified by a hedonistic attitude of having fun while you’re young, experienced in commercial leisure spaces

attracting young patrons, such as cinemas and dance halls. This development affected first the urban youth and subsequently spilled over into rural areas - in the case of Greece from the 1980s onwards, especially thanks to the spread of the cafeterias there.⁵⁷ Intra-Western flows of cultural transfers, such as of British and American rock music, which were screened, broadcast, or performed in these venues, ignited and shaped this spirit in both countries from the very beginning.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the spirit of hedonism that spread among young people in Western Europe should not be attributed only to such transnational flows: in developing a spirit of 'doing your own thing', participants in 'alternative' initiatives were also attracted by lifestyles flourishing in some Asian countries such as India. Part and parcel of Western European youth's hedonistic attitudes was the spread of informally arranged youth travel in West Germany and Greece since the 1960s. In both countries, youth participation in tours arranged by not-for-profit or commercial travel agencies was limited; most opted for spontaneous travel: hitch-hiking or, since 1972, Interrail. In West Germany youth peer groups mixing men and women engaged in such excursions as early as the 1960s; the trend began to gain momentum in Greece in the 1970s. Young West German travellers particularly appreciated cross-border travel, especially to other Western countries.⁵⁹ In this vein, some radical left-wingers from North America and Western Europe engaged 'around 1968' and in the 1970s in informal travel mainly within the West, but also to South Asia, combining hedonism and contact with radical groups abroad.

SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK sought to imbue youth leisure with political meaning, but in different ways. Drawing on a bipolar model endorsed by the Greek Left in the 1950s, KNE and PSK employed a rigorous taxonomy, defining cultural products as

either 'progressive' or supporting the 'American Way of Life'. They used the latter to address cultural products stemming mainly from the USA but also from the 'capitalist world' in general. They associated the 'American Way of Life' with individualism and political apathy. In their view a 'summer way of life' with holidays totally detached from political discussion was yet another insidious weapon of imperialism.⁶⁰ By contrast, SDAJ/MSB did not offer such a clear categorisation of cultural patterns in their publications. One way or another, KNE/PSK and SDAJ/MSB did not serve as bastions of resistance against hedonistic youth lifestyles, but were ambivalent towards them. Politicised leisure, including travel, did not have to be a killjoy in their view. The spirit that the SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK aimed to associate with excursions, as is shown in this and the next section, was akin to that of *serious fun*. This term was employed by historian Anne Gorsuch, who aimed to show that late Stalinist Soviet travel experiences combined recreation with indoctrination.⁶¹ This was made clear in the publications of the groups in question, which labelled these organised tours a mixture of 'leisure and accumulation of information' about state socialist regimes.⁶²

Pro-Soviet Communist youth groups in both countries initially placed more emphasis on politics in the narrow sense, when publicising these tours. Their 'accumulation of information' clearly reflected their ideological orientation, presenting Eastern Bloc policies as an alternative to the 'capitalist' countries' path to modernity. This was a staple of the tours in question throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Their organisers maintained that the destination countries combined technological innovation with the elimination of social class barriers, with citizens happy and committed to Communist ideals. They stressed in particular that, in contrast to the 'capitalist world', education and healthcare in the USSR and its allied regimes were available to all.⁶³ Pro-Soviet

Communist youth groups in both countries squabbled with other left-wingers, such as Maoists, who claimed the USSR had been controlled by a ‘new bourgeois class’ since Nikita Khrushchev’s rule.⁶⁴ In defending the Soviet Union and its allies, the West German and Greek pro-Soviet Communist groups argued that these regimes could serve as a solid reference point for the vision of socialism that West German and Greek societies could implement.

To ensure this ‘accumulation of information’, these tours rested on a structured programme. This deviated from the spirit of spontaneity manifest in the political informal travel of other radical left-wingers, since the groups in question aimed to forge disciplined militants. This programme foresaw that participants would contribute to long discussions about interpretations of Marxist-Leninism endorsed by the USSR and its allied regimes as well as about their policies. Discussion topics were topical: in the 1980s, for instance, they stressed the opposition of state socialist regimes and the pro-Soviet Communist organisations in Western Europe to the deployment of MGM-31 Pershing and cruise missiles in Western Europe.⁶⁵ Beyond these discussions, the ‘accumulation of information’ included visits to local institutions, such as schools and factories. These trips also entailed a reflection on fascism in recent European history from the perspective endorsed by the state socialist regimes, which stressed the ‘glorious’ resistance against the forces of National Socialism and Fascism during the interwar period and the Second World War, skipping references to the extermination of the Jews. In the case of travel to East Germany, relevant commemoration practices included visits to Sachsenhausen^{66, 67}. Among those involved in indoctrination attempts during these excursions were older participants like the East German scholars who gave lectures at the campsite near the

Scharmützelsee in East Germany, a key destination of organised political tourism from West Germany. While the participants were young, their experience was determined by people of multiple generations.

The political concerns raised by the West German and Greek pro-Soviet Communist organisations during the tours were not exactly the same, reflecting how each society was split during the Cold War. In the early 1970s, SDAJ and FDJ used gatherings in the East German Scharmützelsee camp to highlight the issue of the recognition of the GDR by the Federal Republic of Germany, demanding that the West German government not renege on its promise to establish diplomatic ties.⁶⁸ The PSK's Eastern Bloc excursions in the mid-to-late 1970s entailed meetings with Greek political refugees living there since the end of the Greek Civil War in 1949. The Greek state had stripped them of their citizenship and it was not until PASOK assumed power in the 1980s that most, and only those who identified as 'Greek' and not 'Macedonian', were allowed to return. In the mid-to-late 1970s, KNE and KKE campaigned for the refugees, publishing in *Odigitis* extensive reports of meetings with them and their children and stressing these groups' Greek national identity. Visits to locations such as Beloianisz village in Hungary, where Greek political refugees lived, figured prominently in KNE and PSK excursions.⁶⁹ By contrast, these locations were not part of the itineraries followed by members and sympathisers of SDAJ and MSB.

One way or another, this tourism was meant as an eye opener for participants. Nevertheless, while other young radical West Germans and Greeks who increasingly engaged in informal cross-border travel could freely mingle with local populations,

this did not apply to participants in these excursions: in the case of the GDR, they were expected to be accompanied by FDJ functionaries and members. The purported illuminating character of these excursions was a case of staged authenticity, to borrow a term introduced by Dean MacCannell, expert in landscape architecture. According to him, ‘a tourist’s desire to share in the real life of the places visited, or at least to see that life as it is really lived’ also applies to participants in these political tours.⁷⁰ What tourists in general encounter, according to MacCannell, is a carefully selected performance of what was supposed to be the ‘authentic’ way of life in tourist resorts. In the tours under study, strict restrictions on the traveller mobility also achieved this aim: spontaneous visits to East German homes were not part of the itinerary, much less contact with dissident voices.

