PART V. THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE ISLANDS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE ISLANDS

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Listening to the previous sessions, I am struck by the fact that “regionalism” is important or unimportant, depending on one’s point of view. Some have held that regional variation is sociologically important, while others insist that cultural homogeneity is the overwhelmingly important social fact about Greece. It is trivially obvious that both positions are correct.

From my vantage point as an ethnographer, however, I rather prefer the position taken by the people I study. And to rural Greeks, one overwhelming social fact is the “specialness” of the topos, the place where they live rather than some undefined region. I realized this after I had heard the following story on several occasions:

Once, two friends of the village went out to the taverna. After a while they got drunk and, around midnight they began to stroll about the village. One, looking at the sky, said to his friend: “Observe how beautiful the sun is tonight.” The other said: “The sun? What are you crazy? That’s the moon!” Well, they went at it for a while, each insisting he was correct, when along came a third party. The first friend stopped the man and said “Excuse me, sir, but we have this debate here and I wonder if you could help us. I say that’s the sun and my friend says it’s the moon. Which of us is correct?” And the third man said “I’m sorry, but you see I’m a stranger around these parts myself and I’m not familiar with the local customs.”

This story is a strong reminder of the force of topos in Greek rural life.

There are 92 “major” islands listed in the Yearbook of the National Statistical Service of Greece. Included are such giants as Crete, the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean, and such dots on the map as Fournoi between Ikaria and Samos. There are good aesthetic and artistic reasons why “islands” should be distinguished from the “mainland” in Greece. But in terms of regional variation I think this dichotomy is too sweeping a generalization.

The islands have no common folklore, history, dialect or other characteristic of a culture area. They do not form a trading bloc with the mainland, so they cannot be considered a “region” in the way economists use the term. They do not share the characteristic of physical isolation from the font of national culture in Athens. Consider that newspapers arrive less frequently in many parts of Macedonia than they do at Lipsos, an island of only 600 persons in the Dodecanese. Medical care is more available (doctors and hospital beds per 100,000 population) on most of the islands than it is in much of Thrace and Epirus.

I am even skeptical about the so-called mentalité of “the islands.” The farmers of central Naxos, Rhodes, Crete and other islands may despise the sea in the same way as mainland peasants.
In 1965 I visited Vasilika, the village studied by Professor Friedl. When I told the men in the coffee shop that I was studying island sponge fishermen, the reaction was “those poor people... always second guessing the ocean, always risking their lives, never seeing their families,” and so on. I agree with the Vasilikans that a critical distinction should be made between those who look to the sea and those who look to the land for their livelihood.
KALYMNOS: THE ISLAND OF THE SPONGE FISHERMEN

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There is a story which tells of a sponge crew sailing the islands of Greece. One evening they came to Samos, where the people are easily duped. Kalymnians, you know have a great love for fresh figs. The sponge divers miss those figs during the summer when they work away from their home, but this one night they were staying anchored close to shore near a great fig orchard. The orchard was being guarded by a large man, well armed. The captain assumed the role of the archsatan and appeared on the edge of the grove. He called to the divers and one by one they presented themselves before the archsatan as minor devils. They recounted their achievements, talked of the number of souls they had sent to hell, and spoke graphically of their tortures of the damned. As each one finished, the captain nodded his approval and said, "Well, come up and eat of the figs for your reward." When all the divers and the captain had eaten and departed, the guard was counting himself lucky to have escaped with his life...

The ancients said that the three most fearsome things in the world are fire, woman and the sea. Man must do battle with all three to emerge strong. We have.

Procopis Kambouris
Kalymnos, March, 1965

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Kalymnos is located 90 miles northwest of Rhodes and 250 miles southeast of Athens. There are two mountain ranges that transect the island, with Mt. Prophet Elijah reaching 740 meters (See FIGURE 1). Two valleys are created by the mountains. The first opens out to the port city of Pothea, built in the late nineteenth century, after the threat of pirates had subsided in the Aegean. Prior to that, the capital had been in Xora, 3 kilometers up the valley in the pass between Mt. Miravigli and Mt. Prophet Elijah. An early city on the mountain above Xora (called "Castro" for its fortified nature) was occupied during Medieval times. The fields of Xora were cultivated while a lookout kept watch for pirates from the mountain. The earliest occupation of Kalymnos was probably Doric, judging from the remains of the first city, which is known locally as Damos and lies beyond Xora toward Brosta.

Beyond Brosta the valley surges up and then drops to the sea at Myrties and Masouri. The population of Pothea was just over 9,000 in 1971; Xora had 2,400; Myrties and Masouri had approximately 75 permanent residents each. A road from Xora leads to Argos, a high plateau with about 15 families who keep sheep and engage in seasonal fishing. A motor road from Brosta leads to the sea at the Bay of Linaria and to Elies, another summer area on the Bay. Elies has about 10 permanent families.

During the summer months, the communities of Masouri, Myrties, Brosta, Elies, and Bothinous swell with residents from Pothea, many of whom own homes in these areas. It is the custom among the middle-class artisans and shopkeepers of Pothea to ensconce their families in a summer house and then commute to Pothea to work. This is called "making exochi." Less affluent people
set up brush houses, lean-to's, and makeshift cabins on land rented for the summer season. Many landless people arrange to plant some olive and fig trees on a patch of ground near a source of water in order to make exochi. These trees and their produce are inherited by the heirs of the person who did the planting, rather than by the owner of the land. These arrangements are dying out now, the victim of formal land registration and the decline in barter. Exochi has also been declining because the building of temporary shacks was frowned on by the military police as “unbecoming to the island’s image.”
The second valley opens to Vathi and a natural fiord, over a hundred meters long, completely protected from the sea. The population of Vathi numbers about 700, and a few families reside up the valley in Dasos and Stimenia. The total population of Kalymnos was 13,281 in 1971, an increase of 9% over 1947, despite migrations (see TABLE 1).  

