How the Multi-National Women’s Liberation Group Began

Shelley Ipiotis, April 2017

I came back to Greece after the Junta fell wanting to share the wonderful experience I had in the US with a women's consciousness raising group. I knew only Carol, who lived on the other side of Athens, so at the first opportunity, a kid's birthday party, I introduced myself to the mothers there and talked about CR and the Women's Movement.  Several women and their friends were interested, and we formed a wonderful CR group in the Chalandri/ Agia Paraskevi area with women from England, USA, Scotland, Australia and Germany.

Carol, hearing how inspiring the CR group was, formed one in her area.  Eventually we decided to meet with both groups.  This was the meeting that Margaret refers to.  We had books and materials that I had brought from the US and interest was very high on all the women's issues discussed. It was almost immediately obvious that a Women’s Liberation Group was wanting to be born.

We met at a US Naval facility and at the home of a member, and at each meeting the numbers grew at an amazing rate.  At first I phoned every woman for meetings, then set up a telephone tree (pre-email days). Soon we realized that we needed a Women's Center, and with one, we were in a position to schedule regular monthly meetings at a set place.

Margaret, Carol and I knew from the beginning that the group should be non-hierarchical and have a rotating steering committee. I think that this format encouraged the variety and creativity that we experienced in our meetings and projects.