Did such tours achieve the political goals set by the pro-Soviet Communist youth groups in West Germany and Greece? Participants did not always experience them as a vindication of the superiority of state socialist regimes. Some frustration surfaces in the narratives of Greek student migrants in West Germany who were KNE functionaries in the 1970s-1980s and who are no longer members of KKE. Nikitas Apostolidis, in describing tours to East Germany in the 1970s-1980s, both informal and organised by KNE and its youth cultural associations, did not focus on encounters with jubilant workers and students. By contrast, he stressed that ‘I felt that the [East German regime] made many mistakes (...) we tried to justify many mistakes, you cannot justify [the Berlin] Wall, we justified them, but knew that they were wrong’.⁷¹ His testimony touched upon a taboo for the KNE official narrative, namely restrictions on individual liberties in state socialist regimes. Available narratives from SDAJ functionaries and members indicate that the group did not totally fulfil its goals

through its excursions, either. In this case, both oral testimonies and written autobiographies provide important insights, such as former SDAJ functionary Wilfried Reckert's autobiography, written after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and published in 2006.⁷² As Andresen aptly remarks, his narrative about his participation in the activities of SDAJ and DKP is often imbued with 'shame' and has a self-critical tone: he states quite clearly that the success of Eastern Bloc excursions was 'modest'.⁷³

The scepticism of narrators such as Stellakis and Reckert towards the excursions may draw on their thoughts during the 1970s and 1980s, especially after 1989. It was at this point that the Eastern Block collapsed, and some KNE/PSK and SDAJ/MSB members withdrew from the groups, factors that helped them make public potential ambivalence experienced during their tours to state socialist countries. Oral testimonies and written autobiographies certainly bear the imprint of the era in which they appeared. The demise of state socialism in Eastern Europe and the USSR has served as a 'biographical turning point', as defined by sociologist Gabriele Rosenthal, namely as an experience that leads to a different interpretation of the narrator's past, present and future.⁷⁴ Andresen argues convincingly that the written autobiographies of former DKP and SDAJ functionaries that have appeared after 1989 differ in the way in which their activity in those groups is portrayed according to the generation to which these functionaries belong: those who joined the DKP after 1968 tend to stress that they had developed an individual identity beyond the prerogatives of these groups.⁷⁵

Such experiences, however, do not entirely alter one's narrative: by contrast, they help bring into the fore doubts experienced during the period in question, even if unexpressed in public until the biographical turning point occurred. While several testimonies show that former SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK members felt doubts to a lesser or greater extent about the societies they visited, they seem to have largely refrained from expressing them in public, as shown, for instance, in the testimony of Apostolidis. Tours through the Iron Curtain arranged by or coorganised by SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK continued throughout this period, as did their publication of relevant travel reports and advertisements, constituting a key feature of their propaganda. Their members, without necessarily having taken part in tours, actively engaged in publicising and defending them in rival left-wing youth organisation spaces. For instance, in 1980 the final-year university students of the civil engineering faculty at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki split over holiday preferences: one group organised an excursion to Thailand, while another, affiliated with KNE, opted for Czechoslovakia.⁷⁶ In a sense, in defending those excursions without having participated or despite having mixed experiences during their visits, pro-Soviet Communist youth seem to have followed an attitude that was a core component of KNE, but also SDAJ, Communist identity: they derived pleasure from demonstrating loyalty to their organisation and its goals - not necessarily because they entirely agreed with them, but because they thus created a sense of unity. In performing in front of their opponents, they were willing to reproduce the official line of their organisation. This attitude was slightly different from that which anthropologist Alexei Yurchak describes as pervasive in the meetings of the Komsomol in the USSR during the era of 'late socialism' (1960s-1980s). In the case of the Komsomol, there was a 'performative shift' during those years, with Komsomol members placing

emphasis on the form of 'ritualised acts of authoritative discourse' rather than engaging 'with their constative meanings'. Komsomol members voted unanimously in favour of the resolutions of their group, despite the fact that they often did not pay attention in meetings and subsequently acted at odds with the resolutions.⁷⁷ By contrast, SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK members considered seriously both the performance and the constative meanings of their group's resolutions. To achieve an enactment of unity, they abided by the group line; they made a conscious effort to convince themselves that it was right, or at least to avoid expressing doubts publicly, as the testimony of Apostolidis shows, even if their experiences contradicted this line.

Across the Iron Curtain to pleasure?

The previous section analysed the initial emphasis of such excursions on 'seriousness' rather than 'fun'. The latter element, however, permeated the activities of the tours and their representations in MSB/PSL and KNE/PSK organs since the beginning. This section addresses this issue, showing the growing weight assigned to 'fun' in these groups' relevant publications over the course of the 1980s.

Several leisure activities were offered as early as the 1970s: summer camps in Eastern Bloc countries had volleyball and table tennis, for instance.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the organs of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK did not offer identical descriptions of leisure activities in their role-model regimes. In contrast with SDAJ/MSB, which showed a degree of appreciation towards rock music from both the West and the Eastern Bloc, PSK, KNE and KKE linked rock music in general to illicit drugs and the 'American Way of Life' in general until the late 1970s. While it subsequently watered down its critique,

especially as the 1980s progressed, the potential relationship between drugs and rock music never disappeared from its publications throughout this period.⁷⁹ Such diverging approaches to rock music featured prominently in depictions of youth activities ‘in the socialist world’ in the travel reports of KNE and SDAJ, especially in the late 1970s: only the latter referred to political discussions followed by rock concerts at its Eastern European campsites.⁸⁰ Similarly, oral testimonies of young Greeks participating in KNE/PSK fostered excursions across the Iron Curtain contain next to nothing about rock concerts at the destination. Rather, they focused on Greek folk and political songs that the travellers sang alongside the Greek political refugees they met there.⁸¹ Despite this divergence, there was no tension between the West German and Greek pro-Soviet Communists: they viewed each other as comrades and their organisations retained strong ties throughout the period under study, avoiding any critique of one another.⁸²

In emphasising politics in the narrow sense, general published descriptions of the tour activities focused primarily on 'seriousness' rather than on 'fun' in the 1970s, but this was reversed in the following decade. This change was linked not with the mixture of activities offered, which remained the same, but with their representations in the publications of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK. Concerning the former, their travel reports featured in the 1970s images of young people from West Germany walking in Moscow, Leningrad, East Berlin and other large cities of the Eastern Bloc, in awe at contemporary institutions and memorials to the Second World War.⁸³ In the 1980s, however, busy urban centres gave way to sunny beaches full of tourists in their relevant publications.⁸⁴ In addition, the images that accompanied *elan*-promoted excursions, including those across the Iron Curtain, privileged ‘pleasure’ and