Beginning in the mid-1950s many Kalymnians went to Australia (one informant was on a ship with 77 Kalymnians in 1956), West Germany, Canada, the United States and the Bahamas. During the summer, many of those who go to Germany return for a few weeks "to make exochi and to eat the figs and honey of the partidha." For the young palikaria who go to Australia, visits are fewer and farther between. Many go five years before earning enough to visit Kalymnos. Meanwhile, they send part of their money to their mothers who compete with one another over how much their sons are sending back. A newspaper is produced on Kalymnos just for the diaspora, and there are nearly 3000 readers, according to the editor. There are substantial Kalymnian communities going back two and three generations in Darwin, Australia, Campbell, Ohio, and Tarpon Springs, Florida. Almost no one returns from the United States or Canada before retirement. The young men who repatriate from Australia are held in high esteem; they speak English and always have plenty of cash on hand for the establishment of a business. A favored activity among returned migrants is ownership of a taxi.

Many young men return to marry because "you just can't find a good girl in Australia. They're all right to screw, but when you want to get married you really have to come back home." This attitude is enthusiastically endorsed by the Kalymnian fathers who provide the brides. Fathers have another reason to prefer returning migrants as husbands for their daughters:

> I hope I can find a good Australian. They don't want a lot of dowry because they learn other ways in Australia. Not like here where boys ask to be bought. They have their own money and their own future and if I can find one I'll make the sign of the cross and be thankful, because I can't get a good dowry for my daughter.

Contrast this with the reaction of one repatriate who said:

> I'm disgusted. The minute I got here everyone was ready to fix me up. When I went to the bank to put in my money I had three old proximitaries (matchmakers) approaching me on the line! They couldn't wait to get their hands on me. Bloodsuckers!

The Ponentis, a westerly wind that brings fog clouds in the summer, misses Pothea entirely because of Mt. Prophet Elijah. The fallback effect has made Vathi a green valley; the citrus groves are the only commercial agriculture to speak of on Kalymnos, occupying about 7% of the labor force year round. The Sorocos wind hits Pothea during January, February, and March.

Beyond the two valleys, the island stretches out towards Leros. The villages of Arginonda, Skalia, and Emborios have a few families each who engage in fishing and sheep herding. In addition to these communities, Kalymnos has two islets, Telendos and Psarimos, with about 75 and 200 inhabitants, respectively.

The flora and fauna of Kalymnos are both exceedingly sparse, although fresh water is in good supply. The tangerines of Vathi are the most abundant trees on the island, along with thousands of pines on the mountains overlooking Pothea. The pines have been planted since World War II in a continuing program of reforestation. In spite of the programs, the denuding of Kalymnian forests was so thorough during Medieval times that the island still looks practically bare.

A close inspection, of course, reveals a host of scrub vegetation. The most obvious wild plants are the prickly pear trees, a cactus of New World origin. In addi-
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*Source: Agapetides.¹ : 417.
tion there are thribo, oregano, thyme (used as spices) and alatsinakas, a bushy plant used as kindling for bread ovens, and as a kind of scouring pad for pots and pans. A more woody plant used for kindling is aspoilas. Flascomilo (known locally as alisfakia) and chamomile are also found in abundance on the plateaus, and are used for teas and as medicine. Domestic crops (aside from the citrus fruit, and trees that require virtually no care, such as olives, figs, and almonds) are unknown. Tomatoes, grapes, and melons are brought from the village of Kardamena, the nearest point to Kalymnos on the island of Kos, 10 miles away.

Most meat is imported: frozen chickens from Poland, and lamb and beef from Australia, New Zealand, and South America. This meat is plentiful and inexpensive compared with fresh meat; local mythology has it that frozen foods have no vitamins and taste bad, so fresh meat continues to have a certain appeal. At Easter, Kalymnians prepare their lamb in chunks rather than on a spit. No one can tell, therefore, if the meat is fresh or frozen, and many poorer families buy the Australian lamb because it is only two-thirds the price of the fresh variety. Eating frozen lamb for Easter is pitted; not only is the product considered innately inferior, but the whole essence of Easter lamb is lost: picking it out, fattening it up, slaughtering it in a great show, and giving the children the bladders to play with as balloons.

There are no cattle or horses; some donkeys are used as beasts of burden, especially by milkmen. With modern shipping, however, the selling of raw goat and sheep milk on the streets is hardly seen anymore. Most families outside of Pothea keep a few chickens for eggs, and many families also keep several goats for milk and for feasting on during celebrations. The goats are tied up in the back yard, lest they trespass on neighboring land. As in all parts of Greece, the rock walls that separate tiny land parcels are seen everywhere. They do not stop goats, however, and in years past this was a major source of friction and litigation. Today the rock walls are seen as an anachronism by many young people.

The walls are stupid. It takes labor and stones to make them and they serve nothing but pride. We (in my family) have enough rock and labor in those damned walls to build four apartment houses. I guess the old people just didn’t have any idea of the value of time and labor.

The houses of Xora reflect the ancient threats of piracy and the influence of security consciousness. The walls are of stone with very small windows and great wooden doors locked by steel bolts. The houses are built very close together, often sharing a common wall, and clusters of dwellings form tight little neighborhoods. Women spend much of their lives in these very restricted areas, keeping house, raising children, and shopping for daily items such as bread, chick peas, lentils, macaroni, and eggs. Milk was delivered by street vendors, as was much of the fruit. The prestige items (meat, fish, and oil) were purchased by the men. Oil was purchased through personal networks from a friend or a kaombaros or sympeteros. Today, with modern market places built in the 1950s, women do most of the shopping.