‘spontaneity’ over joy through hard work and study: they showed a car full of young people, some playing the guitar; on another occasion, the caption read ‘Hot! With *elan* to pleasure’ (*Heiss! Mit elan ins Vergnügen*).⁸⁵ This process could be labelled as the leisurisation and informalisation of depictions of youth travel across Eastern Europe and the USSR, undertaken by SDAJ and MSB. To an extent, they seemed to draw on aspects of ‘alternative’ travel that had appeared in West Germany since the late 1960s: ‘alternative’ subcultures or milieux developed travel patterns, such as hitch-hiking, free camping or staying at squats, which they juxtaposed with package tourism, mass consumption and what they viewed as ‘authoritarian’ norms. They also engaged extensively in recording their travel experience, producing, among others, travel guides marked by their spontaneous style.⁸⁶ In addition, they developed emotional norms centering on joy during the 1980-81 youth revolts that erupted in West German and Swiss cities and in which they were involved.⁸⁷ Although MSB and SDAJ did not explicitly depict the excursions as akin to ‘alternative’ travel and although their travel arrangement continued to resemble package tours, they addressed youngsters for whom commercial ‘mass tourism’ ‘stank’ and seem to echo the emotional norms of the ‘alternative’ left.⁸⁸ This leisurisation and informalisation also rested on a fundamentally different development: the growing effort of the USSR to encourage and direct mass consumption in the field of tourism. Historian Christian Noack describes this ‘leisure boom’ in the USSR from the 1960s onwards, which also included increasing government investment in tourist resorts like Sochi⁸⁹ and Yalta on the Black Sea.⁹⁰

A similar process of leisurisation was at play in KNE and PSK publications on travel through the Iron Curtain from the early 1980s onwards. Not only did their repertoire

expand to include Black Sea resorts, but images of attractive beaches gained ground at the expense of well-organised factories in advertisements.⁹¹ Similarly, a LEV-Tours advertisement in 1985 for Eastern Bloc excursions, targeting people of all ages, proclaimed that their main attractions would be vodka and balalaika^{92.93} In allowing more space for ‘time apart’ during such tours, they simultaneously dropped the critique of an Americanised ‘summer way of life’ they had mounted in the previous decade. The impetus for this shift in KNE/PSK publications is not as obvious as in the case of West Germany. Nevertheless, as sociologists Panayis Panagiotopoulos and Vassilis Vamvakas have stressed, frugality and the veneration of hard work ceased to play a crucial role as norms shaping actual practice dominant in Greece in the 1980s.⁹⁴ Although the approaches and responses of KNE and PSK to such a delegitimisation of frugality certainly require further exploration, travel stressing mainly or exclusively encounters with committed Soviet workers did not seem to be the most effective way to attract new members and sustain old ones.

Despite the effort of organisers to mix leisure with politics, the expectations or experience of participants did not necessarily fall into the category of ‘serious fun’. Dieter Stelle, who joined SDAJ in 1975, told me that he never participated in organised youth travel to East Germany, despite having been encouraged to do so by the organisation. He preferred to travel to southern Europe with his friends for vacation. He construed the latter as a mixture of ‘fun’ (*Spass*) and reflection on politics, such as on the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in 1974, which toppled the authoritarian regime ruling since 1933. He felt that despite the declarations of SDAJ, there was no serious fun in campsites such as the Scharmützelsee, which he envisaged as a rather solemn experience reflecting, in his view, the lifestyle of only the ‘high-

ranking cadres'. This discouraged him from participating.⁹⁵ Testimonies from youth who regularly took part in this travel, at least the SDAJ and KNE functionaries, tend to vindicate his assumptions about the limited opportunities for fun. For instance, Sotiris Katopoulos, a KNE cadre in the 1970s and early 1980s, recounted that due to his high-ranking position in KNE, he had to arrange meetings between Greek participants and local authorities, leaving little time for leisure. He went further to claim that his experience visiting those destinations as a participant of either an official delegation or an organised youth tour was identical. In contrast with Stelle, however, he did not see this negatively: he seemed to take pride in developing and demonstrating organisational skills on these occasions.⁹⁶ Despite the effort to increasingly leisurise the representations of such tours, especially in the 1980s, they were consistently experienced as a strenuous, albeit not necessarily killjoy, activity.

Sex and the Eastern Bloc

A main feature of the hedonism with which youth culture was synonymous in West Germany and Greece (as well as elsewhere) was the transformation of sexual norms and practices since the 1960s. In West Germany this development was associated with the growing separation of sexuality from procreation through the spread of the oral contraceptive, the legitimisation of premarital flirting, and the eroticisation of public culture, including the appearance of male and female bodies at the beaches. Pornography also gained traction, especially through the import of relevant Swedish movies.⁹⁷ These developments affected the youth, but not only: the contraceptive pill, for instance, was not only used by women who defined themselves as young.⁹⁸ Changes to sexual mores in Greece at that point were quite different from those in West Germany: the contraceptive pill failed to gain momentum. Nevertheless,

pornography gained ground (albeit mainly French and local rather than Swedish films) from the 1970s onwards, attracting primarily heterosexual male watchers of varied age. Moreover, it became increasingly legitimate for heterosexual students and young workers to engage in flirting and sex before marriage from the mid-1960s and, especially, from the 1970s.⁹⁹ Premarital sex was a major motivation to travel for young people from both West Germany and Greece. Meanwhile, the appearance of men and women at the seaside became growingly sexualised in the sense that they showed more skin, even under the socially conservative dictatorial regime that ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed no linear process of dwindling restrictions on sexual practices in the two countries, however. West Germany witnessed a ‘turn inwards’ in the late 1970s, as historian Dagmar Herzog describes a fatigue with growing sexual freedom, whereas some of the radical actors that had gained traction in post-dictatorship Greece opted for sexual restraint.¹⁰⁰

SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK dealt extensively with sexuality. Nevertheless, they differed on their approach to this issue, with the former cautiously adopting the demand for ‘sexual liberation’ and the latter praising sexual restraint. In the case of SDAJ, *elan* published texts that aimed to show youth how to derive pleasure from activity such as petting before and during sexual contact.¹⁰¹ This attitude raised the ire of some members, who complained that *elan* gave too much weight to sexual issues.¹⁰² Women’s groups formed within SDAJ in the late 1970s voiced their confidence in the contraceptive pill and raised the issue of availability to women who wanted it.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, KNE/PSK publications endorsed the concept of the stable heterosexual couple that ultimately married. The latter, in their view, was a core component of Greek ‘popular tradition’ as well, a ‘tradition’ that the Greek Left since

the 1950s had claimed was in peril due to the spread of the 'American Way of Life'.¹⁰⁴ In this vein, KNE/PSK expected men and women to develop 'sentimental' relationships that precluded infidelity and, in the case of women, were based on the role model of the working mother. Thus, in contrast with the SDAJ/MSB, the contraceptive pill was presented either as a negligible concern in comparison to gender inequality in the workplace or acceptable only if the state supported working mothers financially.