The newer houses (those built in Pothea during the last 15-20 years) are larger and more separated from their neighbors. The majority of the homes still have the same basic layout, however, with a kitchen and two large rooms. Until the 1950s, individual beds were rare. Families slept together on one large bed about 10 feet long, 7 feet wide, and 3 feet off the ground. Blankets were purchased as heirlooms, but sheepskins were also used as coverings. With all the family in one room, on one bed, the development of a genre of humor regarding sexual privacy
(or lack of it) is inevitable. Indeed, both men and women (in separate groups, of course) joke about the problems encountered by these arrangements.

Most of the older houses now have flush toilets outside the main home. Out-houses were apparently never common on Kalymnos. Before flush toilets, chamber pots were used. Bathing is traditionally a Saturday night affair. I noticed that boys would only bathe above the waist, and when I asked why I was told flatly "because of shame. Besides, six months a year they all swim and wash their bottoms every day."

A particularly prominent feature of new houses is that they are two-storied. This provides a dowry home for at least one daughter in the same residence as the parents. The preferred marriage residence is matri-local, but in the past the houses were very small and several of them were built on family land.

On Kalymnos, as everywhere in Greece, dowry is an obligation of fathers and and sons for daughters and sisters. Dowry size is the key to female hypergamy. The larger the dowry, the higher a woman can marry. In families fortunate enough to have two or three sons with only one daughter, brothers are expected to raise the social level of the family by providing an oversized dowry for their sister.

In those unfortunate cases of many daughters and one or no sons, a father is truly burdened. In one instance, a man had three daughters, 20, 18, and 10 years of age. He managed to marry his two eldest daughters by providing the remnants of his own wife's dowry, plus an additional sum he had accumulated over the years. Each girl was married with a house, linens, furniture, cooking ware, and $800.00 cash. The family's resources were depleted, but the man assumed he had 8 or 10 years to provide a third dowry for his youngest daughter. Unfortunately, he became ill and could not work. Eight years later his youngest daughter was courted by a man who wanted to marry her but could not because of her lack of dowry. The girl went to court, sued each of her sisters for one-third of their dowries, won the case, and was married.

In another case, a Kalymnian boy from a large and highly respected family wanted to marry a girl from a family whose social status was equivalent to his own. There were no social problems, so the engagement was announced. Then the boy's father became seriously ill and the medical expenses consumed the family's dowry for the boy's younger sister. The engagement was threatened because the boy wanted to work for several years before marrying in order to fulfill his obligation to his younger sister.

In order to avoid a long engagement and the perceived threat of premarital pregnancy, the girl's family gave the boy full power over his future wife's dowry. The couple was married, and the dowry was transferred to the bride's new sister-in-law who married, gave her husband the dowry, who gave it to his sister. The one dowry, in fact was said to have been used to marry five couples; but I think that a basically true case was made apocryphal. Tall tales are a characteristic of Kalymnian culture.

When I told this story to a group of people in Vasilika, the village studied by Professor Friedl, their reaction was "only on an island could such a thing happen." Sanders, however, mentions the recent use of dowries for more than one wedding elsewhere in Greece. Of course, this defeats the initial purpose of dowry, but these cases must be seen in a larger context of cultural change: some girls now offer, as part of their dowry, a high school diploma and a promise to take an office job for a specified number of years.

On Kalymnos, many marriages are still worked out by parents with the help of a matchmaker. Matchmakers are usually old ladies, often widows.
who have nothing better to do with their time than to snoop around being a sticky-nose. She goes around from house to house, gets invited in for a plate of food, learns the family gossip and trades it for juicy gossip from other families. When people get into fights over goats getting into their gardens, the proximitria may step in to iron things out... She is very useful, but when I was a boy if I saw my mother stay more than 10 minutes at the well I would tell her "mama, get away and don't get involved in everyone's affairs. Before you know it you'll be a proximitria." That would shame her into minding her own business. Only someone without children or a husband to care for her will become a proximitria, because people are ashamed to have such a busybody for a mother or a wife. She figures she's doing the girl a favor to arrange her marriage and at the wedding the proximitria gets the best serving and lots of sweets to take home.

No figures are available on the proportion of arranged marriages, but I would guess that at least two-thirds are worked out by parents before the couple is "informed." This is a kind of fiction, however, because many young couples conspire to have their parents arrange the marriage. This does not appear to be new, either. The panagyri system allows young men and women to mix socially at religious festivals throughout the ceremonial year. Pilgrimages are made to other islands or to very remote places on Kalymnos to particular churches or shrines.

During these excursions, young men and women meet openly, and whenever a girl or boy is unaccounted for the speculation of "goings-on" runs wild. Several persons confided that they had pressured their parents into "arranging" their marriage by threatening to have premarital sex at a panagyri. I have no idea how prevalent such ruses are, but I suspect that a large measure of youthful control is (and has always been) exercised over so-called arranged marriages on Kalymnos, and perhaps elsewhere in Greece. On Kalymnos, the dowry (in one form or another) is as strong as ever; this probably accounts for the continued practice of "arranged" marriage, and the continued presence of skilled matchmakers.

Kalymnos is not well known for its churches and shrines, as are Tinos, Symi, and Thira. There are a number of small shrines built by sailors who were saved from hurricanes, or by parents of children surviving smallpox. A particularly interesting church between Xora and Borstia was built in Byzantine times from the ruins of a temple to Apollo. Local legend has it that Justinian the Great, on the return from his famous pilgrimage to Jerusalem, parked his fleet near Kalymnos during a storm. At the time a temple to Apollo still stood on Kalymnos. Justinian, in his zeal as a Christian, ordered the temple razed and a Byzantine church built in its place. The men leveled the pagan shrine and used the same stones from the temple to complete their assignment.

Whoever built the church, many ancient inscriptions are still readable on the stones with which it was built, and nearby lie the remains of several Doric columns. Only the apse and front of the church now stand, but the outdoor mass, held in mid-July on the remote site, is well attended.

Kalymnos is the seat of a Diocese and the home of its spiritual leader, the Metropolitan. The Dodecanese are part of the Greek Diaspora, and fall under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople rather than under that of the Autocephalous Church of Greece.

The city of Pothea is divided into 11 enorias, or church parishes that serve as social and administrative units much like the Latin-American barrio. The enoria serves as an address, so that the most common response to the query "Where do you live?" is "Near the church of so-and-so." The more well-to-do parishes are located up the valley and away from the dock area.

One is born into a enoria, grows up there, and goes to school with the children of one's neighbors. Boys form gangs, one of whose major functions is to uphold the enoria's honor in periodic rock fights with rival gangs from adjacent neigh-
borhoods. Such activity is not officially approved of by the clergy, but priests privately admitted a certain paternal pride in seeing their flock fiercely committed to the enoria.

There are plenty of church-sanctioned activities designed to encourage local fidelity, and to perpetuate parish rivalries. Each church celebrates a name day, for example, and parishioners may be moved to throw a sort of "block party" for the occasion. They invite friends and relatives from adjacent parishes. Those invited then must begin to plan a return celebration.

During Holy Week, before Easter, each enoria builds a crypt in imitation of that used for Christ. These crypts are paraded through Pothea on Easter eve, and some of them take as many as a dozen bearers to carry. Each one contains a model of Christ. Some are outfitted with rows of candles or miniature oil lamps. Some are adorned with electric Christmas-tree type ornaments, lighted by battery packs that are carried alongside by more bearers. The parade of the crypts is one of the social and religious highlights of the year. There is no formal trophy or other prize, but the knowledge of having built the best crypt is highly coveted. In 1965 the winning entry was said to have cost the parish 50,000 drachmes ($1,500.00).

While men of the parish build the crypt, the women are responsible for holding a hymn-singing vigil over the replica of Christ. The paraders return the crypts to their parish church for this, and each church is adorned with complex floral arrangements.

Young men roam Kalymnos in groups, going from church to church to see the displays. Usually there is consensus that one church was more beautifully decorated than the others, or that the singing at one was superior to the others. The old women keep the vigil all night, while the girls spend their time alternatively singing hymns and going outside to mingle in groups with the young men.

At midnight, the priests conclude their mass with the proclamation Xristos Anesti, "Christ is risen." At that moment, outside each church, the young men set off firecrackers. Easter, 1964, found one group of boys exploding a small garbage can filled with powder. The roar was deafening; the vibrations were felt a half-mile away, and four of the church's windows were blown out. Officially, parishioners claimed dismay and shame. Unofficially, they showed a touch of pride when they spoke of the incident. No parish had ever set off such a firecracker.

Even children participate in a form of Easter week competition. They hang an effigy of Judas outside their church with the understanding that the better the job, the better it is for the parish. This custom is accompanied by the chanting of a local children's rhyme:

| Analybetai Christos analybomai kai ego gia ti pisti ton Hebraion chaizo ta | | | | | | | | moustachia tous kai ta paraenya tous |

(Christ rises and I rise. For the faith of the Jews I shit on their mustaches and their dirty beards. The word "paraenya" may be translated in several ways. I have chosen to interpret it as a conjunction of "palaia yenia" or "dirty beards.")

Another practice, rarely seen in Greece, is the painting of a cross of lamb's blood on the household doorway during Holy Week. No one was able to offer an explanation for the custom except that "it is very old." I suspect that it is related to the Old Testament story of Passover in which the Hebrews marked their doorposts with lamb's blood to identify themselves to the Angel of Death during the final plague (the killing of the firstborn sons).

In the two enorias of St. Nicholas and St. Stephanos, flanking the two sides of
the harbor, the overwhelming majority of the residents are sea folk and their families. There, the absence of men has made women’s ties to the church and its activities even more pronounced than is usual in Greece. There, also, religious activities associated with sponge fishing are an important part of the Kalymnian ceremonial calendar. At departure time, for example, there are special masses held for the fleet. The men, the equipment, the boats are all blessed separately to insure safety and prosperity. (This has been treated in film.)

On Epiphany (January 6) there is a Kalymnian celebration in which a cross is thrown into the bay while young men dive to retrieve it. The one who comes up with the cross is considered to be in for good luck that year. The practice was transported to Tarpon Springs, Florida. In spite of the near-total collapse of sponge fishing at Tarpon, the custom has become a major tourist attraction, often presided over by the Archbishop of North and South America, or some other dignitary.

Kalymnos has been dominated so greatly by the sponge industry that there is little native craft. The overwhelming fact about Kalymnos is its dedication to commerce, seafaring and the professions.

HISTORY

If “regionality” is defined at all by common history, then the Dodecanese qualify without question as a region. From earliest times, the Greeks of the Dodecanese have been identified as a group apart. While the Ionians and the Aeolians busied themselves with the northern and central areas of the Asia Minor coast and adjacent islands, the Dorians settled on Rhodes and on the coast from Iassus to Xanthus, Rhodes became the free trading center of the Aegean, promulgating the first maritime law. This law stressed freedom of the high seas for all non-belligerent passage, and Rhodes did everything to see to it that the code was respected. The Rhodian police fleet roamed the Aegean in search of pirates. That fleet was crewed with men from Kalymnos, Kasos, Kastelorizon, and Symi. Later, everyone of these islands would develop sponge fishing fleets, of which only the Kalymnian survives today.