One way or another, all the groups used Eastern European and Soviet societies as yardsticks for the sexual mores they advocated. This was not imposed by the high-ranking cadres of these groups in a top-down manner: quite telling is the case of *elan*, whose readers sent in letters asking for information about sexual patterns in the Eastern Bloc.¹⁰⁵ KNE counterposed sexual relations in the 'socialist world' to the 'oversexualisation' they depicted as happening in the West.¹⁰⁶ By contrast, SDAJ's virtual and actual travels through the Iron Curtain emphasised that sexual mores in East Germany showcased sexual freedom similar or superior to that experienced in West Germany. This was also manifest in their descriptions of travel through the Iron Curtain. Their diverging aims determined which elements of sexual relations in the Eastern Bloc they would choose to stress in their travel reports. Sexual patterns advocated by state socialist regimes were far from uniform. In the case of East Germany, public discourse on sexuality was tightly controlled, but the contraceptive pill was easily available, in contrast with the USSR, and abortion quite common.¹⁰⁷ Travel reports and descriptions of life in East Germany published in *elan* referred extensively to facets of this condition, especially to the use of oral contraception in the GDR.¹⁰⁸ While, however, *elan* stressed the superiority of East Germany in

comparison to West Germany concerning the condition of workers and apprentices, they presented no clear-cut difference in the field of sexuality. Nevertheless, they added that there was more potential in East Germany, arguing, for instance, that the contraceptive pill was easily offered to 18-year old single women, and implying that this did not occur in West Germany.¹⁰⁹ On the contrary, KNE wrote next to nothing about these issues. The Greek pro-Soviet Communists chose to focus on the discourse of Soviet actors on sexuality, instead. Following Stalin's death, sexuality no longer appeared in official texts in the USSR solely as a problem, as had happened in the Stalinist era. Sociologists and even romantic comedies reflected publicly on what they viewed as a 'positive' role-model of sexual relations, revolving around the heterosexual married couple with children, and aiming to stem the tide of divorce and extramarital affairs.¹¹⁰ The KNE/PSK publications drew on such a narrative, arguing that it accurately depicted what was occurring in the USSR. Their travel reports and articles on sexual mores in the USSR in general, complemented with translated articles authored by Soviet sociologists, portrayed the USSR as the land of the consummation of happy family life that was the outcome of opposite-sex relationships; such a life was described as based on genuine love and the equality of men and women.¹¹¹

What participants in tours arranged by SDAJ/MSB narrated does not deviate from the assessment of sexual life in East Germany that appeared in their publications. Nevertheless, there is a noteworthy asymmetry in the ways in which at least some SDAJ/MSB members and the East German authorities understood the spread of nudism in the GDR from the 1970s onwards. In contrast with the preceding decades, the East German regime endorsed nudism as a symbol of 'young, forward-looking'

society. At that point, both younger nude bathers and the regime increasingly viewed the practice as having sexual potential. Nevertheless, SDAJ/MSB members touring East Germany and/or discussing relevant travel reports did not necessarily link nudism with sex. Dieter Stelle, who falls into the latter category, narrated to me that he personally viewed this lifestyle as a ‘progressive tradition of the working-class movement’, which was facilitated in a country that proactively supported the ‘best elements’ of this tradition. However, in mentioning this and while arguing that in the 1970s-1980s he viewed East Germany as ‘more progressive’ in terms of sexual mores than West Germany, he did not, at least explicitly, link nudism with sexual desire.¹¹²

In the case of KNE/PSK, their travel reports did not necessarily match, once again, the experience of their participants. Some Greek pro-Soviet Communists who travelled through the Iron Curtain were not impressed by the purported flourishing of happy family lives there. By contrast, they were struck by the existence, in their view, of conditions that the prescriptive texts of their groups linked with the ‘American Way of Life’ and which they did not expect to find in the ‘socialist world’: prostitution and pornography. A PSK member who visited the USSR through an organised tour mounted a loud critique of a Maoist publication lambasting the USSR. He argued that Soviet workers were far happier than their counterparts in the ‘capitalist’ world. Nevertheless, he conceded that, when visiting, he witnessed ‘aspects of the American Way of Life’ there, such as the existence of sex workers.¹¹³

This ambivalence, which could turn to frustration, is evident in the oral testimonies of those KNE cadres participating in tours in the 1970s and 1980s. Theodoros Stellakis, who was a high-ranking KNE cadre and university student in the early and mid-1970s and who joined a splinter group in 1989, claimed that ‘I asked educated people about

[Wim] Wenders in (East) Berlin and Moscow: they ignored him. Of Greek cinema, they only knew about a soft porn movie!’¹¹⁴ The actual experience of their members who travelled through the Iron Curtain refuted the bipolar model that set a ‘sexually prudent socialist world’ against a ‘morally corrupt due to the American Way of Life West’, which reigned supreme in the prescriptive texts of KNE/PSK. It was a rhetoric of similarity with developments occurring in the West, albeit, on this occasion, an undesirable one. While KNE members did not always follow the prescriptive texts of their group and, for instance, often engaged in premarital sex, they, including Stellakis, venerated the institutions of marriage and family in practice. Certainly, a comprehensive analysis of the lifestyle of KNE/PSK members throughout the 1970s and 1980s requires further research and is beyond the scope of this article. Glimpses into it provided by the oral testimonies I have collected show, however, that those KNE members travelling across the Iron Curtain did not necessarily experience the ensuing contact as shaping their behavioural patterns. Nevertheless, with the exception of the reference to prostitution in the USSR mentioned above, such concerns would not be voiced in public by the KNE/PSK members until 1989 or until they withdrew from these groups. Once again, the young pro-Soviet Communists tried to disregard doubts over the role-model character of the Eastern Bloc.

Conclusions

Historiography largely associates political, social, economic and cultural transformations that took place from the late 1940s to the late 1980s in Eastern Europe with ‘Sovietisation’ and in Western Europe with ‘Americanisation’. It imputes to a greater or lesser extent the emergence of youth lifestyles in Western Europe since the 1960s to the spread of American cultural products. An alternative

argument addresses broader, intra-Western flows of cultural patterns and people contributing to a ‘cultural revolution’ beginning in the long 1960s, continuing in the subsequent decades. This revolution affected the lifestyles of various social groups, including the youth. This article resonates with very recent relevant scholarship showing that youth lifestyles in Western Europe formed due to a wide array of cultural flows. Transfers between Eastern Bloc countries and Western Europe have also been part of this complex puzzle, but their impact on segments of the youth in the latter has largely been neglected. To help fill this lacuna, this article concentrates on the pro-Soviet Communist youth groups in West Germany and in Greece, which were rather influential, especially in the 1970s, albeit not hegemonic, in the left-wing youth of both countries under study. These organisations were among the few adamantly pro-Soviet Communist subjects in post-1968 Europe and contributed to the intensification of youth travel from West Germany and Greece to Eastern Bloc countries from the 1970s onwards.

The article stresses that these Communist groups utilised organised travel through the Iron Curtain to the USSR and its allied countries in Eastern Europe in particular. Although these groups standardised travel arrangements through the Iron Curtain in the same way, the encounters of young Communists from West Germany and Greece with policies implemented and cultural norms existing in the Eastern Bloc through such travel varied. The article argues that the reception of such policies and norms by the Communists under study was akin to a ‘black box’, to borrow a term Kroes has used to describe the appropriation of American popular culture by the Western European youth. Thus, the encounters under study helped to reproduce representations of Eastern Bloc societies in West Germany and Greece that

overlapped, but were not the same. These representations appeared as a product of synergies in the organs of the groups in question: they revolved around aspects that state socialist regimes wished to stress, but also as refracted through the particular lens by which each group viewed them. They stemmed from both a process of selective reception of patterns emanating from the Eastern Bloc and of projection of how each group wished those societies to be.