By the mid-third century B.C., Rhodes held a virtual monopoly on the trade of Egyptian grain in the Aegean. In spite of this, Rhodes joined the Macedonians against the Egyptians, just to maintain the balance of maritime power. Rhodes showed up with diplomatic and military force in 221 B.C. when Byzantium tried to levy tolls on merchant ships passing through the Bosphorus. She became a world center for banking and commerce, and this led to the status of Rhodes and her sister islands as privileged neutral ground.

Rome took the Dodecanese in 200 B.C. and held them for five hundred years. The Dodecanesians remained Greek and were given home-rule, reflecting the privileged, autonomous position established by Rhodes. The Byzantines held the islands for several hundred years after Rome, and succeeded in doing little more than collecting taxes from the Dodecanesians. The Saracens “took” Rhodes in the mid-ninth century, but managed only to collect a single “victor’s” tribute before turning the islands back to self-rule.

The Genoese, the Pisans, and the Venetians held Rhodes and all her sister islands after the Crusaders sacked Constantinople in 1204. In the same year, the Byzantine Emperor leased Rhodes to Genoa as a commercial enclave. The move was designed to replenish the dwindling Byzantine treasury. It marked instead the first in a succession of real occupations of the Dodecanese that was not to end until 1948 when the United Nations restored the islands to Greek political rule.
During all the time of its occupation the Dodecanese remained essentially Greek in culture and in language; a certain arrogance helped. In the early fourteenth century, for example, the Moslems defeated the Knights of St. John in their last assault on Jerusalem. Left without purpose or home, the Knights were forced to lay siege to the island for several months while the Rhodians (with help from the outlying islands) continued to fight. Rhodes capitulated after being guaranteed retention of its status as a privileged domain.

The Knights of St. John remained in the Dodecanese until 1523 when they were defeated by the Turks in a six-months' battle for Rhodes itself. During the battle nearly half of the estimated 200,000 Turkish troops perished, because the Rhodians again joined their foreign occupiers to prevent another takeover. 5

When Rhodes finally fell to the Turks, Suleiman the Great demanded total capitulation. With typical intrepidity, the Rhodians said they would surrender on the condition that their ancient privilege of self-rule be honored. Suleiman accepted, and Turkish fortresses were built on Rhodes and on Kos to protect those islands (and their Turkish colonies that remain to this day) from the ever-present danger of Aegean pirates.

The islands ruled themselves, even on local taxation. In return for this, the recalcitrant Dodecanesians tolerated the presence of the Turks and paid them token tribute. Myres estimated the total tribute for the Dodecanese at about $10,000 in 1830, almost all of which was spent on the upkeep of mosques on Rhodes and Kos.

Self-rule was not the only freedom accorded to the Dodecanesians; they got access to forests on the Asia Minor mainland, guaranteed freedom of religion, freedom to speak and to teach the Greek language, and a pledge of noninterference with Greek customs. These rights were reaffirmed in 1644 and again in 1813.

In 1832, in the armistice after the revolution against the Turks, Greece was to receive all the Aegean isles whereas Turkey was allowed to retain the mainland province of Euboea. Because of general dissatisfaction with this arrangement, a trade was worked out whereby Greece could keep Euboea while Turkey retained possession of the Dodecanese. A glance at a map makes the strategic wisdom of the trade obvious. Euboea dominates the entire northern flank of Central Greece, whereas the Dodecanese lay astride the south coast of Asia Minor. By this time, however, the Greek Dodecanesians had demonstrated their desire to return to Greek political rule. Greece balked at the deal, but England and France obtained a promise from the Turks that these islands would be allowed to continue self-rule. As a show of good faith, the Turks reaffirmed the autonomy of the islands in 1856. As it turned out, this was a political charade.

After 1860 the harbor city of Pothea grew rapidly and became the island's capital with a population near 10,000 in 1900. Three factors accounted for this: (1) The threat of pirates was gone, leaving the Kalymnians free to come down from their ancient fortified city of Xora; (2) in the 1840s the Kalymnian and Symian sponge fleets had found the world's largest sponge beds off the coast of Libya; and (3) in the 1880s deep sea diving gear was introduced to the Aegean, increasing production potential over the traditional nude-diving, breath-holding method. Simultaneously, the Industrial Revolution created vigorous demand for sponges. Between 1850 and 1900 the population of Kalymnos rose 125%; that of Symi increased by 150%. Kastellorizon rose by 140% to an incredible 783 inhabitants per square kilometer. During the same period, the rest of the Dodecanese increased by only 23%. Anxious to reap gain from the islands, the Ottomans began taxing personal wealth, drafting men into the army, and in 1871 they took over civil and religious courts at the local level.
In 1885 access to the mainland forests was denied by the Turks. The artificially swollen population of Kalymnos, Symi, and Kastelorizon was cut off from fuel. Finally, around 1910, freedoms of assembly and religion were revoked and the islands began a rapid depopulation from migration that was not to stop until the end of World War I.

The Italo-Turkish war brought the Dodecanese under Italian rule in 1912. The Italians were greeted as liberators, but soon afterwards they took over the sponge fishing grounds in Libya. In 1915, they stopped sponge fishing completely for military reasons. The migrations continued.

After World War I, a series of treaties was signed that would have made Rhodes semi-autonomous, while giving the other islands to Greece. The treaties were ignored, however, and in 1924 Italy claimed sovereignty over the Dodecanese under the Second Treaty of Lausanne.