This selective reception and projection revolved around their effort to discern an alternative, 'socialist' modernity in the Eastern Bloc, however they particularly viewed it. They expected tours across the Iron Curtain to convince participants about its superiority over the 'capitalist' one. Thus, the tour organisers endorsed an acute dichotomy of 'socialist' and 'capitalist' worlds in terms of the policies implemented in each Cold War camp. Nevertheless, when dealing particularly with youth lifestyles in the Eastern Bloc in comparison to those flourishing in the West, their approach was more complex, one that I would like to describe as semi-open to cultural developments in the latter: the cultural patterns they wished to instill into their members and which travel through the Iron Curtain and encounters with youth cultures there were expected to reinforce, neither necessarily deviated from nor always resembled such Western-inspired lifestyles. To demonstrate this, I focus on two core elements of youth lifestyles, to the shaping of which such intra-Western flows contributed: hedonism and transformations to sexual norms and practices. With regard to the former, the tour organisers in question developed an ambivalent approach: they endorsed what can be described as 'serious fun', which involved a structured programme of ideological indoctrination and leisure. In the case of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK, however, the configurations of indoctrination and leisure

were not entirely the same, as their differing approaches to rock music show. As the 1980s progressed, relevant publications of all the groups in question increasingly emphasised leisure during excursions in a process that I label 'leisurisation'.

Meanwhile, from the 1960s onwards, cross-border youth travel facilitated the relaxation of sexual norms in Western Europe. This applied only to an extent to these tours, which mirrored the varying approaches of SDAJ/MSB and KNE/PSK to sexuality: travel reports of the former concentrated on developments in the Eastern Bloc revolving around the relaxation, in their view, of sexual norms at a comparable or even superior level in comparison with the West. By contrast, similar publications of the latter chose to portray encounters with the purported sexual restraint of the citizens of state socialist regimes. Such diverging approaches to sexuality and rock music should be imputed to the concept of a nationalised 'popular tradition', which figured prominently in the discourse of KNE/PSK, but not of SDAJ/MSB. Especially during the 1970s, the Greek pro-Soviet Communists regarded rock music and transformations to sexual norms that would, in their view, put stable heterosexual relationships at risk, as incompatible with this 'tradition'. KNE/PSK tried to stress in their travel reports only those elements of youth lifestyles in Eastern Europe and the USSR they regarded as coterminous with their idealised version of Greek 'popular tradition'.

The article demonstrates, however, that these excursions helped complicate the 'black box' reception of such patterns by the Communists in question. They made them feel a tension between embracing and criticising the Eastern Bloc that remained unresolved in the period under study. As written autobiographies and oral testimonies

show, participants experienced such tours in diverse ways and only partially in accordance with the expectations of the organisers. While being exposed to and reflecting on the policies implemented and the lifestyles existing in Eastern Bloc societies, they did not necessarily develop pro-Soviet sentiment, but often experienced moments of doubt about those societies. Similarly, although such tours were not the sole determining factor of their lifestyle, whose comprehensive study is beyond the scope of this article, some participants in such excursions felt that their everyday life deviated from both an 'American Way of Life' and from the cultural patterns they observed in the Eastern Bloc. Nevertheless, the tours did not trigger an open rejection of state socialist regimes among these Communists, either. Those who felt ambivalently towards the Eastern Bloc during the tours did not usually voice it publicly as long as they were affiliated with the groups and/or prior to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1989. Publicly arguing in favour of policies implemented by and lifestyles flourishing in Eastern Bloc countries as well as advocating excursions to them was part of performances of unity among members of KNE/PSK and SDAJ/MSB.

Ultimately the tours did not serve as a means of self-Sovieticisation. Rather, they reinforced endorsement of state socialist regimes only to an extent. They also helped shape diverse youth lifestyles that rested on a partial identification with the social/cultural patterns existing in the Soviet and Eastern European societies. Such lifestyles did not necessarily differ from those fostered by intra-Western flows. Therefore, exploring these flows and cultural transfers across the Iron Curtain, affecting Western European youth in the 1970s-1980s, as distinct phenomena, is not a promising avenue. Rather research needs to consider seriously the diverse and

complex ways in which these flows and their impact on youth lifestyles were related to one another.

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Notes

¹ ‘Heisse Tage in Potsdam...’, 22.

² It should be clarified that SDAJ, MSB, KNE and PSK arranged not only excursions across the Iron Curtain, but also to domestic destinations. Several of their members also engaged in non-organised, informal youth travel. On such travel patterns of members of the KNE, see: Papadogiannis, *Militant Around the Clock?*, especially chapter 3.

³ Fitzpatrick, Rasmussen. *Political Tourists*.

⁴ See, for instance: ‘Information zum Verlauf und zu den Ergebnissen’, 22 November 1975, 4. The youth organisation of the Italian Communist Party also advertised excursions to the Eastern Bloc, such as in Bulgaria, arranged by the left-wing ARCI (*Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana*, Italian Recreative and Cultural Association). See: ‘Vacanze’, 6.

⁵ Bracke. *Whose Socialism*. About Eurocommunism, see also: Carrillo, *Eurocomunismo*.

⁶ Papadogiannis, *Militant around the Clock?*, especially chapter 2.

⁷ For more details on this issue, see: *Ibid*.

⁸ According to a *Verfassungsschutz* (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution) report in 1974, 2,200 of those Greek migrants were affiliated with Greek ‘orthodox’ Communist organisations. Support for the wide array of associations in West Germany linked with these groups declined, however, during the period, from 19,000 in 1971, to 14,000 in 1973 and 9,150 in 1974. See: *Verfassungsschutz ’74*, Federal Ministry of Interior, Jul. 1975. Author’s collection, 132-33. During the 1970s, at least according to sociologist and political scientist Ilias Katsoulis, there were more than 6,000 Greek undergraduate and graduate students in West Germany. Moreover, between 1961 and 1973, when the oil crisis put an end to foreign labour recruitment, the Greek population in West Germany rose from 42,000 to 408,000. See: Katsoulis, ‘Demokraten gegen Obristen’, 291; Panayotidis, *Griechen in Bremen*, 89.

⁹ Siegfried, *Time is on my Side*, 191.

¹⁰ Andresen, ‘The West-German “Lehrlingsbewegung”’, 219.

¹¹ *Verfassungsschutz ’74*, Federal Ministry of Interior, Jul. 1975. Author’s collection, 59; *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1981*, *Linksextremistische Bestrebungen 1981*, 15 October 1982, 11 as well as *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1986*, *Linksextremistische Bestrebungen 1986*, July 1987, 14, Archive of the Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg.

¹² *Verfassungsschutz ’74*, Federal Ministry of Interior, Jul. 1975, 60.

¹³ *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1981*, 11; *Verfassungsschutzbericht 1986*, 14.

¹⁴ On the ideological orientation and the influence of those groups, see Papadogiannis, *Militant*, 73-75.

¹⁵ MSB gained 9.8 percent of the seats that year, higher than any single Maoist or Trotskyist group. See: *Verfassungsschutz ’74*, Federal Ministry of Interior, Jul. 1975, 47.

¹⁶ An overview of radical left-wing groups active in West Germany at that point is the following: Kersting, ‘Juvenile Left-wing Radicalism’, 353-375. On these loosely-knit initiatives, see also: Reichardt, Siegfried, *Das Alternative Milieu*.