Almost immediately, a program of de-Hellenization was instituted to make the islands into proper Italian colonies. The Metropolitan of Rhodes was expelled for refusing to deny connection with the Patriarchate of Constantinople; in 1931 schools in the Dodecanese lost the authority to hire teachers; Roman Catholicism and Italian were taught in the public schools as the language and religion. On Rhodes and on Kos, land was expropriated for use by Italian colonial immigrants who were charged with setting examples for Greeks to follow. After an earthquake flattened Kos in 1933, the Italians initiated massive reconstruction programs, intending to build Kos, as well as Rhodes, into tourist centers.

Frustrated, the islanders protested but were powerless. Secret night schools were held in caves on Kalymnos to preserve Greek religion, language and culture. In 1935 the women of Kalymnos initiated the "petropolemos," a bloody stoning war on the occupiers.

In 1937 religious courts were abolished and, although tolerance was extended to minority Turkish-Moslem and Jewish groups, freedom of worship for Greek Orthodoxy was suspended.

Rhodes and Kos were (as always) heavily occupied, but Kalymnos was not, and subversion continued. The father of my closest friend on Kalymnos was imprisoned for refusing to send his children to Italian-run schools. His was by no means an isolated case.

In 1938, exasperated over continuing resistance to de-Hellenization, the Italians forbade the showing of the Greek colors. Within a few weeks most of the houses on Pothea had been painted blue or white by the residents, turning the amphitheatrical city into a defiant Greek flag. Greek collaborators (rufianos or pimps) were ostracized and forced to leave Kalymnos when the occupation ended. Women suspected of extending sexual favors to the Italians are openly rebuked to this day.

In 1943 the Italians capitulated to the Allies. The Dodecanese were occupied by the Germans for two years, and then by the British; they were finally turned over to Greece in 1947 by the U.N. The ancient privileges were revived. In an effort to spark the lagging economy of the post-war Dodecanese, Greece gave the islands free or reduced tariffs on most trade with foreign nations. The privileges were renewed in 1968 and, to this day, passage by mainland Greeks or foreigners to and from the Dodecanese requires inspection by customs officers. Italian-made refrigerators, for example, cost much less in the Dodecanese than a Greek-made unit costs on the mainland. On the other hand, the same Italian unit costs substantially more than the Greek machine on the mainland. Fine English cloth enters the Dodecanese practically duty free; so does Scotch whiskey,
and many Athenians spend their vacations on Rhodes just to have suits made and to squirrel away a few bottles of liquor.

In the end it is not at all clear that the 600-year occupation of Kalymnos by foreign powers has left much of a mark. A few of the municipal buildings look rather Italian. There are a number of words in the local dialect of obvious Turkish or Italian provenance. But, in general, foreign influence has been trivial. The dialect is so conservative that older people still use medieval grammatical forms such as the "ousi" of the third person plural in place of "oun." There are even aspirated voiceless stops and affricates, as well as long vowels, none of which is obviously Turkish or Italian influenced. In 1947, the culture that emerged from 600 years of occupation was and remains singularly, conservatively Greek.

THE ECONOMY

The recent history of Kalymnos has been dominated by the sponge industry. A variety of factors combined to make Kalymnos the world center of this vanishing occupation. Between 1912 and 1917, 35% of the population on Kalymnos left in response to the Italian takeover of the Libyan sponge grounds. As it happens, the core of Kalymnian society was able to remain because the island had developed, even then, a variety of other commercial interests. Symi was Kalymnos' major rival; but Symi is a very tiny island, and in 1912 it had in effect no source of revenue but sponge fishing. Symi is also very close to Rhodes and migration seemed easier, according to those who remembered it. Symi lost a staggering 70% of her population between 1912-1917, and never recovered. In 1912 the sponge fleet of Symi numbered more than 200 vessels and the island had a population of over 22,000. In 1965 only 3,000 people were left and there were no sponge boats.

Other islands that boasted proud sponge fishing fleets fared little better. In 1925, the isle of Chalki had about 35 sponge boats. In 1950 there were only 2. In the same period, the population fell by 50%.

Even islands that were not in the Dodecanese suffered a similar fate, due to the rise of the synthetic sponge industry in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1930s, Aegina had some 50 boats working the North African sponge grounds. In 1965 only three were left. By 1950 Hydra's fleet was reduced to 14 boats. In 1954 there were only four. In 1960 there were none.

I have documented elsewhere the complex circumstances that allowed Kalymnos to become the last great center of sponge diving in the world. The most important factor was the Red Tide, a massive ocean pathology that recurs in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico for no apparent reason. In 1947-48 the Red Tide wiped out the world's largest sponge banks off the west coast of Florida. Ironically, these banks had been fished by members of the Greek community at Tarpon Springs, Florida, many of whom were migrants from Symi and Kalymnos.

With their most important competition wiped out, the Kalymnians poured capital and manpower into their ancient trade; and by 1950 about 38% of the male work force was directly engaged in sponge production, processing, and marketing.

By then, however, cellulose sponge had been perfected in the United States, and was being produced in limited quantities in Sweden. By 1958, synthetics were in production in France, Germany, and Belgium.

In 1963 the Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey on Kalymnos to de-
termine the characteristics of the labor force. The data in Table 2 are from Kolodny's report of the survey.

In 1964, I counted the artisans and shops of Kalymnos. The results, shown in Table 3, indicate that Kalymnos has steadily diversified its economy. In 1970 I estimated that 40% of the labor force was engaged in all sea-related trades, including repair trades, the merchant marine, commercial fishing, sponge fishing, and marketeering of sea products. Thus, the sea in general continues to dominate the economy; but sponge fishing is no longer as important as it once was.

In 1965 sponge fishing employed 511 men, including 261 divers. By 1967, according to Kolodny, this number had dwindled to 399, including 229 divers. Production actually rose during this period (from 46 tons to 48 tons in

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<tr>
<th>Table 2: Working Male Population on Kalymnos in 1963*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, shepherds and fishermen</td>
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<td>Craftsmen</td>
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<td>Masons and house builders</td>
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<td>Laborers</td>
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<td>Mariners (merchant marine and sponge crews, not including divers)</td>
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<td>Merchants</td>
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<td>Service personnel</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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*Source: Kolodny.*

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<th>Table 3: Survey of Artisans and Shops on Kalymnos*</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coffee grinders</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Knitting shops</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Furniture makers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Cobblers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Machine shops</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Contractors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mosaic works</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Electrical repair</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sweet shops</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Woodworkers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Bakeries</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Metal working shops</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Soap makers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Appliance sales</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lamp makers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distillers (including tavern owners)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Paint shops</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Paint makers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Salt grinder</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tanners (including 1 chamois factory)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Blanket makers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Kerchief makers</strong></td>
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*Source: Chamber of Commerce, Kalymnos, 1964.
1967) because of increased efficiency. This occurred because of a very rare phenomenon, the primitivization of technology.

Common wisdom has it that increased technology is the answer to problems such as those faced by the Kalymnian sponge producers. In the early 1960s a number of captains tried scuba gear; one even installed a recompression chamber on the boat, to make life at sea safer and more attractive to the divers. His efforts proved to be non-cost-effective and, in general, modernization of diving technology has not been effective in competing with synthetics. Instead, Kalymnians have reverted to small, family-owned operations, with only a few divers on a boat (brothers, uncles, nephews, brothers-in-law) and the revival of the ancient nude diving technology. Nude diving is safe, since no bends or embolisms can occur; it is also very productive and cost-effective if it is family run on a share basis. In 1960 only 7% of the sponge fleet operated with nude divers. In 1969 this had risen to 29%.

In 1967, Kalymnos produced about 74% of all the sponge harvested in Greece. In addition to the 48 tons produced locally, merchants purchased nearly 6 tons from Turkey and other sources for processing and shipping from Kalymnos. The export value in 1968 was 1.8 million dollars⁷ and rose to over 2 million dollars by 1970.⁶ In spite of the continued vigor of the sponge industry, sponge sales no longer dominate foreign exchange; and in a country with soft currency, there is a tendency to look rather carefully at the sources of hard money. When I was first on Kalymnos in 1964-65, the director of the National Bank reported that before 1950 about 60% of all foreign exchange on Kalymnos came from the sale of sponge; an additional 25% came from remittances. Of the remaining 15% he estimated that less than 1% came from hotels and other tourist facilities. By 1968 remittances from merchant mariners, migrants and pensioners were 40% of the foreign exchange; sponge fishing was 30%. The remainder was in agriculture (11%), commercial (12%) and tourism (7%). In 1970 tourism had risen by 14% to about 8% of the total and was growing steadily.

There is every reason to suppose that tourism will become a very important part of the Kalymnian economy. Since earliest times, the fortunes of Kalymnos have mirrored those of Rhodes, and Rhodes is experiencing a tourist boom. Most important, the tourists going to Rhodes are not Greeks; 74% of the travelers there are foreigners. They bring hard currency with them, and they also bring culture change. Among all the regions of Greece, the Dodecanese has the lowest proportion of Greek tourists (28% compared with 92% in Euboea, and 65% on the mainland in general). Kos is attracting a large number of foreigners as well. In 1970 nearly 40% of the tourism on Kos⁹ was non-Greek, and the "spillover effect" is already evident on Kalymnos. Several new hotels have been built on beach front property, and Kalymnos "waits to be discovered."

These economic changes have had profound cultural effects.

During the 1950s the merchant marine and overseas migration became real alternatives to the young men of Kalymnos. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, they abandoned the sponge industry faster than the decline in the demand for sponges would have warranted. This set up fierce competition amongst the sponge boat captains for scarce labor resources; in turn, this drove the price of sponge up in a declining market. As divers got richer, the wild spending, drinking and other antics for which they were famous throughout Greece, became more pronounced. The beginning of the end of the sponge fishing heyday came in 1963 when women marched on the mayor's office; they demanded that the city close down the only prostitution house, ban bouzoukia during the winter months on Kalymnos, and generally force the menfolk to be more fiscally
responsible. Lighting cigarettes with drachma notes simply would not be tolerated any more.

In the "old days," the mayor could have ignored the protest march. Divers had a license for anti-social behavior that would have been ridiculous for any other occupational group. Divers risked their lives\(^1\) and, but for their efforts, Kalymnos might have become another ghost island like Symi or Kastellorizon. With remittances and tourism on the rise, the license for anti-social behavior was revoked. The landed gentry had always despised the roughneck, "ruffian class" of divers, and now their antagonism came out into the open. In 1965 the traditional Dinner of Love was held in April to feast and celebrate the departing sponge fleet. Banners were hung across the quay wishing the fleet a safe and productive return. But the parades had practically no representatives from the sponge fleet; and the Dinner of Love had only a few token members—a representative of the divers' union, and two rich captains. Anyone who was anyone in Kalymnian society in 1965 got an invitation to the Yacht club for that dinner; but by 1965 the sponge men weren't "anyone" anymore. Sponges still brought in nearly two million dollars in marks, francs, pounds, dollars, and yen, but the major capital of Kalymnos had already begun to move in other directions. Captains were selling their boats or converting them to haul fruit between islands. One captain outfitted his craft with scuba gear and went to Rhodes to open a diving business for tourists. He is doing quite well from last reports.

Sponge buyers began to invest their capital in enterprises such as hotels and other tourist facilities. One buyer converted his plant to process huge blocks of Belgian synthetic sponges into marketable sizes! The irony is lost to no one on Kalymnos; but, characteristically, the capital has stayed on Kalymnos, and no one can complain about that.