¹⁷ The term ‘alternative’ was employed by those subjects who wanted to demonstrate that they refused to be incorporated into the mass consumption patterns that reigned supreme in that country. However, the extent to which they were indeed detached from such patterns is an issue that has caused reflection among historians. See, for instance, Bertsch, ‘Alternative (in) Bewegung’, 115-130. I am using

quotation marks to show that they used this term to portray themselves. I do not wish to imply that this was a fake alternative voice in comparison to other left-wing subjects.

¹⁸ Reichardt, Siegfried, *Das Alternative Milieu*, 11.

¹⁹ See, for example: Wittner, *Towards Nuclear Abolition*.

²⁰ Andresen, 'Vier Möglichkeiten', 29-30.

²¹ Papadogiannis, *Militant around the Clock?*, especially chapter 2.

²² For example, in 1959 the Polytechnic School of Athens organised a student excursion to Egypt. See 'Kinisis Syllogon,' *Panspoudastiki*, 2 December 1959, 4. On such an excursion to Western Europe, see: Letter from Giannis Papadogiannis to K.A. from Cambridge (UK), 17 July 1973, personal collection of Giannis Papadogiannis. Giannis Papadogiannis was then a university student, studying Chemistry at the University of Salonica; the school excursion in which he participated visited France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

²³ I approach the very term 'Eastern Europe' as not a timeless one, but largely a product of the Cold War era: I take into account that several of those countries that had been depicted as falling into this category during the Cold War now tend to present themselves as belonging to Central Europe.

²⁴ Excursions across the Iron Curtain were not confined to young Communists in the Greek case, either. Commercial travel agencies not linked with the Left organised package tours to, for instance, Bulgaria. People of diverse ideological orientations took part. The activities on offer as well as the background and motivations of their participants merit further analysis.

²⁵ The first relevant contacts had started in 1959. See: Schildt, 'Ein Hamburger Beitrag', 193-217.

²⁶ West Germany's contact with its state socialist neighbour, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), gained momentum in 1969, when the West German government, comprising the Social Democratic Party and liberal Free Democratic Party from 1969 to 1982, initiated its *Ostpolitik* of establishing formal ties with the GDR. This process was not reversed after 1982, when the Christian Democrat and the Free Democratic Party took power. On the *Ostpolitik*, see, for instance: Pulzer, *German Politics*, 108-128.

²⁷ For example, in a 1975 gathering that attracted in total 451 guests from West Germany, Austria and Switzerland, 212 were affiliated with the SDAJ and 60 with the MSB. In a similar gathering in East Germany in 1980, 482 sympathisers and members of the SDAJ took part alongside 174 sympathisers

and members of the MSB. While I have not found the total number of members/sympathisers of those groups that travelled annually to Eastern Europe within the framework of such vacations, individual reports mention a few hundred on each occasion, while the number of such gatherings in Eastern Europe that the SDAJ and MSB co-hosted per annum was limited. On such individual reports, see, for instance: 'Information zum Verlauf und zu den Ergebnissen', 22 November 1975, 4; 'Information über die Durchführung des Internationalen Freundschaftslagers im Jugenderholungszentrum am Scharmützelsee vom 19 Juli bis 2 August 1980', 1, both in DY24, 23320, Bundesarchiv Berlin. Such reports were written by functionaries of the FDJ (*Freie Demokratische Jugend*, Free German Youth), namely the official youth organisation of the German Democratic Republic regime. Unfortunately, there are no available figures about the number of participants in the excursions that the SDAJ/MSB co(-)arranged to other state socialist regimes, such as the USSR and Hungary.

²⁸ Slobodian, 'The Borders', 223-224.

²⁹ Sossalla, 'Der Jugendaustausch', 21.

³⁰ I use the terms political tourism and ideologically-motivated travel alternatively, referring to the same hybrid type of mobility: I do not relegate tourism to the status of an inferior, superficial type of mobility and elevate travel to a means of self-improvement. Such a distinction has rather elitist connotations and is predicated on stereotypes about social class, which I reject: according to Furlough and Baranowski, 'with the onset of mass tourism in the twentieth century and working-class tourists more present and visible, claims for the cultural superiority of "travel" over tourism increased in intensity.' See: Baranowski, Furlough, 'Introduction', 2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³² For instance, Ernest Heller was an SDAJ functionary, being an honorary member of the council that guided group activities in Baden-Württemberg. In this capacity, he travelled to the GDR as a member of SDAJ delegations. However, he narrated to me that he did not participate in any campsites in the GDR that falls into the category of *Polittourismus*. Interview with Ernest Heller, 23 September 2014. I am using pseudonyms for all interviewees.

³³ While only KNE/PSK organised political youth travel through the Iron Curtain, there was contact between the authorities of state socialist regimes and delegations from a wide array of Greek left-wing organisations, including KNE, the Youth of PASOK and the Eurocommunists in the 1970s-1980s. In

the case of West Germany, Maoist groups also arranged tours to Eastern Europe, albeit solely to Albania. See: Kühn, *Stalins Enkel*, 92-96. Greek Maoists, by contrast, did not embark on such initiatives.

³⁴ Portelli, 'What makes Oral History different', 36.

³⁵ For instance: Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels*; Stacey, *Star Gazing*, 204.

³⁶ Some scholars, such as anthropologist Kaspar Maase, no longer employ the term 'Americanisation', referring to 'cultural democratisation' instead. See: Maase, 'Establishing Cultural Democracy', 428-450.

³⁷ Kroes, *If you've seen one*, 167.

³⁸ Marwick initially confined his research to the USA, UK, Italy and France. See: Marwick, *The Sixties*. On the applicability of the 'cultural revolution of the Long Sixties' also in West Germany, see: Marwick, 'Youth Culture', 39-58. On its applicability to Greece, see: Kornetis, *Children*.

³⁹ Kornetis, *Children*, 196-99.

⁴⁰ See, for instance: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 207-237; Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc*. On the need to explore flows, including cultural ones, across the Iron Curtain, see also the rationale behind the following conference: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/research/projects/the_politics_of_emotion/cfp_subjectivitesemotionspolitics/ (last accessed: 9 July 2015).

⁴¹ Jaraus, Siegrist, 'Amerikanisierung und Sowjetisierung', 24. Another work addressing flows from the Eastern Bloc to the West and vice versa is: Gorsuch, Koenker, *The Socialist Sixties*.

⁴² Verdery, 'Theorizing Socialism', 379.

⁴³ On the financial support from the USSR to KNE, see: Papadogiannis, *Militant around the Clock?*, especially chapter 2. A detailed analysis of the financial aid provided by Eastern Bloc regimes, especially East Germany, to SDAJ, awaits to be written. Some hints are provided in: Verfassungsschutz '74, Federal Ministry of Interior, Jul. 1975, 58, where it is argued that DKP and its affiliated groups received around 30 million DM from East Germany in 1974. The figure, however, is just an estimate that requires cross-checking.

⁴⁴ See, for instance: Jobs, 'Youth movements'; Bertsch, 'Alternative (in) Bewegung', 115-130. Jobs goes further to argue that such mobility helped such young travelers construe themselves as members of a 'continent-wide [European], transnational social group'.

⁴⁵ On *Sputnik*, see, for instance: Koenker, *Club Red*, 241; Tondera, "'Like Sheep'", 18-35. On the links between LEV-Tours and *Jugendtourist*, see: 'Information zum Stand der Beziehungen zwischen "Jugendtourist" und "LEV-Tours"', DY24, 22446, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁴⁶ Concerning the general background of participants in SDAJ excursions to East Germany, at least according to existing primary sources, most were male workers who did not study at a university aged between 17 and 20. In the case of KNE, those participants were students, but their social class and gender are not reported in the available sources. For instance: 'Bericht über das Sommerlager der SDAJ vom 1-14.8.1970...', DY24, 23201, Bundesarchiv Berlin; 'Konzeption für die Durchführung des Internationalen Sommerkurses an der JHS "Wilhelm Pieck"', DY24, 22333, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁴⁷ For instance, they arranged an excursion that aimed to facilitate an encounter with the Bulgarian youth in 1977. See advertisement in *Odigitis*, 22 July 1977, 16. On excursions to the USSR, see: 'Kalokairina taxidia stin ESSD', *Odigitis*, 2 July 1981, 12.

⁴⁸ Camping filias., 11-12.

⁴⁹ From the mid-1970s and during the following decade, according to historian Heike Wolter, East Germany witnessed a substantial increase in the number of diverse accommodation facilities that addressed particularly young tourists. See: Wolter, '*Ich harre*', 185-196. About the interaction of young pro-Soviet Communists from several European countries, see, for example: 'Information zum Verlauf und zu den Ergebnissen', 22 November 1975, 4. Nevertheless, some camps were limited to encounters between young Communists from West and East Germany. See, for instance: 'Konzeption für die inhaltliche und organisatorische Vorbereitung des "Internationalen Freundschaftslagers FDJ-SDAJ" vom 24. Juli bis 14. August 1971 im Zentralen Pionierlager "Maxim Gorki"', DY24, 23033, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁵⁰ Relevant information about excursions to Eastern Europe and the USSR organised by KNE and PSK were found at least once annually in their publications. On travel reports from excursions to the USSR in *Odigitis*, see, for instance: 'Episkepsi sti S. Enosi', 16. The organ of the PSK, *Panspoudastiki*, also published such texts. See, for example: 'Ekdromi tis E Architektonon stin ESSD', 8.

⁵¹ On the case of KNE, see, for example, relevant advertisements of LEV-Tours, such as in: *Odigitis*, 7 July 1978, 21.

⁵² Advertisement in *elan*, July/August 1968, 79.

⁵³ The WFDY is an international left-wing youth organisation. In the period under study it attracted mainly, but not solely, pro-Soviet Communist organisations. On its Festival in 1968 in Sofia, see: Rutter, 'Look Left, Drive Right', 193-212.

⁵⁴ Junge Union Deutschlands, 'Deshalb nehmen wir an den 10. Weltfestspielen teil', DY24, 24009, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁵⁵ 'Reisen '75 für elan Leser'. 17-20. This catalogue appeared once annually from that point onwards.

⁵⁶ Interview with Nikitas Apostolidis; interview with Sotiris Katopoulos. Katopoulos was a school pupil in Athens until 1975 and later a university student and high-ranking cadre of KNE. In the late 1980s, he withdrew from KKE and joined the radical left-wing group NAR (*Neo Aristero Reyma*, New Left Current). Apostolidis has lived in West Germany since the early 1970s. During the 1970s he was a student and KNE member. He is no longer a KKE member, but is currently aligned with SYRIZA (*Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras*, Coalition of the Radical Left). On the (failed) effort of the Greek Community in Hamburg which was controlled by the Left to organise an excursion to the USSR, see, for instance: Letter from ht-reisen to Jakovos Papadopoulos (chairman of the Community), 29 September 1976, Archive of the Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg, Gemeinde der Griechen in Hamburg e.V, 1970-76.

⁵⁷ Epitropoulos, 'Youth Culture'. However, the issue whether pleasure has been a core component of all youth lifestyles in West Germany and Greece since the late 1950s requires further study.

⁵⁸ Maase, 'Establishing', 439; Katsapis, *Ichoi*.

⁵⁹ On West Germany, see: Schildt, 'Across the Border'. Concerning Greece, young Greek men travelled to tourist resorts to have sex in the 1960s. See: Nikolakakis, 'Tourismos', 427-438. Groups comprising young Greek male and female holidaymakers gain momentum, at least among left-wingers, in the 1970s. See: Papadogiannis, *Militant*, 48-49, 153-55.

⁶⁰ Papadogiannis, *Militant*, 150.

⁶¹ 'Serious fun' was actually introduced by historian Robert Edelman, who explored spectator sports in the USSR. See: Edelman, *Serious Fun*, x, 250; Gorsuch, *All This is your World*, 47.

⁶² For example, advertisement in *elan*, April 1974, 43. Their definition of the mobility under study differs from the one that I offer, since the organisations in question approached such accumulation of information in a normative way, namely as a means of presenting the ‘truth’ about those regimes, while this article takes into account the fact that the state socialist regimes presented some of their facets to visitors.

⁶³ See, for instance: ‘1917, 60 chronia sosialistikis oikodomisis’, 18-19.

⁶⁴ For example: “‘Monopleyri parousiasi’”, 6-7.

⁶⁵ ‘Information über die Durchführung des Internationalen Freundschaftslagers im Jugenderholungszentrum am Scharmützelsee vom 19 Juli bis 2 August 1980’, 1., in DY24, 23320, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁶⁶ A concentration camp in Oranienburg, Germany, which operated from 1936 to 1945 and was mainly used for the detention and execution of political prisoners.

⁶⁷ Rahmenkonzeption für das Internationale Freundschaftslager vom 26.7-15.8.1972 an der Sonderschule des Zentralrats der FDJ in Buckow, 7-8, DY24, 23129, Bundesarchiv Berlin. This occurred at a point when the discussion about the extermination of Jews by the Nazis was gaining ground in West Germany, namely during the 1970s-1980s. On the memory of the Holocaust in West and East Germany, see, for instance: Fulbrook, *German National Identity*. The only reference to the extermination of Jews by the Nazis as part of an antifascist commemoration during such travel in the GDR that I have found in relevant primary sources occurred in 1988 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Kristallnacht. See: Zentralrat der FDJ, ‘Information über die Durchführung des Internationalen Jugendlagers der Freien Demokratischen Jugend vom 30.10 bis 04.11.1988 in Werder’, DY24, 14163, Bundesarchiv Berlin. The issue of whether the East German regime began at that point to reframe the antifascist memory it endorsed, adding more weight to the elimination of the Jews, awaits further examination.

⁶⁸ ‘Konzeption für die inhaltliche und organisatorische Vorbereitung des “Internationalen Freundschaftslagers FDJ-SDAJ” vom 24. Juli bis 14. August 1971 im Zentralen Pionierlager “Maxim Gorki”’, DY24, 23033, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁶⁹ For instance, interview with Katopoulos.

⁷⁰ MacCannell, ‘Staged Authenticity’, 594.

⁷¹ Interview with Nikitas Apostolidis, 15 October 2012.