The result of all this has been that the lower-class divers became even lower class, while the upper class has remained stable. In social structural terms, not much has happened; but the unusual prestige once given to a lower socioeconomic group has disappeared, and in cultural terms a major change has occurred. The content of social relations on Kalymnos has been altered. In 1965 one shopkeeper talked about "wiping out the disgraceful behavior of those men (divers) who do nothing but give our island a bad name. What must tourists think," he asked, "seeing them (divers) carousing like that." Now, ten years later, the last old-time taverna, the kind that made its own wine and catered strictly to divers, has shut down. Its owner has moved his family to Boston. He is also doing well.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In studying Kalymnos I have isolated several areas that I believe are crucial to our understanding of life in Greece. Two of these are the role of women, and campanilismo.

The role of women in Greece has been of concern to many researchers and was the subject of the 1966 Mediterranean Social Anthropological Conference. Kalymnos is famous as the "island of the sponge fishermen." However, in parts of Xora, and in two enorias of Pothea (St. Nicholas and St. Stephanos), it has been the "island of the women of sponge fishermen" for half the year. Thus, Kalymnos presents some important problems for study. Descriptions of fishwife cultures are practically nonexistent. It would be particularly instructive to look at such a culture in tightly knit neighborhoods where men are absent for so
long. Absente seafaring fathers obviously have different impact on their children than, say, farmers. Exactly what these differences are is an empirical matter that should be explored systematically.

I have dealt briefly with these issues elsewhere.\textsuperscript{11} I noted that the male children of sponge fishermen do not appear to have self-images that are any less masculine than the boys of land-based fathers. Furthermore, the wives of the sponge fishermen seemed to adjust easily to the yearly shift in their role as the men left the island. A number of women expressed relief at being free to run their house without interference from their husbands.

There is a lot of evidence around that social and psychological relations between men and women on Greece are strained and often mutually destructive. Many of the issues raised by this can be elucidated through studies of fishwife cultures with absentee husbands and fathers.

The role of localism rather than regionalism is of major importance in understanding rural Greek culture. Here is one example that I am sure many field workers in Greece will find suspiciously familiar. Fifteen miles straight across from Kalymnos looms the island of Kos. For the people of Kos, Kalymnians are shifty, unscrupulous in business, and inveterate liars. For Kalymnians the people of Kos are lazy, amoral, and unfortunately backward. On Kalymnos the only word one ever hears when reference is made to Koans is “Kotes” or “chickens” rather than the proper plural “Koi.” Among Kalymnians there are many versions of why the Koans are called “Kotes.” Some people insist that there is no significance to the word at all, except that “Koi” is hard to say. The most popular story, however, tells of the 1933 earthquake that devastated Kos. Many Kalymnians went over to Kos in little fishing boats to help with the evacuation and, says one of the participants, “When we got there we found them hiding in their ruined houses, cooped up like chickens, so now we call them Koans.” If it sounds like a just-so story, it is. But this relationship between Kalymnos and Kos is important as an extension of the mainland Mediterranean phenomenon of campanillismo, described by Pitt-Rivers in his “The People of the Sierra.”\textsuperscript{12}

As is usually the case with stereotypes, there is a grain of truth in the statements of Koans and Kalymnians about one another. The people of Kos are mostly farmers and, like small farmers everywhere, they are poor. The island, however, is rich, fertile, naturally irrigated, well supplied with fresh water and very well drained. It is a place with natural beauty, perfect for tourism. It has some exciting ruins, including a restored ancient city and the original hospital of Hippocrates. The plantain tree under which The Doctor held classes still stands, now a national monument. By contrast, Kalymnos is a pile of rock; less than 18% of its 49 square miles is arable, and not all of that is under cultivation.

In a way, Kalymnos and Kos form alter egos for one another: a settled agricultural people vs. a restless, seafaring folk. This seems a gross generality and oversimplification of a complex matter. Yet, compared to the worldly seafaring Kalymnians, the Koans are backward. Compared to the Koan agriculturalists, Kalymnians are unscrupulous businessmen.

Consider the issue of morality. Koan women are immoral, by Kalymnian standards. In the city of Kos local women rode bicycles and wore slacks in public in 1964. Even now, a Kalymnian woman in slacks and on a bicycle is a rare sight. In the citrus orchards of Kalymnos, the fruit is picked each January by boatloads of Koan women. For a woman to go to another island to engage in wage labor is, for Kalymnians, ample evidence of the looseness of Koan women. On the other hand, for the agricultural Koans, the “ridiculous Kalymnian attitude” provides an excellent source of supplemental income. Moreover, Koans
insist that the wives of seafarers like Kalymnians are more likely to be adulteresses than the wives of agriculturalists. There is no scientific evidence to support this view; but in the matter of campanilismo (attachment to place) this is of no consequence. Each place sees itself as higher in all values than the other, and this is supported by the neat trick of putting some other place down.

It seems to me that the differences between agricultural and seafaring folk are crucial if we are to understand subcritical variation in Greece. One of the best ways to study these differences is in situations where the two adaptations are juxtaposed against one another. Certainly, the people of Kalymnos and Kos appreciate their differences. Here is the way one man summed it up on Kalymnos:

Look around and what do you see, Russell? Rocks, rocks, rocks; precipices that are without life. Do you see those trees on the mountain sides? Every one of them was planted by hand by the school children and their teachers on regular outings. This land is poor but it has made us strong. Like the rocks among which we live. There is no land so we have been fishermen.

Look across the way and see Kos. They have plenty of good rich land there for farming but they are poor, very poor... Why are the Kotes so poor? I'll tell you why: they are lazy. It is true that they are exploited by a few greedy landowners, but they are lazy nonetheless. If the Kalymnians had that land to depend on...

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