⁷² On autobiographies, see, for instance: Guenther, ““And now for something completely different””, 25-61.

⁷³ Reckert, *Kommunismus-Erfahrung*, 35-36. Andresen, ‘Vier Möglichkeiten’.

⁷⁴ Rosenthal, *Erlebte und erzählte Lebensgeschichte*.

⁷⁵ See: Andresen, ‘Vier Möglichkeiten’, 37. On autobiographies see, for instance: Guenther, ““And now for something completely different””, 25-61.

⁷⁶ Interview with Danis Artinos, 12 May 2008. Artinos was in 1980 linked to a radical left-wing group that was highly critical of KNE. He narrated that during the assembly that decided the destination he argued against what the members of PSK had advocated, namely a trip to Czechoslovakia. Moreover, on a critique from a Maoist perspective of the content of travel reports concerning KNE-initiated excursions to the USSR, see, for instance: ‘Oi foititikes ekdromes sti Sovietiki Enosi. Enas didaktikos “sozialismos”’, 7. The article argued, among others, that class inequalities existed in the USSR. The discussion about such excursions even reached popular women’s magazines. See, for instance: Aggelopoulou, ‘Diakopes’, 56-57.

⁷⁷ See: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 25, 96.

⁷⁸ ‘Rahmenkonzeption für das Internationale Freundschaftslager vom 26.7-15.8.1972 an der Sonderschule des Zentralrats der FDJ in Buckow, 7-8, DY24, 23129, Bundesarchiv Berlin.

⁷⁹ For instance: ‘Jimi Hendrix Experience’, 3-5; ‘Pop Rock mit der rotten Lok’, 34-37; Panousakis, ‘Gia ton Amerikaniko Tropo Zois’, 44-54.

⁸⁰ ‘Urlaub in “Sanssouci”’, 11. Similarly, during the 1980s the SDAJ invited rock bands from East Germany, such as the *Puhdys*, to the events that it held in West Germany. See: ‘Heisse Rock-nacht’, 7.

⁸¹ Interview with Nikitas Apostolidis.

⁸² For instance, *Odigitis* published a very warm comradely message from *elan* on the occasion of the publication of its issue no.300. See: *Odigitis*, 9 May 1980, 13. On the mainly positive approaches to rock, but also some critical voices, as expressed in *elan*, see also: Siegfried, *Time is on my Side*, 716.

⁸³ ‘Wie gefällt’s euch in Berlin?’, 36-37.

⁸⁴ For example, see: *elan*, March 1983, 36.

⁸⁵ ‘Heisse Tips für die tolle Tage’, 14-15; cover page, *elan*, July 1986.

⁸⁶ See, for instance: Mittag, Wendland, 'How Adventurers', 36-51.

⁸⁷ Häberlen, Smith, 'Struggling for Feelings', 628-636.

⁸⁸ 'Heisse Tips'. The issue whether SDAJ and MSB tried to attract participants in those milieux in order to counter their falling membership figures in the 1980s awaits further examination. Moreover, the issue of whether SDAJ/MSB were influenced by the emotional norms that the 'alternative' left developed in 1980/81 merits further exploration.

⁸⁹ Those places did not necessarily develop as tourist resorts for the first time in the 1960s. For instance, Sochi had been constructed in pre-1917 Russia in order to 'vie with the French Riviera for foreign tourists'. McReynolds, 'The Prerevolutionary Russian Tourist', 37.

⁹⁰ Noack, 'Coping with the Tourist', 282. It should be stressed that one cannot argue that this shift to leisurisation/informalisation was imposed onto SDAJ and KNE by the Soviet Union, since the 'leisure boom' in the USSR started well before this shift in the travel reports and advertisements of those groups.

⁹¹ Such a tendency is evident, for instance, in the following advertisement of LEV-tours in *Odigitis*: 'Kalokairina taxidia stin ESSD', 12.

⁹² Russian stringed musical instrument.

⁹³ *Rizospastis*, 30 May 1985, 13. *Rizospastis* is the newspaper of the KKE.

⁹⁴ Vamvakas, Panagiotopoulos, 'Introduction', LXV-LXVII.

⁹⁵ Interview with Dieter Stelle, 19 September 2013.

⁹⁶ Interview with Sotiris Katopoulos, 8 April 2008.

⁹⁷ On changes to sexual norms in Western Europe at that point, see, for instance: Stearns, *Sexuality*, 133-164.

⁹⁸ Silies, 'Taking the Pill'. 43-44. However, Silies argues that 'in the 1970s, the contraceptive pill became a contraceptive for the young' in West Germany and England. Silies, 'Taking the Pill', 54. Her analysis is based on age cohorts rather than on whether those she describes as 'young' felt so.

⁹⁹ Kornetis, *Children*, 207; Avdela, 'Neoi en Kindyno', 472.

¹⁰⁰ Herzog, *Sexuality*. Herzog also stressed that growing sexual freedom was not necessarily experienced as a source of pleasure, but also of anxiety.

¹⁰¹ Fakten, 14-15. While I refer to transformation of sexual norms, I do not regard its spread as akin to ‘liberalisation’. As the cited article demonstrates, enacting ‘permissiveness’ was also regulated by rules. For an analysis of cultural change in post-World War II as ‘transformation’ rather than ‘liberalisation’ of norms, see: Häberlen, Smith, ‘Struggling for Feelings’, 636-637.

¹⁰² For instance, letter by Susanne M. entitled ‘völlig ohne Sex?’, published in *elan* in June 1971.

¹⁰³ Articles about the contraceptive pill that saw print in *elan* include: ‘Emanzipation über Männerleichen’, 4-5; ‘Die Pille mit 16’, 18-19.

¹⁰⁴ On the relevant attitude of the Greek Left in the 1960s, see, for instance: Katsapis, *Ichoi*. On the 1970s, see: Papadogiannis, *Militant*, 95-104.

¹⁰⁵ Letter entitled ‘Warum kein Sex?’, published in *elan*, October 1971, 12.

¹⁰⁶ Papadogiannis, *Militant*, 97-99, 156.

¹⁰⁷ McLellan, *Love in the time of Communism*.

¹⁰⁸ Benzien, ‘Problem Du und Ich’, 4-8; ‘Fragen an die Hennigsdorfer’, 36. *Rote blätter* also published articles about sexuality in the GDR. See, for instance, see the reflections of Franz Sommerfeld, the editor of *rote blätter*, on that topic, which saw print in *rote blätter* 9 (1979), 26.

¹⁰⁹ Silies argues that only in the late 1960s did organisations such as Pro Familia gain momentum in West Germany, granting easy access to the contraceptive pill to unmarried and young women. Silies, ‘Taking the Pill’, 45. It is interesting, however, that this development was not mentioned in *elan*.

¹¹⁰ Healey, ‘The Sexual Revolution’, 236-248, especially 240.

¹¹¹ For instance, A., ‘I pornografia’, 8-9.

¹¹² Interview with Dieter Stelle, 19 September 2013.

¹¹³ Letter written on 12 May 1977 and published in *Sapisma* 7 (1977), 6.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Theodoros Stellakis, 3 December 2007.

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